



*Creating & Caring
for the Outdoor Living Environment*

**Right Plant, Right Place.
Right Time, Right Now.**

**Bob Fitch, Executive Director
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association
bob@mnla.biz**



Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association

- Nursery and greenhouse growers
- Landscape designers and contractors
- Garden Centers
- Irrigation Contractors
- Lawn, Tree and Gardening Services

*\$2.1 billion in annual sales . . .
Family-owned companies*

**The green industry is
accused of introducing
invasive
plants . . .**

How do we plead?

GUILTY AS CHARGED!



Glossy Buckthorn



Purple Loosestrife

Lythrum salicaria

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However . . .

Are there mitigating
circumstances?

Less than 1% of
introduced species
have become invasive.

New plants have long
been the lifeblood of
profitability for
growers, garden
centers and landscape
professionals.

- New plants excite consumers.
- New plants bring old customers back for more.
- New plants equal profits.

Customer favorites
that have served
important roles
in the landscape . . .

Amur Maple



Norway Maple



Japanese Barberry



Russian Olive



Exotic Honeysuckles



Green Industry Perception of the Attitude of Environmentalists

- All non-natives are bad.
- The push for native plants is confused with the desire to ban invasive plants.
- Failure to recognize the environmental benefits of many non-native plants, especially in urban settings.

Traditionalists become defensive . . .

- **“There’s no such thing as a bad plant. A weed is just a plant out of place.”**

Traditionalists become defensive . . .

- **“Don’t tell us what to grow.”**

Traditionalists become defensive . . .

- “Native plants don’t perform well in urban settings.”

Traditionalists become defensive . . .

- **“There’s no market for native plants.”**

Despite the lingering attitude of some traditionalists, the industry has moved forward.

- National and state leadership understands the issue.

The industry has moved forward.

- Recognition of responsibility
- Information and education
- Voluntary changes by growers and landscape professionals
- Engagement of research community

**Can we find
common ground?**

Common Ground

- Continue the push for native plants.
Demand created by landscape architects, landscape designers and consumers (via garden centers) will, over time, change the inventories of growers.

Common Ground

- Recognize that most urban landscapes are not true “native” sites . . . i.e. disturbed soils, changed sun and wind patterns, heavy traffic, salt, etc.

Common Ground

- Agree to judge on scientific evidence – not anecdotal evidence. Compare apples to apples – such as climate zone and soil conditions.
- Do we agree that agree that just because it's invasive in southern Illinois (the Midwest) doesn't mean it will be invasive in Minnesota (also the Midwest)?

Common Ground

- Accept improved cultivars of native species.

Common Ground

- Support research on development of sterile varieties of popular non-native plants.

Nurseries, Garden Centers, and Landscape Professionals are Environmentalists!

- MNLA members and the green industry as a whole want plants to improve the world!

Creating and Caring for the Outdoor Living Environment

- MNLA policy on invasive plants
- Voluntary Codes of Conduct
- Involvement on task forces

Plant Risk Assessment and Management Protocol

- Objective assessment recognizing environmental risk, societal benefit, and economic considerations

Pressure Point

- Plant Risk Assessment and Management Protocol: Proactive or Reactive Model?
- MDA has an objective assessment tool recognizing environmental risk, societal benefit, and economic considerations. However, state budget limits have prevented its active implementation.

State Terrestrial Noxious Weeds Program

- Assessment protocol left in limbo
- State leadership and coordination is missing
- Noxious weed problems are not going away . . . **But what sort of crisis will it take to get state leaders to respond?**

Pressure Point

- When an agreed upon Risk Assessment Tool identifies a problem plant, when do we cross the line from best management practices and industry good faith into regulation?

Amur Maple – Management?

Exotic Honeysuckle – Regulation?



Right Plant. Right Place.

- Recognize the sins of our past.
- Recognize “relative invasiveness” and promote best management practices.
- Voluntarily stop including bad actors in designs and stop growing them.

Right Plant. Right Place.

- Regulatory action when appropriate.
- Restoration of funding and enhancement of MDA Noxious Weed Program for statewide coordination.

MNLA's Goal:
Right Plant. Right Place.
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- Cooperation among all environmental stakeholders that awareness of invasive plants and noxious weed issues needs to be increased among the public, lawmakers, and business interests.

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- The environment will be best served by communication and mutual education.



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