

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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TO: Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group ("MIPAG")

FROM: Ashley Randle, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

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

- Wall-lettuce (*Mycelis muralis*)
- Callery pear/Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)

DATE: September 19, 2024

On August 22, 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources ("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 August 25, 2023. There were no verbal or written comments received during the hearing process.

After reviewing the scientific information provided by MIPAG in its request, the Department has made the determination that Wall-lettuce (*Mycelis muralis*) could have a negative impact on native plants and natural habitats in Massachusetts, and therefore approves the MIPAG request to add the species to the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List.

After reviewing the scientific information provided by MIPAG in its request, the Department also made the determination that Callery pear/Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) poses a threat to land in Massachusetts, and therefore approves the MIPAG request to add the species to the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List. However, the Department recognized the importance Callery pear has when used as a grafting agent for the production of pear fruit, so decided to hold another hearing on April 26th, 2024, regarding adding Callery pear to the List with an exception for grafting stock. The majority of the comments were in support of adding Callery pear to the List with this exception. Therefore, Callery pear will be added to the List with the following exception:

When Callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) is used as a grafting agent for the production of pear fruit, the grower must monitor their trees and identify any trees where the graft has failed. Since *Pyrus calleryana* used as grafted rootstock has been documented to regrow if the graft fails, the grower must remove and dispose of the rootstock in a way that prevents the trees from generating new growth.

Agents/Growers can no longer receive new stock or begin growing new stock of either wall-lettuce or Callery/Bradford pear as of the issuance of this notice, but may sell any existing stock during the phase out period listed below:

- Wall-lettuce (*Mycelis muralis*): 1 year phase-out, no sales permitted after December 31, 2025
- Callery pear/Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*): 3-year phase-out, no sales permitted after December 31, 2028

The Department recognizes the importance of the control and prevention of invasive species as well as the associated impacts that a prohibition of a plant may have. The Department values the ongoing work and information provided by the MIPAG.