



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner
The Capitol • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0800
www.doacs.state.fl.us

Please Respond to:
Division of Plant Industry
PO Box 147100 / 1911 SW 34th Street
Gainesville, Florida 32614-7100
Telephone: (352) 372-3505/Fax: (352) 955-2300

April 4, 2008

«Title» «First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Job_Title»
«Company_Name»
«Address_Line_1»
«Address_Line_2»
«City_State_Zip»

Dear Pine Straw Harvester:

We are writing to advise you how to avoid a potential interruption in your pine straw harvesting and sales business due to product contamination with noxious weeds. This has been a recent problem both with intrastate and interstate shipments.

There are a number of weed species on the Florida List of Noxious Weeds found in Rule 5B-57.007 Florida Administrative Code whereby movement within the state is prohibited. Other states have lists of noxious weeds that they also prohibit. If inspections at destination reveal an infestation of prohibited weeds, the shipment will likely be rejected and returned to the shipper at their expense. The information on the plant quarantine requirements of all states can be found on the National Plant Board website at www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/.

Two weed species that are gaining an increasing amount of attention are the Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*) and Tropical Spiderwort (*Commelina benghalensis* L.). Japanese climbing fern is a noxious weed regulated by our department and tropical spiderwort is a weed regulated by North and South Carolina and potentially by other states in the near future. Both weed species are difficult to control. Our department has developed recommended best management practices for avoiding the movement of Japanese climbing fern in pine straw. Tropical spiderwort is a weed more commonly found in row crops, but it could potentially move into a pine planting especially in peripheral areas.

We encourage you to take necessary precautions to prevent the movement of weeds in pine straw and to obtain more information on these weed issues by visiting the following websites: Information on Tropical Spiderwort: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AG230>; and State Regulations: <http://www.nationalplantboard.org/laws/noxious.html>. By doing so, you can



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avoid any potential disruption to your business. You may also call our helpline at 1- 888-397-1517 to obtain this information or to request a site specific assessment of areas you plan to harvest.

Sincerely,

CHARLES H. BRONSON
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE

Richard D. Gaskalla
Division Director

RDG/cr

cc: Craig Meyer
Mike Long
Richard Clark