

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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To: Interested Parties

From: The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Crop and Pest Services Division

Regarding: The request to add the following plants onto the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List:

Actinidia arguta (Hardy kiwi)

Date: August 28, 2017

On January 10, 2017, the Department held a public hearing regarding the addition of the above-listed plants to the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List ("List"). The Department also received written comments prior and up to 5:00 pm on January 10, 2017. The vast majority of the comments received were regarding the addition of *Actinidia arguta* (Hardy kiwi), both in support and opposition to its addition to the List.

As a result of the number of comments in opposition of the addition to Hardy kiwi to the List, the Department took additional time to investigate this matter further before making a final determination.

Decision

At this time, the Department will not be adding *Actinidia arguta* to the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant list. MDAR reviewed the data along with the public comments, and feel that the distribution of hardy kiwi is primarily made up of numerous escaped plantings that are not showing signs of spreading from their original locations. Until we better understand why the large infestation in Western MA has begun to grow so aggressively we do not feel that hardy kiwi should be banned from sale at this time. This was a difficult decision that also took other factors into consideration such as the impact on current resources to ensure proper regulation, the varied scientific opinions and the number of sites impacted. The Department will still accept additional information that may lead to the Department reconsidering its decision. If the Department decides to change its determination then another public hearing will be announced and held.

The Department recognizes the importance of the control and prevention of invasive species and the associated impacts that a prohibition of a plant may have; it values the ongoing work and information provided by the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG).