African fountain grass has been widely planted as an ornamental in Australia and overseas. African fountain grass is a garden escapee and native to drier parts of northern and eastern Africa and south-western Asia. It is a highly invasive, fire-adapted coloniser that readily out-competes native plants. It increases the intensity and spread of fires, resulting in severe damage to native dry forest species. African fountain grass produces large numbers of wind-dispersed seeds—its spread could be rapid and almost impossible to prevent.

Legal requirements
African fountain grass is a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the Biosecurity Act 2014. It must not be given away, sold or released into the environment without a permit. Under this Act everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants and animals under their control.
Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants and animals in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on certain species. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.

**Description**

African fountain grass is an erect, densely-tufted perennial that grows to 1 m tall. Leaf blades are linear, convolute, folded or flat and mostly 8–30 cm long. The florescence (seed head) is a pink, feathery spike, 10–25 cm long and 1.2–1.6 cm wide. It is a perennial plant that may live for up to 20 years. Flowering occurs over a prolonged period from spring through summer. Evidence from Hawaii, where it is also weed, suggests that seeds may survive for more than six years in the soil seed bank. Most seeds germinate in late spring through to early summer.

**Life cycle**

Most seeds germinate in late spring through to early summer. Evidence from Hawaii, where it is also weed, suggests that seeds may survive for more than six years in the soil seed bank.

**Methods of spread**

African fountain grass is mainly spread by people for ornamental planting. The seed is dispersed by the wind, flowing water and seeds attached to fur and vehicles.

**Control**

**Managing African fountain grass**

The GBO requires a person to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks posed by African fountain grass. This factsheet provides information and some options for controlling African fountain grass. The removal of large areas of African fountain grass may required revegetation of the cleared and this is best pre-planned to ensure that other weeds then do not gain a foothold in the disturbed area and include mulching to keep weeds down.

**Manual control**

Seedlings and smaller plants or small infestations can be hand-pulled, chipped out, bagged, composted or disposed of at the local garbage dump. Wear gloves as the leaves and seed heads can cause skin irritation.

**Herbicide control**

Herbicide control, such as foliar spray, may be required for larger infestations of African fountain grass.

Before using any herbicide always read the label carefully. All herbicides must be applied strictly in accordance with the directions on the label or the details, conditions and limitations stated in an APVMA permit. If the addition of a wetting agent is recommended, always use a commercial wetting agent or surfactant as per its label instructions.

Some herbicides permitted for African fountain grass control have withholding periods and significant ongoing management requirements in grazing and dairying situations. All land managers that have or may have dairy or beef cattle on their property at any stage in the future should carefully consider these requirements when determining the suitability of these herbicides for use on their property.

Details of herbicides for the control of African fountain grass are listed in Table 1.

**Further information**

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.
Table 1. Herbicides for the control of African fountain grass

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Application method</th>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands, agricultural areas prior to sowing, tree and vine crops, agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation area, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas, public service areas</td>
<td>Boom spray</td>
<td>Glyphosate 360 g/L</td>
<td>6 L per ha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands, agricultural areas prior to sowing, tree and vine crops, lucerne and agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation areas, margins of aquatic areas, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, domestic areas, commercial and industrial areas, turf, playing fields, golf courses, public service areas, areas surrounding agricultural buildings</td>
<td>Spot spraying</td>
<td>Glyphosate 360 g/L</td>
<td>1 L per 100 L water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands and agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation areas, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas</td>
<td>Spot spray</td>
<td>Flupropanate 745 g/L</td>
<td>300 mL per 100 L water</td>
<td>DO NOT spray near desirable susceptible trees DO NOT apply above 3 L per ha to steeply sloping sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands and agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation areas, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas, golf courses, public service areas, areas surrounding agricultural buildings</td>
<td>Seed set suppression</td>
<td>Flupropanate 745 g/L + Glyphosate 360 g/L</td>
<td>3 L per ha + 380–630 mL per ha</td>
<td>DO NOT reseed areas treated with flupropanate until at least 100 mm of leaching rain has fallen DO NOT use in channels, drains or watercourses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands and agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation areas, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas</td>
<td>Seed set suppression</td>
<td>Flupropanate 745 g/L + Glyphosate 360 g/L</td>
<td>300 mL + 335 mL per 100 L water</td>
<td>DO NOT reseed areas treated with flupropanate until at least 100 mm of leaching rain has fallen DO NOT use in channels, drains or watercourses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture, grazed woodlands and agricultural non-crop situations, wasteland, forest and conservation areas, roadsides and easements, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas, golf courses, public service areas, areas surrounding agricultural buildings</td>
<td>Seed set suppression</td>
<td>Flupropanate 745 g/L + Glyphosate 360 g/L</td>
<td>500 mL per 10 L water + 330 mL per 10 L water</td>
<td>DO NOT apply above 3 L per ha to steeply sloping sites Suppression of seed set is only successful if application is made several months before seed set</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Read APVMA permit PER9792 for rates for products containing glyphosate 450 g/L or glyphosate 540 g/L. Read carefully the section related to ‘other introduced tussock grasses’ as well as general instructions. The herbicides listed in Table 1 are permitted under APVMA PER9792 (expires 30 November 2020). Persons who wish to prepare for use and/or use products for the purposes specified in this permit must read or have read to them, the details and conditions of the permit. The permit is available on the APVMA website apvma.gov.au

Read the label carefully before use and always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label1

This fact sheet is developed with funding support from the Land Protection Fund.

Fact sheets are available from Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) service centres and our Customer Service Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at biosecurity.qld.gov.au to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this fact sheet should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, DAF does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.