



# Certified Noxious Weed Free Program

Guide A-145

Michelle Cattaneo, Jamshid Ashigh, and Tracey Carrillo<sup>1</sup>

Cooperative Extension Service • College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

## *Frequently Asked Questions About Buying and Producing Certified Noxious Weed Free Products in New Mexico*

### **What does “certified noxious weed free” mean?**

Certified Noxious Weed Free (CNWF) products have been inspected by New Mexico State University Seed Certification (NMSUSC) trained inspectors prior to harvesting or distribution of the products. Only products found to be free of weed species listed on the North American Noxious Weed list and the New Mexico Noxious Weed list can be certified.

### **What is the purpose of a Certified Noxious Weed Free program?**

Noxious weed-infested products, such as hay, mulches, erosion control materials, and gravel, may facilitate the introduction or spread of noxious weed species in an area. Therefore, a CNWF program is designed to promote healthy vegetative communities in roadsides, construction sites, restoration projects, agricultural fields, and open rangelands by providing certified products that are unlikely to cause noxious weed infestations, which can help prevent costly weed management actions in the future. Furthermore, as federal and state land management agencies begin to adopt noxious weed free polices, the demand for certified products will likely increase.

### **What can be certified?**

Products that can be certified through the CNWF Program are forages, mulches, erosion control materials, and gravel pits. Products certified through this program meet minimum acceptable standards provided by the North American Weed Management Association.

In order to be certified, products like alfalfa hay and straw must be inspected at each cutting by contacting NMSUSC 10 days prior to harvest. Site/facility inspections for mulches, erosion control materials, and gravel pits are required annually or periodically for certification.

### **Is this program mandatory for producers?**

No, this program is not a mandatory program for producers. Requests and inspections are made solely on a voluntary basis.

### **What documents are required to get started?**

To request an inspection, the required documents are available on the NMSUSC website at <http://seedcertification.nmsu.edu/>, and can be emailed to [seedcert@nmsu.edu](mailto:seedcert@nmsu.edu). If you do not have internet access, forms can be obtained by sending a request to NMSU Seed Certification, Leyendecker Research Center, P.O. Box 30003, MSC 3LEY, Las Cruces, NM 88003-8003; forms can be submitted to this address or faxed to (575) 646-8137.

### **What are the fees for inspection?**

Please see our website for a current list of fees associated with the certification process: <http://seedcertification.nmsu.edu/>.

### **What should I expect for the inspection?**

When requesting an inspection, be prepared to have an inspector arrive and assess your fields and/or operating facility for the presence of plant species listed on the North American and New Mexico Noxious Weed lists. For a forage inspection, the inspector will be using various inspection patterns depending on the field shape and size. If requesting

<sup>1</sup>Respectively, Technician III, NMSU Seed Certification, Leyendecker Plant Science Research Center; Extension Weed Specialist/Assistant Professor, Department of Extension Plant Sciences; and Assistant Director, Campus Farm Operations, Leyendecker Plant Science Research Center, all of New Mexico State University.

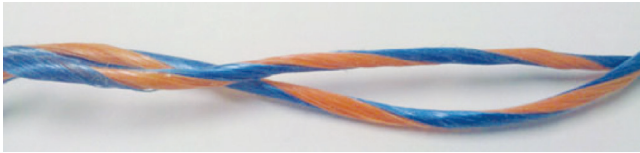


Figure 1. Special twine attached to certified noxious weed free products, usually hay/straw.



Figure 2. Sample certified noxious weed free label.

a site inspection for mulches, erosion control materials, or gravel pits, the inspector will be inspecting all areas of the site to ensure that no noxious plant species are present.

After the forage or site inspection is completed, the inspector will provide you with a copy of the Inspection Certificate. Transit Certificates are also offered for out-of-state shipping of the certified products. The special twine (Figure 1) and/or labels (Figure 2) provided at the time of inspection are considered, in most cases, the proof of certification of the products within the state. At least one strand of the special twine must be placed on each bale of certified hay/straw.

