



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.