

Pest alert

Declared Class 1

Chilean needle grass may be in your area.

Call Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23** if you see this pest:

- It invades native grasslands and pastures.
- It's a perennial, tussock-forming grass.
- It has a large and persistent soil seed bank.
- Pointy seeds have a long tail (awn).
- Early detection helps protect Queensland's agricultural industries and natural environment.



Photos courtesy of Chris Cooper, Mark Gardener and Donna Smithyman © State of Victoria, Department of Primary Industries

Chilean needle grass (*Nassella neesiana*)

Description

Chilean needle grass—named for its sharp, pointed seeds—is a perennial, tussock-forming grass, which grows in dense clumps up to 1 m tall. Seedlings grow quite slowly but have a very high survival rate.

Chilean needle grass is long-lived, very hardy and can produce flowers in its first season. Flowers and seeds are produced from September to February.

Seeds are 8–10 mm long, pale brown when mature, enclosed in 16–25 mm long purple bracts (glumes) and have a 60–90 mm long tail (awn), which is usually bent twice. Between the seed head and awn is a small raised crown (corona).

In addition to normal seeds, Chilean needle grass produces hidden seeds in the nodes and base of flowering stems.

Leaves are 30 cm long and 1–5 mm wide, flat and strongly ribbed on their upper surface. The edges are rough to touch.

Declaration details

Chilean needle grass is a Class 1 declared plant under Queensland legislation.

Class 1 pests established in Queensland are subject to eradication from the state. Landowners must take reasonable steps to keep land free of Class 1 pests. It is a serious offence to introduce, keep or supply a Class 1 pest without a permit issued by Biosecurity Queensland. Penalties of up to \$80 000 apply.

What should I do?

If you have seen this plant, please contact your local government office or Biosecurity Queensland on **13 25 23**.

Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland (call **13 25 23** or visit our website at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

