

Chilean needle grass

Frequently asked questions

Why is Chilean needle grass (CNG) a problem?

CNG is unpalatable to stock when seeding (Nov – Feb) and displaces desirable pasture, reducing stock carrying capacity on infested properties. The sharp, needle like seeds penetrate skin and muscle, causing welfare issues for stock including painful abscesses and blindness. Once established it is difficult and expensive to contain.

What does CNG look like?



When is the best time to look for CNG?

From early November until early March when panicle seeds are present.

Where is CNG found?

CNG is widespread in Marlborough (2700ha) and present in Hawkes Bay (600ha) and Canterbury (370ha). It has the potential to infest 15 million ha of land nationwide, including half of the Canterbury region. It is mostly found in dry hill country, areas with light soils, heavily grazed pasture and bare ground.

How does CNG spread?

CNG has sharp seeds which will catch on anything that brushes past them – clothing and footwear, animals, vehicles, machinery and equipment. It can also be picked up and transported in soil, mud or contaminated feed. To prevent CNG spreading to your property, have a farm biosecurity plan in place.

What should I do if I find CNG?

If you think you've found CNG, or think you have purchased contaminated stock, seed or feed call Environment Canterbury (0800 EC INFO, 0800 324 636) immediately.

Where can I find more information?

See ecan.govt.nz or facebook.com/Chileanneedlegrass