

Fairfield University Native Plant Policy – Endorsed by the Land and Water Subcommittee of the Campus Sustainability Committee Dec. 9, 2013

Fairfield University sits on 214 acres in a suburban setting in southwestern CT. The outdoor landscape is a mixture of lawn, athletic fields, landscaped plantings, and mixed hardwood forest. Water resources include 2 small ponds, a small stream, and a wetland. 28 acres are in areas regulated by the Town of Fairfield (wetlands and conservation easements). The Campus Sustainability Plan calls for land and water management practices that minimize environmental impact, enhance biodiversity, and increase campus and community awareness of the importance of land management to sustainability. The use of native plants is a critical element to meet the goals of creating a more sustainably managed campus.

Use of native plants protects the diversity of plants species native to the New England region, provides wildlife habitat and food, enhances the natural beauty and local integrity of New England landscapes, and provides educational opportunities for the University and surrounding communities. We strive to use native species in all **new** plantings with the following exceptions:

- i) athletic fields and lawn areas
- ii) designated edible and horticultural gardens (e.g., Japanese Garden)
- iii) horticultural displays and collections

The use of ornamental cultivars of native species (e.g., “October Red” Red Maple) is permitted when landscaping around buildings. However, to maintain genetic diversity, ensure establishment in local conditions and provide the most appropriate wildlife habitat and food, native plants propagated from regionally sourced material will be used when planting in natural areas.

Implementation:

All staff who design, construct and maintain campus landscapes will be made aware of the native plant policy.

All consultants and architects hired by the University will be made aware of the native plant policy.

Resources:

<http://www.ct-botanical-society.org/garden/index.html> - list of flowers and grasses native to Connecticut that are particularly suited for planting

http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/wildlife/pdf_files/habitat/ntvtree.pdf - list of shrubs and trees native to Connecticut that are available at local nurseries