



GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING RELEASE SITES FOR BIOCONTROL AGENTS



The Biological Control Of Weeds Book - Te Whakapau Taru: A New Zealand Guide

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Choose sites well in advance carefully considering the following criteria:

- The weed does not need to be eradicated or controlled within a short time frame.
- The landowner is co-operative, understands the concepts, and is committed to the project (a written agreement may be useful).
- The land is unlikely to be sold – new owners may have different priorities.
- The site is not intensively managed – heavy stocking, spraying, ploughing, etc can damage insect and fungus populations.
- The site has good access, especially if it is to be used as a nursery for later redistribution.
- The plants are healthy – control agents will grow and reproduce best if their food is nutritious.
- The site is not prone to fires, flooding, slipping, or other accidental disturbance.
- If the site is to be used as a nursery, then an isolated infestation is preferable as the agents will be more concentrated and easier to collect. Otherwise, a large infestation is better as it will allow the agents to disperse naturally.

- The site is warm and sheltered for insects – the higher the temperature, the faster cold-blooded insects can feed, move and reproduce.
- The site is sheltered, shaded from the sun and regularly wet from dew, fog or rainfall for fungi – fungi need humid conditions to infect new leaves.

For more detailed criteria refer to the information sheet on the species in question.

Biological control is not a suitable method for weed control at all sites. Biological control is most appropriate where alternative methods are not physically or economically possible or would cause unacceptable damage.

See How to release biocontrol agents in a way that facilitates assessment



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