

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING RELEASE SITES FOR BIOCONTROL AGENTS

Choose release 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 land owner 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 populations.
- The site has good access, especially if it is to be used as a nursery for later redistribution.
- The site is warm and sheltered – the higher the temperature the faster cold-blooded insects can feed, move and reproduce.
- 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.



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

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

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.

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