

## WEED FILE: **HOLLY**

ISSUED: APRIL 2018



Holly – *Ilex aquifolium*  
Chinese Holly – *Ilex cornuta*

### INTRODUCTION

Bringing back memories of childhood Christmas's Holly wouldn't be considered by most to be a weed but as it encroaches more and more onto farmland it is becoming increasing more of a problem especially in some areas.

### DESCRIPTION

Pretty easy to recognise with glossy, prickly leaves and the traditional red berries, this evergreen can grow up to 12 meters

Holly is dioecious, which means the male and female flowers are on separate plants. The leaves are 5-8cm long with large prominent prickles. Berries are bright red and 6-10mm in diameter.

Chinese Holly has leaves that are almost rectangular in shape and is much less common.

### HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION

Originating in Europe, Northwest Africa and Western Asia Holly is traditionally found in scrubland, hedgerows and forest, Holly is easily dispersed by birds and is starting to encroach on bordering farmland.

In the North Island Holly can be found in Auckland, Waikato, Horowhenua and the Hutt Valley in Wellington. In the South Island Holly is common in lowland Canterbury including Christchurch, Dunedin and the Otago peninsula, Nelson and inland from Kaikoura.



### HERBICIDE CONTROL

Sadly there is no easy spray-programme for getting rid of Holly. Like most woody or "tree-like" weeds control is quite labour intensive.

#### Manual Control

At any time of the year pull out smaller plants and seedling by hand.

#### Stump Swabbing

Anytime of the year you can cut the stem close to the ground and remove the cut foliage and stems for disposal at a refuse transfer station. The fresh-cut stump must be liberally swabbed with one of the following:

- **Grassmate** at 200ml/L of water.
- **Glyphosate 360** at 200ml/L of water.

#### Bore & Fill

In Spring and summer you can bore holes around the base of the trunk about 5-10cm apart and put into the holes about 1.5-2ml of undiluted **Grassmate**

#### Frilling

Using a sharp axe or chisel make deep cuts into the sapwood about every 5cm. Treat with undiluted **Grassmate** or **Glyphosate**

**IMPORTANT:** If you are hand-pulling smaller plants make sure you are confident that you have got all the roots as these will re-sprout.