PA Department of Agriculture **WARNS CONSUMERS** to

Report Unsolicited, Mislabeled Seeds Received by Mail

If you receive unordered seeds in the mail,

DO NOT PLANT THEM OR THROW THEM AWAY WITHOUT DOUBLE BAGGING AND SEALING THE BAGS.

Report the package to the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) confidential Anti-smuggling Hotline, 800-877-3835 or email SITC.Mail@aphis.usda.gov. USDA will provide further instructions.

Consumers nationwide have received seeds in packages labeled as jewelry. These seeds may contain plant diseases, weeds or invasive plants that could harm our agriculture industry and ecosystem. Planting seeds without knowing what they are can wreak havoc with our environment, destroy agricultural crops and incur costly control efforts for years to come.

Seeds labeled as jewelry are likely a scam known as "brushing." Companies boost online sales by purchasing their own products through fake buyer accounts. The products are shipped to a real address, to someone who didn't order the item. The seller writes a positive review of their items from the fake buyer account. Recent packages have been filled with unlabeled seeds. For more information on Pennsylvania's efforts to protect and promote agriculture in Pennsylvania, visit agriculture.pa.gov.

YOU CAN CONTACT THE LOCAL GETTYSBURG USDA OFFICE AT 717-334-4216