

# African feather grass

*Pennisetum macrourum*

Sustainable  
Options

Pest Plant Control

07

## Description

Perennial grass forming large clumps up to 1.5 m tall, like a small pampas.

**Leaves:** Up to 0.5 m long with prominent ribbing on the underside. The leaves feel rough when fingers are run down them. Leaf base has a dense fringe of needle-like hairs.

**Flower:** Long fluffy heads are up to 300 mm long with soft bristles. Flowers in summer.



## Origin

Native of southern Africa. Introduced to New Zealand as soil binding plant; later grown as garden plant.

## Where is it found?

African feather grass is able to grow almost anywhere but favours fairly dry sites and disturbed ground.

## How does it spread?

Seeds are spread by the wind but tend not to blow far. They seeds are also carried by water and in the hair of animals.

## Why is it a problem?

African feather grass grows to form dense stands which exclude other vegetation. It can become a major problem in pasture as stock avoid it.

African feather grass may also become a problem on roadsides, parks, forestry. It will survive regular mowing.

## Status as a pest plant in the Bay of Plenty

African feather grass is a Containment Pest Plant in the Bay of Plenty Regional Pest Management Plan.

Rules require land occupiers to destroy any African feather grass on their properties.

It is an offence under the Biosecurity Act to propagate, sell, distribute, release or spread african feather grass in the Bay of Plenty.

Assistance may be available from Bay of Plenty Regional Council by way of approved programmes.

**CAUTION:** When using herbicide please **READ THE LABEL** thoroughly to ensure that all instructions and safety requirements are followed.

**DISCLAIMER:** Information in this fact sheet regarding herbicides does not necessarily appear on the labels of the products concerned. Bay of Plenty Regional Council does not accept liability for any damage that may arise from the use of herbicides at non-standard rates. Mention of product trade names implies neither endorsement of those products nor criticism of similar products not mentioned.

## How do I get rid of it?

**Manual:** Grubbing or digging is ineffective because of extensive root system.

**Spraying:** Thorough coverage is important and repeat applications may be necessary.

Spraying can be done at any time of year but the plants are easiest to find when flowering in summer (December-January).

Spray with Haloxypop (e.g. Gallant NF, Agpro haloxypop).

With knapsack or CDAX unit use 150 ml per 10 L of water.

With handgun use 500 ml per 100 L of water.

Always add crop oil to the spray mix (e.g. Uptake). Use 50 ml per 10 L spray mix.

For more information contact a Bay of Plenty Regional Council Land Management Officer

