



Oceana Conservation District

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Golden Township
5527 Fox Rd
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Ms. Iteen,

I received your letter regarding the concern that Golden Township resident Mr. McKissack raised at a recent Board meeting. It is true that conservation districts used to sell Autumn Olive before the concept of alien or invasive species arose. At the time, back in the 1980s and early 90s, conservation districts saw the benefits of autumn olive. It served as wildlife cover and food, windbreaks, highway barriers and soil stabilizers. It was drought, disease and insect resistant and it could grow in poor soils in full sun to partial shade.

When it was brought to the Michigan Association of Conservation District's attention, in the late 1990s, that Autumn Olive was an invasive species and was causing problems to native flora, the species was soon restricted and we were not allowed to sell it. Our records show that we stopped selling it in 2000.

We now know the value of promoting and selling native vegetation! We currently only sell trees and shrubs during our spring tree sale that are native to Michigan with the exception of 3 non-invasive conifer species. We also sell Michigan dunegrass, wildflowers and grasses throughout the year.

Please also note that in 2015, through funds from the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program, I initiated significant efforts to start eradicating invasive species in Oceana County. Our current priorities are Japanese knotweed and *Phragmites*, species that are not yet a problem in Oceana County like they are in other counties, but will be, if left unchecked, like Autumn Olive. My hope is someday there will be state funding available and/or cost-effective means to treat Autumn Olive in Oceana County.

Please feel free to forward information to Mr. McKissack on best management practices for Autumn Olive on his own property. From the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISIN) website, <http://www.misin.msu.edu/>, he can search by common name under the Species Information tab and find a link to detailed information on best management practices.

Thank you for your care and concern,

Suzie Knoll
Executive Director