



Inverell Shire Council

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL UNIT

Please address all correspondence to the General Manager, Inverell Shire Council,
144 Otho Street, Inverell, NSW 2360 – Telephone 02 6728 8288 Fax 02 6728 8277
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Chilean Needle Grass

Chilean needle grass (*Nassella neesiana*) is regarded by many as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, and its economic and environmental impacts.



Chilean needle grass
Nassella neesiana

Spreading with the
wind across this
laneway near
Swanvale NSW

Photo LRT

31 DEC 2007

Chilean needle grass, named for its sharp, pointed seeds, is a perennial, tussocky grass. It is very hardy, and its capability to produce such large numbers of seeds ensures it will survive grazing, slashing and fires. The seeds are spread by wind, animals, floodwaters, vehicles and machinery. Chilean needle grass can produce 20,000 seeds per square metre!

EFFECT ON ANIMALS?

Intensive grazing is an effective means of control. However, stock, especially sheep, should not be exposed to Chilean needle grass when the grass approaches its mature, seeding stage. The sharp seeds penetrate the skin. Apart from the obvious injury and discomfort to the animals, the sharp seeds cause skins and

hides to be downgraded. The sharp seeds also cause problems for working dogs.

IDENTIFICATION

Chilean needle grass remains well camouflaged amongst other grasses for most of the year, until flowering and seeding commences in the spring. At this stage the lighter colour of the plant sets it apart from most other grasses. The characteristic angle of the seed head is a definite identification feature (photo, o/leaf).

Chilean needle grass is similar in appearance to other native spear grasses. Landholders really do need to see an actual Chilean needle grass plant to ensure they can identify it if it appears on their own property. More information on identification can be obtained from the Weeds CRC website or your local weeds officer.

LEGAL STATUS:

CHILEAN NEEDLE GRASS IS A CONTROL CLASS 4B NOXIOUS WEED:

The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled by conducting an on-going and effective treatment program to reduce plant numbers and to minimise the plant's negative impact on the land.

Boundaries and waterways must be kept free of the plant to prevent spread from the property. All reasonable measures are to be taken to ensure vehicles, machinery and livestock moved off the property are free of the plant. The plant must not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed.

MORE INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL WEEDS OFFICER:

Les Tanner 02 6728 8284 - mobile 0427 241 806

Phil Sutton 02 6728 8244 - 0418 446 068

OR check out Council's website on www.inverell.nsw.gov.au, Environmental Services section

CHILEAN NEEDLE GRASS (continued)

MORE INFORMATION:

Most of the information contained herein has been taken from a *Chilean Needle Grass Weed Management Guide* produced by the CRC for Weed Management (in conjunction with National Heritage Trust). Copies of the guide are available from the Weeds CRC (www.weeds.crc.org.au) or through Inverell Shire Council on 02 6728 8284.

CONTROL METHODS

Non-Chemical Options: Grazing management is a feasible option for controlling large areas of Chilean needle grass - pre seeding. The grass provides good feed during its early stages but is less palatable when it gets to the flowering stage. Intensive grazing regimes can be effective. But, grazing is not a recommended treatment option for small infestations because grazing will not contain the spread of the plant.



Converting an infested area to a well-worked cultivation paddock (where appropriate and permissible) is the only effective way to eradicate large areas of Chilean needle grass!

Chemical options for Chilean needle grass: According to NSW DPI's excellent booklet "*Noxious and Environmental Weed Control Handbook 3rd Edition*", there are two options. Both treatments are reasonably effective but the down side is that they also impact on desirable, competitive grass species...

Chemical options	Rate: Spot/Boom	Comments
Flupropanate 745 g/L eg Taskforce®	100-300 mL per 100 L of water. 1.5-3.0 L/ha	Boom application. Apply to actively growing plants.
Glyphosate 360 g/L Various trade names PLUS Flupropanate 745 g/L eg Taskforce®	150 mL glyphosate PLUS 200 mL flupropanate per 100 litres water	Spot spray application in spring and autumn. Spray until runoff. Full details see APVMA permit PER9792

IMPORTANT: USE OF PESTICIDES - ALWAYS READ THE LABEL

Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they are registered and must not be used in any other situation or in any manner contrary to the directions on the label. Never use a herbicide in any way contrary to the label recommendations.

DISCLAIMER: The information contained herein is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Inverell Shire Council or the user's independent adviser. (LRT 19/3/10)

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