

Chilean needle grass

Nassella neesiana

Detect this pest plant before it becomes a problem

Why it's a problem:

Chilean needle grass spreads easily and causes destruction in many ways.

- Its sharp needle like tip can penetrate the skin and muscle of stock.
- It contaminates feed and wool, and reduces productive pasture grasses.
- Generally unpalatable to livestock and therefore reduces available grazing area.
- Spreads through water, wind, machinery, animals and contaminated soil and feed.

Appearance:

- A clumpy grass that grows up to one metre tall.
- Yellow to green leaves that grow 2–8 mm wide and are harsh to the touch.
- Large tufts shine in the light.
- Purple drooping seed heads that are bullet shaped and extremely sharp.

Location:

Farm land, grasslands, forest margins and wasteland. Currently it infests approximately 3,700 hectares of land in New Zealand, but has the potential to affect up to 15 million hectares nationwide.



Contact us:

If you see this plant on your property or need help to identify a plant in the Wellington Region, **contact us on 0800 496 734 or email pest.plants@gw.govt.nz.**

We help to support landowners with the management of this pest plants found in the Wellington Region.

Get more information:

- [Weedbusters](#) provides descriptions and images to help with pest identification.
- [Agpest](#) is an identification tool for pests, biology, impact and management for farmers and agricultural professionals.
- [iNaturatlist](#) is a sharing tool that contributes to biodiversity science for avid nature observers.
- Manaaki Whenua – [Landcare Research](#) provides information on weeds and biocontrol
- [Ministry for Primary Industries](#) (MPI) for information on protecting New Zealand from biological risk.
- Practice [biosecurity hygiene](#) to stop the spreading of pests.