



Cogongrass

Imperata cylindrica

- Also known as Japanese blood grass
- Perennial rhizomatous grass
- Aggressive weed of forest, roadsides, disturbed areas, and a wide variety of growing conditions
- Highly flammable and fire tolerant
- Spreads by roots and seeds

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Suggested Control Methods for Cogongrass

Chemical Control

Herbicides are the most effective method for suppressing cogongrass, specifically those containing the following active ingredients:

Glyphosate: Best for areas where desirable trees are present, as it has no soil residual activity and is absorbed only through green leaves.

Imazapyr: Generally more effective than glyphosate but has significant soil residual activity and can kill hardwood trees through root absorption.

Application Timing: The optimal window is **late summer to early fall** (August through October), about a month before the first frost, as the plant moves energy into the roots during this time.

Mechanical and Physical Methods

These methods are rarely successful alone and should be integrated with herbicides.

Deep Tillage: Repeated tillage to a depth of at least 6 inches can exhaust energy reserves in newer patches. It must be repeated every 6–8 weeks during a growing season; infrequent tillage may actually spread the plant by fragmenting rhizomes.

Mowing and Burning: These remove above-ground biomass but do not kill the rhizomes. Burning can be used 6 weeks before herbicide application to clear thatch and promote new growth, which absorbs chemicals more effectively.

Manual Removal: For very small infestations, hand-digging can work if every rhizome fragment is removed and destroyed.

Cultural Control and Rehabilitation

Establish Competition: Planting fast-growing native species or competitive non-invasive grasses after herbicide treatments can help shade out remaining cogongrass and prevent re-establishment.

Prevention and Sanitation: This is the most critical step. Thoroughly clean all equipment before leaving an infested site to prevent spreading rhizome fragments to new areas.