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Protecting America's Agriculture in April: How Every American Can Make a Difference

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Press Release

WASHINGTON, April 2, 2025—The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated April 2025 as Invasive Plant Pest and Disease Awareness Month. This

year's campaign spotlights how citizen-driven, cost-efficient strategies can protect one of our Nation's most valuable assets: healthy, abundant crops.

Invasive pests are sneaky and can hitch a ride unseen on everyday items, from outdoor gear and vehicles to agricultural products bought online from overseas. Their rapid spread disrupts local ecosystems and threatens crop productivity and the economic strength of our farming communities.

"Agriculture is the cornerstone of our national prosperity, and every American plays a vital role in its protection" said Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins. "When we work together, whether by cleaning outdoor gear, or staying informed about invasive threats—we are investing in the health and abundance of our crops and the future of our food system."

This year's campaign highlights four ways you can make a difference:

1. Stay informed: Learn about local quarantines by visiting your [State department of agriculture's website](#). Learn about what you can do to help by visiting [HungryPests.com](#) and clicking on "What You Can Do." You can help USDA lower food costs by complying with local and federal agricultural regulations.
2. Inspect and Clean: Before traveling, check your vehicle, and any outdoor furniture or gear you may be traveling with for signs of invasive pests. Clean your car and outdoor patio furniture regularly to help reduce invasive pest populations and reduce their spread.
3. Source Domestically and Shop Smart: Wood can spread tree-killing beetles. Avoid moving untreated firewood to new places. To be safe, use locally sourced wood or buy certified, heat-treated firewood. When purchasing agricultural products online, verify the product's origin and follow import regulations to help protect American plants and our food supply.

If you don't know where an agricultural product is coming from, don't buy it online. U.S. regulations apply to the importer—meaning the person purchasing and importing the product—not the online merchant. Buy the item domestically or learn how to safely and legally [import plants, seeds](#) and other [agricultural products](#) before purchasing them online. Also, avoid mailing homegrown plants, fruits, and vegetables, which can also spread invasive pests to new areas.

4. Report and Declare: If you notice unusual signs of pest activity—whether in your garden, on your outdoor gear, or in your community—report them to your

local [Extension](#) office, [state department of agriculture](#) or your USDA State Plant Health Director's office. Visit your local state department of agriculture's website to learn about quarantines in your area.

It's also essential to declare all agricultural items, including seeds, soil, and handicrafts to U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials for inspection when returning from overseas travel. Declaring these items protects U.S. resources and it's required by law.

Join the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and follow #IPPDAM on social media. To learn more about invasive plant pests and diseases in your area and how to stop them, visit [HungryPests.com](#).