

## **PlantRight Bootcamp for Effective Outreach to Nurseries**

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### **Introduction**

*Cal-IPC*: Working with the California Horticultural Invasives Prevention (Cal-HIP) partnership for several years. Cal-HIP is a steering committee of nurseries, landscape professionals, academics, and agencies.

*Cal-HIP*: people behind PlantRight project

*PlantRight*: brand/campaign which acts as a vehicle for achieving Cal-HIP goals

*Fall 2007*: Outreach to nurseries scheduled before outreach to public—more effective to go to nurseries first, public outreach next spring/summer to help create trust with nurseries and prepare them for consumers aware of PlantRight.

*Spring 2008*: Outreach to garden clubs and gardening public—consumer education phase.

### **Introductory Discussion**

*How not to approach* – aggressive, confrontational

*How to approach* – immediately ask for a manager or buyer. Introduce yourself, saying something to the effect of “Not sure if you’re aware of the Plantright campaign...” Give him or her a brochure and try something like “The nursery association CANGC supports this campaign, and here’s a website your nursery can check out for more info. There will be major public outreach to gardening clubs in a few months and we wanted to let you know before the public campaign.”

- Great if you approach as a local and consumer
- Local nurseries often have buyers on site
- Big box stores often don’t have buyers on site, but may, and either way give them a brochure

*Good things to do/mention*

- Mention CANGC is a partner
- Great if you’re a local consumer
- If the nursery supports the program, they can say they are part of the PlantRight campaign

### **Role-playing**

Pairs of participants practiced effective interactions between a weed worker and nursery worker; each had a chance to be on both sides of the interaction. This activity was

intended to facilitate thought about difficulties that might arise in “real life” and consideration of effective ways to deal with challenges before approaching high-stakes situations (talking with sensitive stakeholders about PlantRight) that can effect the success of others performing similar outreach.

### **Post-role-playing group discussion**

*What's needed/would help with outreach*

- List of plants
- DPP brochures
- Branding of plants/nursery

*What works*

- Understanding your audience
- Promoting non-invasive plants
- Being attentive to context
- Mentioning cost to society/taxpayers
- Offering to help educate employees/be a resource
- Mentioning economics for nursery – e.g. if you have alternatives early (consumer demand) you could reap financial reward
- Letting them know that wholesale growers are at table
- Finding a point of agreement, common ground
- Going local, where you're known

*What doesn't work*

- Using jargon, technical terms
- Not realizing your audience
- Aggression
- Excessive idealism or doom and gloom scenarios

### **Conclusion**

- Go out and spread the word!
- Joint the speakers bureau
- Spring 2008 outreach through speakers bureau, join in!
  - Master gardeners
  - Landscape architects
  - Junior college horticulture departments
  - And more being pursued
- *Check out Cal-IPC's PlantRight web page for weed workers!*