



What to do

If you suspect you have found cogongrass, please contact Clemson University Department of Plant Industry or your local Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service office.

Call 864-646-2140 to report cogongrass.

Volunteers from across the state survey for cogongrass each year. You can learn more about cogongrass identification, sign-up to volunteer and register for the free training by clicking on Cogongrass Survey on our website:

www.clemson.edu/invasives



Who we are. What we do.

The Department of Plant Industry, a part of Regulatory Services in Clemson University's Public Service and Agriculture, helps prevent the introduction of new plant pests into South Carolina as well as the spread of existing plant pests to non-infested areas.

Plant pest surveys, inspections, quarantines, control and eradication programs are among the tools used to safeguard the state's agricultural and natural resources.

We help horticultural businesses - such as nurseries, greenhouse growers, transplant growers and turf grass producers - as well as farmers, agricultural industries and South Carolina consumers in shipping plant material intrastate, interstate and internationally.

Inspections and certification services help ensure that plants are pest-free, which is essential for movement of plant material to other states and foreign countries.

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511 Westinghouse Rd.
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Cogongrass Identification Guide



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What is Cogongrass?

Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) is an invasive weed that can choke out even the most hardy native plants. The Asian native grass is a federally regulated noxious invasive weed, and is considered one of the worst weeds in the world.

Cogongrass can easily displace native plants that are used by birds, animals and insects for forage and shelter. The weed also poses a threat as a fire hazard. Cogongrass burns very hot and will burn beneficial plants commonly managed with fire.

When cogongrass is detected in South Carolina, the Department of Plant Industry assists property owners in determining appropriate eradication methods. DPI monitors all known cogongrass sites to prevent further spread.



How is it identified?

You can tell cogongrass apart from other weeds in one of three ways: by its flower, its leaf or its rhizome, the underground stem at its base from which its roots emerge.

It usually flowers during late April and the month of May, although mowing or chemical treatment may prompt the plant to flower at other times. The flowers usually have a light maroon color before they open.

The cogongrass leaf measures about one-half to three-quarters of an inch wide and usually has a conspicuous, offset midrib. This rib is sometimes white on older plants.

Cogongrass forms dense mats of sharply pointed underground rhizomes. The rhizomes are segmented and hard. While the sharp rhizome is a great diagnostic characteristic, please **DO NOT** dig up any suspect grass. One segment of a rhizome can start a new plant.

Cogongrass grows from a crown and is not a branching grass. It can grow as tall as five feet.



Cultivars: Japanese Bloodgrass and Red Baron

Several red cultivars of cogongrass may be found for sale in garden centers and on the Internet. These cultivars are illegal in South Carolina, as in most states. They are invasive and have been known to revert to the green wildtype.

