Control options

The most common control method is hand grubbing to remove plants one at a time. This work is labour intensive and must be carried out systematically and thoroughly to make sure few plants survive to produce viable seed.

Other controls include spraying of herbicides by knapsacks (very labour intensive) and aerial broadcast spraying (recommended only for large, very dense infestations).

Several herbicides are available to control nassella tussock. Consider their use in relation to potential damage to desirable plant species.

Nassella tussock can grow almost anywhere. It prefers dry plains and hill country where conditions such as drought and open pasture allows it to establish.

Outside of this area, the deadline for removal is September 30.

In the highlighted area, land occupiers must remove nassella tussock by October 31.
Why is nassella tussock a problem?
› Unpalatable to stock
› Displaces desirable pasture, reducing pasture yield
› Difficult to identify and distinguish from other tussock grasses
› Costly to control once established, especially in steep hill country
› Seed is wind borne and can travel long distances
› A single plant can produce tens of thousands of seeds

Who is responsible for control?
Land occupiers are required to control nassella tussock annually before it seeds. They need to remove all nassella tussock plants by September 30, unless they are in the zone highlighted on the map overleaf, in which case the deadline for removal is October 31.

Nassella Tussock
(Nassella trichotoma)

PEST STATUS:
Sustained Control Programme

The objective of this programme is to contain nassella tussock to current population densities across Canterbury.

DID YOU KNOW...

Nassella tussock originated from South America and has been in New Zealand since 1860.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

› Flower heads are purple and carried on slender stalks from October to December. They are erect when young and droop over leaves when mature.
› Seeds are small, oval and purplish-brown with a bristle at the tip. Nassella tussock is most obvious to the untrained eye when flowers or seeds are present.
› Seeds are viable from early to mid November.
› Leaves are bright green and upright in small plants, becoming duller and more drooping as plants mature. Leaf tips are whitish during winter. Leaves feel rough when rubbed from tip to base.
› Roots are deep, fibrous and matted, making even small plants difficult to pull out. Stem bases are whitish and separate easily like shallots. When squeezed, the base feels very hard.