

Q-37 Talking Points

[Prepared by the California Invasive Plant Council, September 2009]

1. **Screening is critical for biosecurity.** Invasive plants take a tremendous toll on the country's environment. Many degrade important ecosystem services, such as flood control, water supply, fire protection, and pollination. Preventing such species from entering the country is much more cost-effective than trying to control them once they are here.
2. **Action should be taken immediately.** The high rate of international trade poses a major threat for introducing invasive plants every day. The knowledge for effective screening protocol is available, and there should be no delay in implementation. USDA should declare an explicit implementation timetable.
3. **NAPPRA is a good approach.** Creating the "not authorized pending pest risk assessment" category is a logical step in facilitating the screening of plant imports, and should be implemented immediately.
4. **All USDA plant assessments for NAPPRA consideration should be publicly available.** This will enable organizations to use the risk assessments in their own programmatic decision making and to contribute additional relevant information that may improve the assessment.
5. **USDA should have a procedure for the public to request assessments for plants of concern to be considered for NAPPRA.** If a person or organization has information suggesting that a given plant may be a risk, there should be a clear avenue for submitting the information and receiving a timely response regarding the assessment.
6. **NAPPRA should be open to plants already in the U.S.** In addition to risky plants not currently in the U.S., screening should also be applied to risky plants already present in the U.S.—naturalized or in cultivation or both—that are of limited economic importance. These should be considered for addition to the NAPPRA category, such that future importation would require a full weed risk assessment (WRA).