

Taking Action

MEPAAW-NT-03A

Serrated Tussock, the Persistent Problem

GLENRAC Inc



Integrated monitoring and control of Serrated Tussock was a focus at the annual Farmer Update.

The issue

Serrated Tussock is an issue arising for local farmers in the Northern Tableland regions. Out competing preferred pasture species and reduced production for grazing animals, its prevalence has been exacerbated with current dry conditions. Refreshing and increasing knowledge and keeping the pest front of mind when checking paddocks is a constant need for the GLENRAC region to keep on top on new invasions. The aim of this event was to address the issue by promoting new technologies and best practice methods for identification and control.

The solution

The annual Farmer Update was held on the 17th of April 2019 with key speaker James Browning from the New England Weeds Authority. James informed attendees of the biosecurity responsibilities of the producer and those of the public when it comes to Weeds of Nation Significance. Regarded as one of the worst weeds, due to invasiveness, potential for spread and economic and environmental impacts, Serrated Tussock is everybody's business. Stuart provided a plethora of information to take home, as well as how to identify and the top integrated management practices to control Serrated Tussock, which included a demonstration of the Weed Wise app.

The impact

Farmers were shown the most notable ways to identify Serrated Tussock is the feel of the leaves and the hairless ligule. Though rough textured due to upward pointing barbs, when a Serrated Tussock leaf is rolled between ones fingers it should feel smooth like a needle. In other grasses the ligule is different by colour or the presence of hairs. The best mode of control is prevention. The second best is an integrated strategy that includes minimal soil disturbance, maintaining at least 80% ground cover in grazing systems, and destroying existing plants in manageable blocks. Participants showed a significant increase in knowledge after the Farmer Update. Of the 60 attendees, 64% of participants having some knowledge prior; we observed that 62% of participants had a lot or expert knowledge after the event. The change in confidence to manage Serrated Tussock was also significant. Before the event 64% of producers had some confidence, however after the event 59% had a lot of confidence.



Key facts

- Herbicide treatment alone, results in reinfestation from seed in soil, it is important to incorporate other control methods.
- Competition from more desirable plant species is key to prevention and control.
- Serrated Tussock can be acclimatised to many different environments, especially if bare soil is present.

Project Partners



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