### Where can I find a list of producers?

Our website has a list of producers who participate in the program. Contact information can be found at <http://seedcertification.nmsu.edu/>.

### What does certification NOT guarantee?

- It does not guarantee a complete absence of noxious weeds. It only certifies that the inspector made a reasonable and prudent visual inspection and did not find any noxious weed species.
- It does not certify quality, protein content, maturity, or safety of the product.
- It does not mean that there is an absence of non-noxious weeds in the product. The inspector may note on the inspection certificate other factors, such as non-noxious weeds.
- Certification under these rules does not qualify a commodity for export from the United States.

### What weeds are not acceptable?

Inspectors from NMSUSC check for the weed species listed in two lists: North American Noxious Weed list, and New Mexico Noxious Weed list. Below is the New Mexico Noxious Weed list.

#### Class A Species are currently not in NM or have limited distribution:

Alfombrilla	<i>Drymaria arenariodes</i>
Black henbane*	<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>
Camelthorn	<i>Alhagi psuedalhagi</i>
Canada thistle*	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Dalmatian toadflax*	<i>Linaria dalmatia</i>
Diffuse knapweed*	<i>Centaurea diffusa</i>
Dyer's woad*	<i>Isatis tinctoria</i>
Eurasian watermilfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>
Giant salvinia	<i>Salvinia molesta</i>
Hoary cress*	<i>Cardaria</i> spp.
Hydrilla	<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>
Leafy spurge*	<i>Euphorbia esula</i>
Oxeye daisy*	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Parrotfeather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>
Purple loosestrife*	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>
Purple starthistle	<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>
Ravenna grass	<i>Saccharum ravennae</i>
Scotch thistle*	<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>
Spotted knapweed*	<i>Centaurea biebersteinii</i>
Yellow starthistle*	<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>
Yellow toadflax*	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>

#### Class B Species are limited to portions of the state:

African rue	<i>Peganum harmala</i>
Chicory	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>
Halogeton	<i>Halogeton glomeratus</i>
Malta starthistle	<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>
Musk thistle*	<i>Carduus nutans</i>
Perennial pepperweed*	<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>
Poison hemlock*	<i>Conium maculatum</i>
Russian knapweed*	<i>Acroptilon repens</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>

#### Class C Species are widespread in the state:

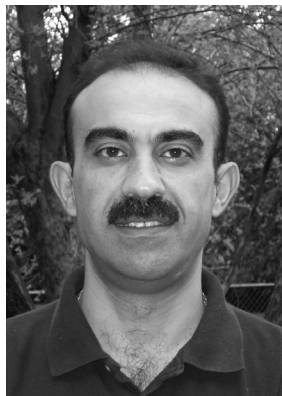
Bull thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Cheatgrass	<i>Bromus tectorum</i>
Jointed goatgrass*	<i>Aegilops cylindrica</i>
Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>
Saltcedar	<i>Tamarix</i> spp.
Siberian elm	<i>Ulmus pumila</i>

Please note that only the species marked with an asterisk (\*) are cross-referenced in the North American Noxious Weed list. Both the North American and New Mexico Noxious Weed lists can be viewed at <http://seedcertification.nmsu.edu/>.

**If you have questions about the CNWF Program, please contact:**

NMSU Seed Certification  
Leyendecker Research Center  
MSC 3LEY  
P.O. Box 30003  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8003

Phone: (575) 646-4125  
Fax: (575) 646-8137  
Email: [seedcert@nmsu.edu](mailto:seedcert@nmsu.edu)  
Website: <http://seedcertification.nmsu.edu/>



***Jamshid Ashigh** is Extension Weed Specialist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Extension Plant Sciences at New Mexico State University. He received his B.Sc. in botany and his Ph.D. in weed science from University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. His program focuses on integrated weed management systems in field and horticultural crops.*

---

Contents of publications may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. For permission to use publications for other purposes, contact [pubs@nmsu.edu](mailto:pubs@nmsu.edu) or the authors listed on the publication.

New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.