



Declared Plant Policy

This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.

espartillo (*Amelichloa brachychaeta*)

Espartillo is an unpalatable perennial tussock grass that superficially resembles some native *Austrostipa* species and may invade unsown pastures or native vegetation with a grassy understorey. It is not yet naturalised in South Australia.

Management Plan for Espartillo

Outcomes

- Pasture and native vegetation protected from degradation by unpalatable invasive grasses.

Objectives

- To prevent the establishment of espartillo as a naturalised species in South Australia.

Best Practice Implementation

- Surveillance for infestations as part of routine inspection by regional landscape boards and Green Adelaide.
- Any infestations found to be delimited, contained and destroyed.
- Movement of machinery or fodder from an infested property to be monitored to contain any dispersal.

Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

| Region | Actions |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Alinytjara Wilurara | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Eyre Peninsula | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Green Adelaide | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Hills and Fleurieu | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Kangaroo Island | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Limestone Coast | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Murraylands and Riverland | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| Northern and Yorke | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |
| South Australian Arid Lands | Prevent entry and sale, destroy if detected |

Declaration

To implement this policy, espartillo is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia so that movement of contaminated fodder or machinery can be prevented. Its entry to South Australia, movement or transport on a public road by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant, are prohibited. Landowners are required to notify their regional landscape board or Green Adelaide of infestations on their land to ensure that these are destroyed.

In all regions, land owners are required to destroy espartillo plants growing on their land. landscape boards and Green Adelaide are required to destroy plants on road reserves in their regions and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners.

Espartillo is declared in category 1 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its movement or sale can only be issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying espartillo on public roads, or bring them into the State. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying espartillo. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to espartillo throughout each of the regions noted below:

| Sections of Act | Region | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|
| | AW | EP | GA | HF | KI | LC | MR | NY | SAAL |
| 186(1) Prohibiting entry to area | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 190 Requiring notification of presence | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 192(1) Land owners to destroy the plant on their properties | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| 192(2) Land owners to control the plant on their properties | | | | | | | | | |
| 194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025, or in the event of espartillo becoming established as a weed in South Australia.

Weed Risk

Invasiveness

Espartillo disperses by two types of seeds. Aerial seeds produced abundantly in stalked panicles become attached to animals, clothing, and vehicles, or are blown by the wind. Cleistogenes are seeds concealed in leaf sheaths at the base of the plant, providing a

seedbank to enable rapid regrowth. Both types of seeds can be dispersed in contaminated produce, notably hay.

Impacts

Espartillo forms dense infestations in pasture, native grasslands and woodlands where it can exclude desirable species. It has only medium feed value to stock, and is not very palatable so tends to be allowed to increase as long as more palatable pasture species are present.

Potential distribution

May grow in grasslands, pastures and grassy woodlands on fertile soils. Espartillo is a weed in California, and climate matching suggests that the southern agricultural regions of South Australia are at risk.

Feasibility of Containment

Control costs

Permits exist for use of glyphosate, fluazifop and flupropanate for the control of espartillo. Herbicide control would be expensive and labour intensive, as these are non-selective controls and it would be necessary to repeat treatment over several years and search for remaining plants.

Persistence

Eradication of an incursion would be slowed by the long life of seeds in the soil and the difficulty of detecting all espartillo plants among other grasses.

Current distribution

Espartillo is absent from South Australia, but is naturalised in New South Wales and Tasmania.

State Level Risk Assessment

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

| Land use | Weed Risk | Feasibility of control | Response at State Level |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Grazing - southern | low 36 | very high 0 | monitor |
| Native vegetation | low 18 | very high 0 | monitor |

Considerations

Espartillo is very similar to broad-kernel espartillo (*Amelichloa caudata*), which is declared under the same provisions of the Act. It is native to Chile, Uruguay and Argentina.

Risk assessment indicates monitoring as a management action to detect and destroy any incursion of espartillo in the State. Due to its absence from the State and very high feasibility of control, espartillo is regarded as a State Alert Weed and a high priority surveillance target to increase the likelihood of early detection.

Synonymy

Amelichloa brachychaeta (Godr.) Arriaga & Barkworth, Sida 22: 147 (2006)

Basionym: *Stipa brachychaeta* Godr., Mém. Sect. Med. Acad. Sci. Montpellier 1: 450 (1853).

Nomenclatural synonyms:

Achnatherum brachychaetum (Godr.) Barkworth, Phytologia 74: 6 (1993).

Jarava brachychaeta (Godr.) Peñail., Gayana, Bot. 59: 30 (2002).

Taxonomic synonym:

Stipa amphicarpa Phil., Anales Mus. Nac. Santiago de Chile 1992: 11 (1892).

Other common names include Araucanian needlegrass and narrow-kernel espartillo.

References

Gardener, M. R. & B. M. Sindel (1998) The biology of *Nassella* and *Achnatherum* species naturalised in Australia and the implications for management on conservation lands. *Plant Protection Quarterly* 13: 76-79.

Hon David Speirs MP
Minister for Environment and Water

Date: 28 March 2021