

# FACTSHEET

Buffel Grass – Collective term for *Cenchrus ciliaris*,  
*C. pennisetiformis*

## Buffel Grass Hygiene

Buffel grass has been recognised as one of the greatest pest threats to South Australia. It is often referred to as a transformer species meaning it has the ability to alter entire ecosystems through the alteration of fire regimes and through competition with native flora.

Following introduction into South Australia, buffel grass has invaded a significant portion of the states arid and semi-arid rangelands.

### Why is Hygiene Important?

Weeds reduce the quantity and quality of Australia's agricultural products. It is estimated that weeds cost Australian farmers around \$1.5 billion a year in weed control activities and a further \$2.5 billion a year in lost production.

Hygiene is important to protect agriculture as well as priority assets such as the Flinders Ranges, Great Victorian Desert and other sites of cultural and/or environmental significance.

Buffel grass is a prolific seeder. Due to the seeds small size and fine hairs it has the ability to spread long distances into remote areas via vehicles, earth moving and other machinery, stock, wind, water and other human activities.

### Preventing Weed Spread – What Can I Do?

- Ensure vehicles are clean before entering a new site.
- Stay on tracks.
- Avoid areas of high-risk or known buffel grass infestations. If unavoidable, plan a route from areas of low infestation to areas of high infestation.

### To Minimise Buffel Grass Spread by Animals and Other Products

- Quarantine any animals suspected of carrying buffel grass seed in a withholding paddock for a minimum of 7 days. Monitor the withholding paddock following summer rains and carry out control as necessary.
- Be sure to decontaminate vehicles used for transportation of stock or other products. If not possible, be sure to undertake regular surveillance and control in the loading and unloading paddocks following summer rains.
- Avoid enabling dogs to run freely though areas infested with buffel grass.
- Avoid stockpiling items close to buffel grass infestations.



Decontaminate graders and ground engaging machinery



Decontaminate the underside of vehicles

## Effective Decontamination Options

### Wash the Vehicle Down

- Use a hose, high pressure cleaner or spray tank and pump.
- Wash-down adjacent to areas where buffel grass needs to be contained. Choose sites where the land slopes back into an infested area or a site that can be monitored regularly and control of new germinations undertaken as required.
- Air blast hard-to-reach areas such as cavities and joints when the vehicle and contaminants are dry.
- Wash down all potential seed collection points and move the vehicle forward to ensure the entire tyre is clean.
- Sweep/vacuum inside the cab to remove contaminants.

### Physical Removal

Where no wash-down facilities are available be sure to physically remove all clods of mud and visible plant material in addition to cleaning the foot-well and cabin of the vehicle.

Use a brush or scraping implement to remove contaminants such as burrs and clods of mud from tyres, mud guards, grader blades, ledges and crevices that could contain contaminants.

## Tools You May Need For Vehicle Inspection and Decontamination

- Mirror.
- Tools to remove covers and guards.
- Torch.
- Probe or rod.
- Wire brush.
- High pressure washer/air hose.
- Scraping implement.
- Broom.
- PPE.
- Container for contaminated material.



Remove buffel grass seed from footwear, socks and clothing



Remove buffel grass seed from tools and camping equipment

**Also Consider the Following:**

- Clean footwear and remove weed seeds from socks and clothing.
- Clean the vehicle from the top down. Use the compressed air method prior to washing with water in dry conditions.
- Use detergents to assist removal of grease, dirt and mud, which may contain weed contaminants.
- Clean the undercarriage, springs and axles of trailers/caravans etc.
- Use the same site for cleaning and monitor regularly for germinations following summer rains.
- Visually inspect vehicles and camping equipment when leaving an area containing buffel grass.

**Vehicle Decontamination Checklist** (All types of vehicle)

**Cabin:**

- Carpet.
- Mats.
- Foot wells.
- Pedals.
- Controls.
- Seats.
- Air Condition filter.

- Around counter weight.
- Around the fuel tank.
- Axle housing.

**Wheels and Steering:**

- Treads.
- Inside and outside of rims.
- Wheel arches.
- Mud flaps.
- Brackets and brakes.
- Steering and suspension components.

**Underside and other parts:**

- Guards and belly plates.
- Chassis rails and brackets.
- Recesses.
- The swing-drive area.



Decontaminate wheels and steering

**Track Area:**

- Shoe.
- Links.
- Sprockets.
- Idler wheels.
- Track adjuster guards.
- Lubrication points.
- Inside the track area.

**Blades/Buckets, Arms/Booms:**

- Front and back of grader blades.
- Teeth.
- Pivot points.
- Turning circle.
- Hydraulic rods and hoses.
- Bucket.
- Wear plates.



Clean foot well and floor mats



Remove belly plates for inspection



Clean track area



Decontaminate front and back of grader blades and hydraulic rods



Decontaminate intercoolers and radiator fins



Decontaminate recesses and crevices on slashers

**Engine:**

- Intercooler.
- Chain cases.
- Radiator fins and grills.
- In between cooling cores.
- Engine mounts.
- Recesses.
- Engine bay.
- Air filter.
- Battery box.

**Attachments:**

- Tynes and rippers.
- Support frame.
- Hydraulic hoses.

**Slashers:**

- Care should be taken to thoroughly decontaminate all recesses and crevices on roadside slashers.
- Air blast prior to high pressure wash in dry conditions.

## When to Wash-down and Implement Hygiene Protocols

- If grading, slashing or using any ground engaging machinery.
- When moving stock.
- When receiving goods via rail or road train.
- Moving machinery out of a local area of operation.
- Moving machinery between properties.
- Using machinery along roadsides or along river banks.
- Using machinery to transport soil and quarry materials.
- Using controlled-access vehicle tracks.

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Contaminated material must be disposed of in a manner that ensures all weeds and seeds removed cannot spread or grow.

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## Disposal of Contaminated Material

- Incinerate or burn the plant material.
- Solar radiation can be used to kill the seed by placing in a black plastic bag and leaving in the sun for at least a month.
- Deep burial of at least 0.5m.

## For Further Information

For resources and state-wide buffel grass management visit Biosecurity SA – Buffel grass webpage:

[www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds\\_and\\_pest\\_animals/plant\\_pests\\_in\\_south\\_australia/weed\\_id/plant\\_id\\_notes/buffel\\_grass](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds_and_pest_animals/plant_pests_in_south_australia/weed_id/plant_id_notes/buffel_grass)

For regional buffel grass management and advice contact your local Natural Resources SA office:

[www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/home](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/home)

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