

Dear

As a concerned voter, I am writing to express my dismay in learning that the government is considering the implementation of a “clean list” or “white list”, controlling the import and movement of plants and animals in the U.S., allegedly to stop the spread of “invasive species”.

At the opening session of the national Invasive Species Council (established by Clinton’s Executive Order 13112), co-Chair Bruce Babbitt called for the use of a white list, under which all species **not** on the approved list will be prohibited for cultivation, sale, movement, etc.

I feel that this “white list” would be a reckless and irresponsible policy, for the following reasons:

1) Such a policy requires adequate, scientifically verified methods of predicting which species would be “invasive”. There is no reliable way to predict this, and there is not even a coherent, rational definition of the term “invasive”. All scientific attempts at predicting “invasiveness” have failed.

2) We already have adequate weed laws. We already know which species are pests; implementing a sweeping, poorly-conceived ban on what will amount to 99% of the world’s species will cause more problems than it could possibly solve.

3) Scientific researchers need ready access to the earth’s biological resources for new food crops, new medicinal plants, new industrial uses. Limiting this access will place U.S. scientists at a disadvantage in the competitive world markets. Limiting our farmers’ access to new crops will increase our dependence on foreign supplies.

One of the founding fathers of our nation, Thomas Jefferson, said: “The greatest service a man may do for his country is the introduction of a useful plant.” I hope you will stand with Jefferson on this issue, and not be swayed into making a terrible mistake during a moment of hysteria.

In closing, I want to point out that gardeners are the single largest common-interest group in the U.S., and that you can be sure we will Remember In November. I will be waiting for your response, indicating where you stand on the “white list” issue.

Sincerely,