

Article 36.

Plant Pests.

§ 106-419. Plant pest defined.

A plant pest is hereby defined to mean any insect, mite, nematode, other invertebrate animal, disease, noxious weed, plant or animal parasite in any stage of development which is injurious to plants and plant products. (1957, c. 985.)

§ 106-419.1. Plants, plant products and other objects exposed to plant pests.

Any plant, plant product, object or article which has been, or which the Commissioner of Agriculture or his agents have reasonable grounds to believe has been exposed to a plant pest, may be treated as a plant pest for the purposes of this Article. (1971, c. 526.)

§ 106-420. Authority of Board of Agriculture to adopt regulations.

The Board of Agriculture is hereby authorized to adopt reasonable regulations to implement and carry out the purposes of this Article as to eradicate, repress and prevent the spread of plant pests (i) within the State, (ii) from within the State to points outside the State, and (iii) from outside the State to points within the State. The Board of Agriculture shall adopt regulations for eradicating such plant pests as it may deem capable of being economically eradicated, for repressing such as cannot be economically eradicated, and for preventing their spread within the State. Regulations may provide for quarantine of areas. It may also adopt reasonable regulations for preventing the introduction of dangerous plant pests from without the State, and for governing common carriers in transporting plants, articles or things liable to harbor such pests into, from and within the State. The Board is authorized, in order to control plant pests, to adopt regulations governing the inspection, certification and movement of nursery stock, (i) into the State from outside the State, (ii) within the State, and (iii) from within the State to points outside the State. The Board is further authorized to prescribe and collect a schedule of fees to be collected for its nursery inspection, nursery dealer certification, narcissus bulb inspection, plant pest inspection, phytosanitary certification, and plant pest certification activities. (1957, c. 985; 1991, c. 442, s. 1; 2021-180, s. 10.2(a).)

§ 106-420.1. Agreements against plant pests.

The North Carolina Board of Agriculture is authorized to enter into agreements with any agency of the United States or any agency of another state for the eradication, suppression, control and prevention of spread of plant pests. The Commissioner of Agriculture is authorized to enter into agreements with any unit of local government in this State or any organization incorporated or unincorporated who has an interest in the control of plant pests for the eradication, suppression, control and prevention of spread of plant pests. (1971, c. 526.)

§ 106-421. Permitting uncontrolled existence of plant pests; nuisance; method of abatement.

No person shall knowingly and willfully keep upon his premises any plant or plant product infested or infected by any dangerous plant pest, or permit dangerous plants or plant parasites to mature seed or otherwise multiply upon his land, except under such regulations as the Board of Agriculture may prescribe. All such infested or infected plants and premises are hereby declared public nuisances. The owner of such plants or premises shall, when notified to do so by the Commissioner of Agriculture, take such measures as may be prescribed to eradicate such pests. The notice shall be in writing and shall be mailed to the usual or last known address, or left at the ordinary place of business, of the owner or his agent. If such person fails to comply with such

notice within such reasonable time as the notice prescribes, the Commissioner of Agriculture, through his duly authorized agents, shall proceed to take such measures as shall be necessary to eradicate such pests, and shall compute the actual costs of labor and materials used in eradicating such pests, and the owner of the premises in question shall pay to the Commissioner of Agriculture such assessed costs. No damages shall be awarded the owner of such premises for entering thereon and destroying or otherwise treating any infected or infested plants or soil when done by the order of the Commissioner of Agriculture. (1957, c. 985.)

§ 106-421.1. Authority of Board of Agriculture to regulate plants.

The Board of Agriculture shall have the sole authority to prohibit the planting, cultivation, harvesting, disposal, handling, or movement of plants as defined in G.S. 106-202.12. This section shall not prevent the designation of plants as noxious aquatic weeds pursuant to Article 15 of Chapter 113A of the General Statutes, nor shall it prevent the adoption or enforcement of city or county ordinances regulating the appearance of property or the handling and collection of solid waste. (2013-197, s. 1.)

§ 106-422. Agents of Board; inspection.

The Commissioner of Agriculture shall be the agent of the Board in enforcing these regulations, and shall have authority to designate such employees of the Department as may seem expedient to carry out the duties and exercise the powers provided by this Article. Persons collaborating with the Division of Entomology may also be designated by the Commissioner of Agriculture as agents for the purpose of this Article. The Commissioner of Agriculture, and any duly authorized agent of the Commissioner, shall have the authority to inspect vehicles or other means of transportation and its cargo suspected of carrying plant pests and to enter upon and inspect any premises between the hours of sunrise and sunset during every working day of the year to determine the presence or absence of injurious plant pests. Any duly authorized agent of the Commissioner shall have authority to stop or cause to be stopped on any highway or other public place, by any law-enforcement officer at the request of said authorized agent of the Commissioner, any vehicle or other means of transportation that is being used, or that the representative of the Commissioner has reasonable grounds to believe is being used, to transport or move any plant, plant product or seed in violation of the provisions of this Article. (1957, c. 985; 1967, c. 976.)

§ 106-423. Nursery inspection; nursery dealer's certificate; narcissus inspection.

The Board of Agriculture shall have the authority to define nursery stock. The Commissioner of Agriculture shall have the right to cause all plant nurseries, and narcissus bulb fields where narcissus bulbs are commercially raised, within the State to be inspected at least once each year for serious plant pests. Every person, firm or corporation buying and reselling nursery stock shall register and secure a dealer's certificate for each location from which plants are sold. (1957, c. 985.)

§ 106-423.1. Criminal penalties; violation of laws or regulations.

If anyone shall attempt to prevent inspection of his premises as provided in the preceding sections, or shall otherwise interfere with the Commissioner of Agriculture, or any of his agents, while engaged in the performance of his duties under this Article, or shall violate any provisions of this Article or any regulations of the Board of Agriculture adopted pursuant to this Article, he shall

be guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor. Each day's violation shall constitute a separate offense. (1957, c. 985; 1993, c. 539, s. 782; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)