

GreenThumb Voluntary Codes of Conduct for Plant Nurseries, Botanical Gardens, Landscapers, Landscape Architects, & Property Managers.

[Florida Keys Invasive Exotic Task Force](#) - August 2010

**Double starred items are mandatory for certification and are worth 30 points total (45% of 67 total points possible)
You must reach at least 40 points total to qualify for certification (60% of 67 total points possible)

As a professional horticulturalist in the Florida Keys, I recognize my responsibility to the ecosystems of our islands. In order to do my part to do no harm, I pledge to:

1) Right Plant, Right Place

Provide healthy, vigorous growing plants that can take the Florida Keys growing conditions of limited available water, salty winds, salt intrusion into the root zone, high pH soils, and year round pest problems.

- 3 points**** Dispose of all plant matter in a maintained compost pile or in the trash. No dumping allowed. (Mandatory)
- 3 points**** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend a [selection of native](#) trees, palms, shrubs, groundcovers and vines, thereby minimizing the need for water/fertilizer. (Mandatory)
- 2 points**** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend a selection of salt tolerant plants (both wind borne & storm surge). (Mandatory)
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend a selection of drought tolerant plants.
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend a selection of wind tolerant plants.
- 2 points:** Meets [Florida Grades and Standards](#) for plant materials: trees, shrubs, groundcovers, vines & palms as a Florida Fancy or Florida #1.
- 1 point:** Plants are not root bound.
- 1 point:** Plants are weed free.
- 1 point:** Plants are disease free.

2) Remove Invasive Exotic Plants

Reduce the harm that invasive exotic plants inflict on our islands, crowding out native plants and wildlife, and growing like weeds in the landscape. Be familiar with bi-annual updates to the ranked [Exotics Plant List](#).

- 3 points**** Do not Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend Florida Keys Invasive Exotic Task Force Category 1 invasive exotics. (Mandatory)
- 3 points**** Do not Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend Florida Keys Invasive Exotic Task Force Category 2 invasive exotics. (Mandatory)

3) Attracting Wildlife

Plant a variety of native trees, shrubs and groundcovers provides more cover and feeding opportunities for birds, butterflies and caterpillars.

- 2 points**** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend a selection of native butterfly attracting plants (larval/nectar). (Mandatory).
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend vines, shrubs, and trees that provide cover, nesting areas and/or food sources for birds.
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend bee houses, bird baths, butterfly puddling stations, and/or bird houses.

4) Fertilize Appropriately

Choose slow release fertilizers that are formulated for the Keys alkaline soils and apply enough to feed the plants but not pollute our nearshore waters.

- 3 points**** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend slow release fertilizers that are appropriate for alkaline soils.
- 2 points**** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend chelated iron (Sequestrene 138, Hampshire 806).
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend minor element foliar nutritional spray.
- 2 points:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend 8-2-12 palm fertilizer.
- 1 point:** Buy/Plant/Sell/Recommend Sell composted manures.

5) Mulching

Apply wood mulches around shrubs, planted beds and bare ground to improve the soil fertility, keep moisture near the plant roots, inhibit weed growth and reduce “weed whacker” damage.

- 2 points**** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend [by-product mulch](#) such as pine bark, and/or Enviromulch (melaleuca).
- 2 points:** Encourage/practice proper mulching methods.
- 1 point:** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend non-arsenic red dye mulch.
- 1 point:** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend cypress as a by-product mulch only.

6) Controlling Yard Pests Responsibly

Work with the Extension Service to identify insects to determine if the insect is harmful or helpful, and if control is necessary. If no helpful insects are present try: a stream of strong water to knock them off or insecticidal soaps or horticultural oils.

- 3 points**** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend horticultural oils.
- 3 points**** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend insecticidal soaps and/or other household recipes.
- 2 points:** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend yellow sticky traps.
- 2 points:** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend Bacillus Thuringensis (Dipel, Thuricide).

7) Watering efficiently

Recognize that overwatering depletes our water supply, makes plants prone to pests and adds to stormwater runoff which pollutes our nearshore waters. Lawns should be watered when 50% of the lawn shows signs of wilt and established bedding plants and shrubs can be watered “as-needed.”

- 1 point**** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend Water Sensors with Rain shut off valves.
- 1 point** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend Drip irrigation equipment.
- 1 point** Buy/Use/Sell/Recommend Rainbarrels or Cisterns.

8) Communications

- 2 points** Remind customers to not dump plants during point of sale, or when improper behavior is noticed.
- 2 points** Educate and encourage my plant material suppliers to provide landscape contractors and the public with non Category I or Category II invasive plants.
- 2 points** Ensure that all plants are correctly labeled.
- 1 point** Display materials about invasive species and benefits of natives and other suggested resources.

- 1 point** Review or participate in the bi-annual ranking of Florida Keys invasive exotics put out by the Florida Keys Invasive Exotics Task Force to determine what species in your region either are currently highly invasive or show aggressive potential.
- 1 point** Take advantage of continuing education opportunities.

____: Total points

I wish to become a GreenThumb Certified partner and lead by example. I certify that my organization/agency/ business is doing all of the above check-marked items. I will send you our website and/or logo so that you can promote my participation.

Name

Signature

Business/Organization Name

City

Phone Number

Email

When complete, save and email to Kim Gabel at kgabel@ufl.edu

For Office Use Only:

- Accept and Promote
- Decline and Suggest Changes
