

Taking Action

MEPAAW-NT-03B

Fighting Fireweed

GLENRAC Inc



GLENRAC hosted a weeds workshop to increase knowledge and skills for Fireweed management and prevention.

The issue

The aim of this workshop was to increase the knowledge and skills of producers concerning the impacts of Fireweed. Introducing producers and contractors to new technologies for the purpose of identification and monitoring had been recognized as a need in the community. Fireweed contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids that are toxic to stock and cause liver damage; young and hungry stock are at most risk of poisoning, therefore informing land managers of up to date control methods and technologies for most accurate identification will enable the prevention of Fireweed spreading in the GLENRAC area and ensure sound production on local properties.

The solution

The workshop was held on the afternoon of the 10th April 2019 at the Glen Innes Saleyards Canteen. Our guest speaker Mary O'Brien educated the crowd on the most effective modes of weed management and practical application methods. With an extensive background in local legalities and biosecurity for farmers she also outlined the best record keeping approaches to ensure the survival of the top weed management tactics. Our second speaker, James Browning, presented various biosecurity obligations and consequences for neglecting to manage weeds on your property, while Josh Ross of the New England Weeds Authority presented the workings and inside knowledge of the Weed Wise app. Fourteen participants attended the workshop from across the Glen Innes District, including primary producers and spraying contractors.

The impact

Before the event, the majority of participants (88%) had a little or some knowledge of fireweed. Immediately following the event, 78% of participants had a lot or expert knowledge. Producers can identify fireweed now most by the flower. The tap-rooted, daisy-like plant has 13 petals and 21 bracts forming the 'cup' under the flower. The confidence in participants before the event was relatively low (85% little or some confidence), following the event however, 86% of participants had a lot of confidence in their ability the undertake weed management. The best form of control for Fireweed is prevention; ensuring adequate groundcover and no bare earth with competitive pasture species.



Key facts

- Fireweed forms a persistent seed bank and will take over heavily grazed and neglected pastures.
- Contains alkaloids toxic to livestock that cause liver damage.
- Seed spread mostly by wind, but also on clothing, machinery and in contaminated livestock feed and wild animals.

Project Partners



The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative Program that enables the promotion of these case studies on the Gateway, is funded by the NSW Government and is supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW

