



Planning a control strategy

Step-by-step planning

1. Set goals
2. Prioritise
3. Prepare a plan
4. Record your progress

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Section 3

Step-by-step planning



Successful lantana control in pasture, Giru, Qld.



Lantana control carried out in flatter pastured areas first, Central Tilba, NSW.

Hellen Haapakoski

Graham Harding, courtesy of Eurobodalla Shire Council

Step-by-step planning

1. Set goals

Control and proper follow-up carried out effectively in smaller areas is better than large-scale one-off treatments that are difficult to follow up. Establish clear and realistic goals before deciding on a particular control strategy.

For example, you might aim to:

- restore a site by completely removing a new or small infestation
- restore a heavily infested site gradually by removing sections of the infestation over time
- prevent an infestation from spreading.

'Start small. Get scattered infestations, and then come back and do it again. Don't push it all over at once and forget about it. Do only as much as you know you can control for the next couple of years.'

(Landholder, Marlborough, Qld)

'Be clear about your objectives. High-value pasture land is different to heavily forested steep country, and what you might want to achieve for that. If you are managing for conservation, you'll try different tactics and practices. In grazing land, which areas are worth dealing with first? Make a management plan outlining the steps. Planning is the key—and flexibility to take advantage of opportunities.'

(Landholder, Crows Nest, Qld)

'Our weed management is ongoing. We are gradually freeing areas of weed, with minimal disturbance. Our aim is to create the most weed-free environment possible over the next 10 to 15 years.'

(Landholder, Giru, Qld)

2. Prioritise

Prioritise areas for control where success is most likely, such as small infestations that can be removed completely and new infestations that have not yet produced seed. Areas of high value for production or conservation should also receive high priority. A map of the site or property marked for areas that have been identified and prioritised for control can be a useful tool for planning.

Early intervention and prevention are important to reduce the need for control in the future. Contain large infestations and prevent their spread by securing un-infested areas, and develop strategies to prevent smaller and scattered infestations from increasing in size and density.

Treatment of large infestations should always begin at the edges and other sparse areas and work towards the denser parts.

3. Prepare a plan

In all cases, planning for the control of lantana should include initial and follow-up treatment, revegetation and monitoring over a number of years.

Initial control

The size and density of the infestation will determine whether initial control treatments are needed to create access or reduce the mass of the plants. Consult sections 1 and 2 for more information.

Follow-up control

Follow-up control is essential. Be sure to plan for the time and resources it will require.

Regrowth is likely when lantana is slashed, burned, sprayed, pushed, trampled, or affected by frost or biological control agents. Even on sites where the plants have been grubbed out whole, follow-up control, revegetation and extended monitoring for new seedlings will be necessary.



Before lantana control, Nightcap National Park, NSW.



After lantana control, Nightcap National Park, NSW.

Revegetation

Revegetation with native or pasture species immediately after control is essential. In natural ecosystems, native vegetation may regenerate naturally; however active replanting may be necessary where the native seed bank has been depleted.

Follow-up is likely to still be necessary for some time. (see 'Follow-up and revegetation' in section 3 and 'Pastures and grazing lands' in section 1).

Monitoring

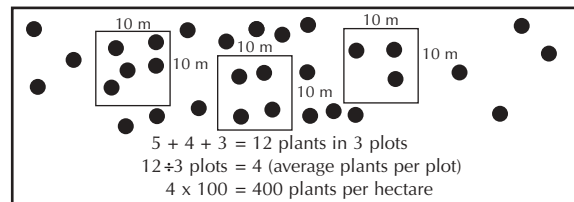
Monitoring for new seedlings will reduce the likelihood of re-infestation. It should be carried out in areas where lantana has been controlled or removed, and in un-infested areas. Give particular attention to fences and trees where birds roost (as bird droppings are an important vector of spread).



Work across boundaries, Atherton, Qld.

4. Record your progress

Recording progress and monitoring the success of control over time can be done with a diary or calendar, a map of the property or site, and/or 'before and after' photographs. Also useful is keeping a record of the cost of different methods for comparison. Measure the density of the infestation over time: plants per hectare can be calculated by averaging the number of plants or lantana clumps over three areas of 10 m x 10 m, and then multiplying the result by 100.



How to calculate density.

Tips

- Choose methods of control that minimise disturbance to soil and desirable vegetation. Minimise disturbance elsewhere by using existing roads and tracks.
- Inform yourself about the legal requirements associated with lantana control around waterways and riparian areas and on steep land, and for the protection of native flora and fauna (see 'Legal and safety requirements' in section 3).
- Combine control efforts with neighbours and work across boundaries.
- Carry out control of other weeds at the same time.
- Identify the cause of infestation by lantana. Weeds are often a symptom of other problems, such as disturbance to soil and native vegetation by humans, inappropriate burning, overgrazing and clearing.
- Be flexible and able to adapt to circumstances such as drought, fire bans, cost blow-outs or difficult access to infestations.
- Integrate strategies for controlling lantana with broader plans. Landholders in some states and local government areas are required to develop property management plans. Other pest management plans operate at local, catchment or regional levels, and can give further guidance for the property-level planning.