

# Treating Serrated Tussock before it sets seed

After a relatively warm winter we can expect strong pasture growth this Spring. The down side is that it will also be a good season for weeds. One of the key invasive weeds we need to be vigilant about is Serrated tussock. Serrated tussock is often described as Australia's worst agricultural weed as it reduces the productivity of grazing land more than any other weed. Serrated tussock crowds out more useful pastures species and individual plants can live for more than 20 years. They are prolific seed producers, the seed can remain viable for 14 years and the seed heads can travel up to 50kms on the wind. Stock will graze Serrated tussock when better feed is not available, however, the plant is largely indigestible and has almost no nutritional value.

Now's a good time to check your property for Serrated tussock. It has a soft lime green appearance at this time of year which helps it stand out amongst the native tussock grasses. Serrated tussock has a fine leaf (about 0.5mm in diameter) and will roll smoothly between the index finger and thumb whilst native tussocks feel as though they have flat edges. The leaves also feel rough when you run your fingers downwards due to fine serrations. Serrated tussock goes to seed during November and December producing seed heads that drape over to form a purplish 'horses mane'. You will be well rewarded for treating Serrated tussock on your property before the seed is allowed to mature.

New England Weeds Authority will be setting up Serrated tussock identification sites throughout the area to increase the public's ability to recognise this weed. Keep a look out for our roadside signs which highlight that Serrated tussock is known to exist in the area. These signs also provide some information to assist with identification. As always, if you suspect you have a invasive weed on your property contact your local weeds officer who can help you with identification and provide advice on a suitable management plan to control your weeds.



**For help with weed identification and management please contact us on 6770 3602,  
call into our office at 129 Rusden St Armidale or visit us at [www.newa.com.au](http://www.newa.com.au)**

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