



Trading as:

NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY

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MANAGEMENT PLAN

for

PRICKLY PEAR

(*Opuntia* species except *O. ficus-indica*)

BACKGROUND

Description: The *Opuntia* species are commonly known as 'Prickly Pears'. All have been introduced to Australia (mainly as ornamentals) where they have become naturalised. They are classed as shrubs, are from 1 to 3 m high and reproduce from seed and from branch segments. Uncontrolled, it can form dense impenetrable thickets. The introduction of the biological control insects *Cactoblastis* and *Cochineal* in the 1920s, have proven to be the most successful bio-control agents brought into Australia.

Declaration: The *Opuntia* species are classified as Class 4 noxious weeds in the New England Weeds Authority Area.

Under the *Noxious Weeds Act of 1993* as amended:

- The control objective of Class 4 noxious weeds is that they must be managed in such a way as to 'minimise the negative impact of the weed on the economy, community or the environment of New South Wales'.
- The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled according to the measures specified in a Management Plan published by the Local Control Authority (in this case the New England Weeds Authority).
- The plant may not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed.

CONTROL MEASURES

The New England Weeds Authority will control *Opuntia* species growing on all land for which it has the responsibility to control weeds under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*.

Owners/Occupiers of land are required to actively control *Opuntia* species to prevent them from spreading, and their numbers and distribution must be reduced.

Owners/Occupiers of infested land are required to control *Opuntia* species in the following manner:

- (a) **CHEMICAL** – The *Opuntia* species is to be treated with a herbicide registered for the control of *Opuntia*, in the manner specified on the label; OR
- (b) **MECHANICAL** – The *Opuntia* species is to be physically removed and buried; OR,
- (c) **BIOLOGICAL** – A suitable control agent is to be placed on or in close proximity to healthy plants and encouraged to establish.