

What Is An Invasive Plant?

What is an invasive plant?

An **invasive plant** is a species that is not native to an area and causes harm to human health, the environment, or the economy. Invasive plants become a weed pest that grows rapidly. It spreads and displaces other plants. Invasive plants typically appear on disturbed ground but the most invasive ones can invade existing ecosystems. Invasive plants can be very expensive to control.

What is a native plant?

A **native plant** is one that occurs naturally in a particular place without human intervention. Species native to North America are generally recognized as those occurring on the continent prior to European settlement.

What is an introduced plant?

Introduced plants are mostly European or Asian species that have been accidentally transported or intentionally imported for their ornamental value or other characteristics, such as shade, windbreaks, or erosion control. Not all introduced species become invasive.

What makes plants invasive?

- Fast growth rate.
- Grow well in a wide range of soil and growing conditions.
- Some have high seed production with seeds that easily disperse and sprout quickly.
- Some have the ability to reproduce by roots or shoots, called suckering.

Why are invasive plants bad?

- Displace and reduce native plant species.
- Destroy habitats that support native animals.
- Change ecosystem processes so that they support aggressive and introduced plants, animals and diseases.
- Are difficult to control, can escape from cultivation and can dominate whole areas.
- Overall decrease in biodiversity of ecosystems.