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Statement of
Bob Heffernan
Executive Director
Connecticut Green Industries Council
before the Environment Committee

Supporting S.B. 1016 / Bamboo

March 15, 2013

The state's horticultural industry supports the bill, which is a reasonable approach that has been worked out with the approval of the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council.

Our plant retailers are way ahead of the legislature on bamboo management. We have designed a special care tag for running bamboo (copy attached) to be given to our customers that explains a system for containing the plant. We've educated our own industry on bamboo control.

Important: the legislature and the public must not confuse the different types of bamboo. The bill rightly refers to "running" forms of bamboo. There are also many varieties of "clumping" bamboos that do not aggressively spread.

We would prefer to see a section added to the bill on municipal pre-emption. This bill will amply cover all situations in all 169 towns. Current law has a municipal pre-emption for invasive plants.

Lastly, bamboo does not fit the state definition of an invasive plant. It's in a category all by itself. Unlike other invasive plants, bamboo cannot spread by wind or animals/birds or seed. It has to be planted by a human, and then only spreads out from the original plant through rhizomes.

OVER FOR BAMBOO TAG

Proper Planting for Running
Bamboo

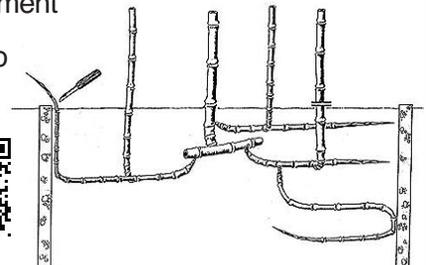
Hardy bamboo can be used as a focal point in the garden, and is valuable as a fast growing screening plant. However, be aware this plant can spread quite rapidly by underground rhizomes (roots) after it becomes established, and some form of containment may likely be necessary (see reverse side). This is especially true along property lines. Mowing the new shoots is effective in controlling spread. When the bamboo shoots emerge in the spring, they are tender and easily clipped. Herbicides like Roundup® may also be effective in mid to late summer.



CONNECTICUT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

Rhizome barrier for Running
Bamboo

You can construct a barrier out of polyethylene, metal, cement, or fiberglass to surround the plant and avoid undesirable spread. The barrier should extend 28"-30" deep into the soil, and extend above the soil at least 2". Polyethylene lasts longest and is most flexible to be freeformed to any desired bed line. Leave a 2" lip above ground to check for any rhizomes (roots) that may try to grow over it. When properly installed, the rhizome barrier provides excellent containment of your bamboo plant.



Seek advice from your local plant professional.