Exotic vs. Native Plants Philosophy Scale
J.C. Raulston, 1996

To help understand where others (and you) stand in the very wide spectrum of the horrific and unending native vs. exotic plant “mud-wrestling debate” - the following scale is offered tongue-in-cheek for humor to laugh at ourselves on this admittedly serious issue. Where are you in this range??

1-2: Encourage maximum population growth; burn, bulldoze and kill all existing vegetation and build everywhere; plant only those ugly aggressive noxious exotic plants with no redeeming values (e.g. - hybrid tea roses, Leyland cypresses or ‘Bradford’ pears); eat only kiwis, mangos and rice; live in rosewood lumber homes with plastic furniture; demand “Chemplush” (TM) lush iridescent green lawns everywhere and in all seasons.

3-4: Burn, bulldoze and kill most existing vegetation - but save old historic trees slept under by great presidents; maintain cryogenic tissue samples of native flowers germplasm just in case someone ever wants to sample pimple cure; eat olives and figs, with one bowl of beans a month; live in a redwood home with a basket woven of local reeds; weed and feed lawn monthly and mow weekly.

5-6: Live life in moderation; plant and enjoy useful plants; protect native habitats; eat everything in sight regardless of origin (Raulston’s Rule); recycle paper, homes, and other products - and use local plantation grown lumber to build; weed & feed lawn annually and mow monthly if it needs it; worry endlessly about everything ‘cause you don’t have a final perfect answer to Earth’s problems like everyone else seems to.

7-8: Eliminate aggressive invasive exotic plants; work politically and financially to protect native habitats; urge population control; use low maintenance native plants appropriate to environment and culture; eat beans, corn, blueberries and an occasional cantaloupe in season; live in hand-hewn pine cabin from lumber you grew yourself; use all native oak furniture built from lightening killed trees and enjoy a mahogany rocking chair inherited from your Indonesian great-grandfather; let goats graze whatever grass or other stuff comes up out front - then eat goat (if not vegetarian or animal rights).

9-10 Eliminate all plant species not growing when and where they existed as colonists arrived; remove all physical construction not in use in 1492 and reduce human population levels to that time with appropriate attention to native American ethnic purity; eliminate all travel and exchange of products and/or technology; eat only the foods botanically existing on your specific habitat (no cheating with imported Mexican corn or Maine blueberries) - mushrooms are recommended as they don’t reproduce easily or spread aggressively; live in caves to protect trees from destruction; wear no clothing or use any tools; if there is no tree removal, there is no sun, and therefore no summer grass = no lawn maintenance sweat.