



Mysterious Seeds Appear In U.S. Mailboxes - Federal Safeguards

Officials from over 27 states, as well as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), are urging people across the country to be aware of packages containing seeds from China. The seeds appear to have been mailed directly from China in white pouches displaying Chinese lettering and the words “China Post”. Various state agricultural departments have also reported the packages marked as jewelry, earbuds, and toys.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is warning recipients of these seeds as they could be invasive species that may introduce diseases to local native plants. The seeds may also be harmful to livestock and increase the cost of food production for various crops and meats. Invasive plant species and noxious weeds can displace established crops and jeopardize a sensitive food chain.

The USDA is urging recipients of these seeds to avoid planting them and to contact the USDA of the contents received. It is still unknown if the seeds are meant to destabilize a food chain or if they are merely sent as a “brushing” scam.

As of July 29th, the USDA had identified several of the seed species as herbs including mint, sage, rosemary, and lavender. The USDA will continue to test and examine all seeds until it determines that no threat is warranted to the U.S. food chain.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture; https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/newsroom/stakeholder-info/sa_by_date/sa-2020/sa-07/seeds-china