



Common pampas

## DESCRIPTION:

Both common pampas and purple pampas are erect, tall, clump-forming, perennial grasses. Both plants have coarse abrasive leaves and will grow up to three metres high.

The distinctive and erect flower stems of pampas grass can grow up to five metres high. Common pampas has fluffy white flowers, which appear in mid March, while purple pampas has purple flower heads that appear in late January and later fade to brown. Other than that, the plants share the same features and because both are troublesome plants they require the same control measures.

## OTHER NAMES:

Pampas, *Cortaderia*, cutty grass.

## VALUES AT RISK:

**Ecological values**, through the suppression of native plants along forest and streambank margins, in scrub and

secondary forests, and wetlands and coastal areas.

**Agricultural production**, particularly through the suppression of forestry seedlings in planted forests. The plant can also be a nuisance on roadside verges.

## STRATEGY RULES:

Unless the plant is being used as a hedge, for live fencing or as a shelterbelt, you must destroy all common or purple pampas on your land.

'Hedgerows and shelterbelts' are where a group (five or more) of pampas grass plants have been planted in a row for the purpose of providing shelter or screening. However, if you have such a hedgerow or shelterbelt you must maintain and trim the plant to *prevent* the plants from flowering. **When trimming, any flower heads should be collected and disposed of, preferably by burning.**

After 2012 you will be required to destroy all common or purple pampas on your land, even those plants being used for shelter belts.

**All pest plants are banned from being sold, propagated or distributed.**

## HOW TO DESTROY COMMON OR PURPLE PAMPAS:

Using herbicides to control pampas grass is effective if the correct timing and rates of application are used. Always follow the manufacturer's directions on the product label and avoid spraying if it will rain before the spray is rain-fast. The rain-fast times for herbicides vary widely by up to five hours so it pays to check, rather than waste spray.

### Guidance on the use of Glyphosate

- Apply glyphosate to actively growing plants.
- If broadcast spraying – mix 9 L of glyphosate in 50 to 100 L of water per hectare.
- If using a handgun – mix 750 ml of glyphosate with 100 L of water.
- If using a knapsack – mix 75 ml of glyphosate with 10 L of water.
- Add a penetrant, (eg organo silicone such as *Boost* or *Pulse*) to increase the effectiveness of the spray.
- Spray plant foliage and stems from all sides to give complete and uniform coverage.
- Follow mixing instructions carefully as concentrations of glyphosate vary in the different formulations of this herbicide.
- This product must be under the control of an approved handler when applied onto or into water. Records of use must be kept when applied onto or into water.

### Guidance for using glyphosate powder (eg *Trounce Gorsekiller*)

- The best results for controlling common or purple pampas with glyphosate powder are achieved when the plant is actively growing, although it will still be effective all year round.
- Apply using a handgun.
- Mix 500 gm of glyphosate powder per 100 L of water along with a penetrant.
- Spray the plant to give complete and uniform coverage.
- This product must be under the control of an approved handler when applied onto or into water. Records of use must be kept when applied onto or into water.

For further advice or information about pest plant management contact:

### TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

Pest Plant Management Section  
Private Bag 713, Stratford  
Ph: 06 765 7127 or 0800 736 222  
Fax: 06 765 5097 [www.trc.govt.nz](http://www.trc.govt.nz)

## DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXOTIC PAMPAS AND NATIVE TOETOE?

Common and purple pampas should not be confused with the four native *Cortaderia* species (commonly referred to as toetoe). Toetoe is generally smaller, (no more than three metres tall when flowering) and the flowers, which are a creamy-yellow, 'droop' significantly from October to January. Toetoe also has a white waxy surface on the leaf base where the common and purple pampas have 'hairy' leaves. Toetoe leaves have distinct veins between the mid-rib and leaf edge. Pampas leaves have a conspicuous mid-rib but lack distinct veins between the mid-rib and leaf edge.

## GOOD ALTERNATIVE PLANTS FOR HEDGING AND SHELTERBELTS

While pampas hedges are being phased out, there are many other plant species that can be used for hedging and shelterbelts. The planting of shade trees or shelterbelts can improve farm production. Providing shelter can benefit animal health and planting native plants can enhance landscape values and biodiversity values on your farm. Flaxes, native toetoe and karo are hardy species that will grow in most conditions and will attract native birds as well as providing stock with shelter. For other ideas on what plants to plant, contact a land management officer at the Council or visit [www.trc.govt.nz](http://www.trc.govt.nz) or [www.taranakiplants.net.nz](http://www.taranakiplants.net.nz).



*Native toetoe (above) with waxy surface of leaf base, compared to exotic pampas grass (right).*



*Native toetoe (left) showing ridged leaf, compared to leaf of exotic pampas grass (above).*



*Native toetoe flower head (left), compared to the exotic pampas grass flower head (right). Note that pampas flowers can also droop when they get older, so don't rely on flower head alone - check the leaf base and leaf veins too.*

The Taranaki Regional Council accepts no responsibility for any error or omission in these pages, nor for the use or misuse of any herbicide product. Users must observe safe practice guidelines and any directions on the product label. If in doubt, contact the product supplier for advice

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