



## Narrabri Shire Council Management Plan for Columbus Grass (*Sorghum X almum*)

**Plan No:** CG01/2006

Columbus Grass (*Sorghum X almum*) is a summer growing perennial sorghum that can invade both dry land and irrigated cropping areas. It is an important host of insect pests (primarily sorghum midge) and diseases of grain sorghum. It is a contaminate of seed sorghum crops and can be toxic to livestock.

Columbus Grass is erect and robust, has numerous tillers and thick, short rhizomes that curve upwards to produce new shoots near the parental stool. Growth from the apical or auxiliary nodes on the primary rhizomes that have survived the winter begins as temperatures increase in the spring. Depending on the climate, flowering begins roughly two months after growth commences and continues throughout the growing season. Most of the year's rhizome growth takes place after flower production. The tertiary rhizomes that grow deep into the soil (up to 120cm into the soil) survive the winter and become the following season's primary structure.

In the Narrabri Shire, Columbus Grass is gazetted as a Class 4 noxious weed under Schedule 4 of Weed Control Order 19 (Order 19) made pursuant to section 7 and 8 of the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* (the Act) as amended in 2005. Class 4 noxious weeds are plants that pose a threat to primary production, the environment or human health, are widely distributed in an area to which the order applies and are likely to spread in the area or to another area.

Order 19 also provides that the growth and spread of this plant must be controlled according to the measures specified in a management plan published by the Local Control Authority (LCA). To comply with Order 19, Columbus Grass must be managed in such a way as to minimise the negative impact of the weed on the economy, community or the environment of NSW.

### CONTROL MEASURES

Columbus Grass must be actively managed to reduce population size and distribution. Areas within 100m of a property boundary must be free of Columbus grass.

Owners/occupiers may use either or both of the following control methods:

- a. **Mechanical:** all rhizomes material to be removed.
- b. **Chemical:** effective treatment with a herbicide registered for the control of Columbus grass, in the manner specified on the label.

Narrabri Shire Council (NSC) Weeds Officers will inspect private and crown land for infestations of Columbus Grass. NSC will also undertake control work with allocated funds on Crown Land and land for which it has responsibility.

Enforcement through court action is an LCA option for non-compliance with Section 12 of the Act by the owner/occupier of private land.

The plan will remain in force until 1 March 2011 and Council may review, vary or revoke this plan in accordance with the Act.

Further information about this plan can be obtained from NSC by phone (02) 6799 6702, fax (02) 6762 4301 or by mail to PO Box 261, Narrabri NSW 2390.

**Adopted:** 21 November 2006  
**Revision Date:** 1 March 2011

**Authorised:**  
Acting General Manager