

Weeds + Plant Information - Foothills County Div. 4 Councillor Suzanne Oel

Identify Noxious and Prohibited Weeds: Did you know that invasive plants (aka weeds) can threaten biodiversity, ecological health, agricultural production and human and animal health? Foothills County Agricultural Service Board is responsible for enforcing the “Alberta Weed Control Act” both on County property and private land within the County.

Regulated weeds in Alberta are designated as Noxious or Prohibited Noxious. Noxious weeds are introduced plant species that are found in Alberta but need to be controlled to limit their spread. As a landowner you are responsible for controlling Noxious weeds, meaning the plant must be prevented from growing and spreading. Prohibited Noxious weeds are species that are not yet found in Alberta or found in small, localized areas. As a landowner you are required to destroy Prohibited Noxious weeds.

What’s showing up in the County: Invasive plants displace desirable native and agronomic plants by competing with them for nutrients, water and sunlight. Some can inhibit the growth of nearby plants by producing chemicals in their roots and tissues (allelopathy). Others are poisonous to livestock, pets and humans or cause skin irritation and burns. Weeds present in Foothills County include Spotted Knapweed (prohibited noxious), Wild Caraway (locally noxious), and these noxious plants: Hoary Cress, Scentless Chamomile, Leafy Spurge, Common Burdock, Yellow Toadflax, Canada Thistle, Oxeye Daisy, and Field Scabious. More details can be found here:

<https://www.foothillscountyab.ca/services/agriculture/weed-grass-control>

Weed Inspections and Notices: Foothills County employs an Agricultural Services Department and conducts a weed control program. County-appointed Weed Inspectors are granted the authority under the Weed Control Act to enter land at a reasonable time. If an inspector finds regulated weeds on your property you will be issued a Weed Notice, which will specify control measures that must be completed within a timeframe stated on the notice. If you require assistance in the identification or control of weeds, please contact the County’s Agricultural Fieldman at 403-603-5423.

Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC): For photos and detailed information about invasive plants and other creatures, with suggestions on how to manage, download PDFs on each type of invasive species, here:

<https://abinvasives.ca/invasive-species/>

Be PlantWise: Stop the spread of invasive plants:

- Read the “Grow Me Instead” brochure to help you choose only non-invasive plants: <https://abinvasives.ca/take-action/#be-plant-wise-grow-me-instead>
- Be suspicious of exotic plants, bulbs, and seeds promoted as fast spreaders, vigorous self-seeders, or drought resistant.
- Check reliable sources of information before choosing a plant to grow. Review AISC’s invasive species fact sheets.
- Purchase plants that are properly labelled and you know exactly what they are.
- Avoid using wildflower mixes, as they often contain invasive species seeds.
- Always check the ingredients when selecting birdseed, as many contain invasive plants. Consider creating your own seed mixes to be sure of the seed ingredients.
- Remove and replace invasive plants and encourage other people to be PlantWise.
- Properly dispose of invasive plants.

Weed Control Act: This Alberta Law enables the declaration of noxious or prohibited noxious weeds that present significant economic, social or ecological risks. It describes the duties and powers of individuals, local authorities, municipalities, and the Crown, related to the prevention, control, and destruction of weeds. Find the Alberta Weed Control Act here: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/w05p1>