Paula Tibbitts

From: Hilary Hofstein <hilary.hofstein@neric.org>
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 12:11 PM
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Cc: Amy Lupinski; David Guiliano; Jamie Bonino; Lynette Holman; Michael Walker; Micki Jones; Sherrie Strain; Timothy Murphy
Subject: Packages of Unsolicited Seeds from China

Good afternoon,

I writing to share information the Health-Safety-Risk team received on recent reports of packets of plant seeds being shipped to and received by individuals in 32 states, including New York.

Seeds appear to have been mailed in white pouches displaying Chinese lettering and the words "China Post". The seeds arrive in plastic bags (e.g., zip-lock bag, seal-a-meal-type bags) without an identifier as to the name or nature of the contents. Several different types of seeds are involved. Seeds may arrive in the form of jewelry. Recipients did not order the seeds.

It is unknown what the seeds are from or their true origins. Until and unless these seeds are determined to be of a benign nature, they should be considered and treated with caution. *It is important that if you or someone you know or know of receives such packages, please follow the instructions below.*

1. **Do not handle or plant the seeds – and set them in a safe location**; *and*

2. Immediately notify your State Plant Regulatory Official
New York (518) 457-2087 Christopher.Logue@agriculture.ny.gov

or

USDA APHIS State Plant Health Director
New York (518) 218-7510 Edward.Chen@usda.gov

for instructions.

Please hold onto the seeds and packaging, including the mailing label, until someone from the State department of agriculture or APHIS contacts you with further instructions. Do not plant seeds from unknown origins. The USDA is currently collecting seed packages from recipients and will test their contents to determine if they contain anything that could be of concern to U.S. agriculture or the environment.

If you have questions regarding this email, please reach out to me or the safety specialist assigned to your school districts.

Best regards,

Hilary Hofstein
Managing Program Coordinator I
Health-Safety-Risk
Capital Region BOCES

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