

Abstract

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E-commerce of freshwater aquarium fishes: potential disseminator of exotic species in Brazil

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The availability of freshwater aquarium fish species for sale was surveyed from July 2005 to June 2006 in Brazilian electronic commerce and the Orkut website. São Paulo was the leading state regarding virtual shops, auctions on Arremate/Mercado Livre, and hobbyists on Orkut, with 52, 44 and 46%, respectively. The Southeast and South regions led the offer of pest species such as *C. carpio*, *C. auratus* and *P. reticulata*. Among the 207 species for sale, 14 species considered potential pests were identified, contrasting with only one page that warned about the dangers of aquarium dumping. The easy access to fish (especially the potential pest species) through e-commerce and Orkut, together with the low total price (unitary value + shipping and handling ranging from US\$ 17.67 to 30.39), and fast interstate delivery (two-four days on average) confirm the widespread e-commerce accessibility and its high dispersal potential via postal services and home hobbyists trade. It is imperative to enforce the use of warnings or alert messages in e-commerce about the dangers of biological invasions.

Keywords

Virtual shops, hobbyists, biological invasions.

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