

# **STOP** Fountain grass from becoming a problem on Molokai!



## **What is Fountain grass?**

Fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*) is an invasive perennial bunch grass with stems that grow up to 3 feet high. Its small, pink or purple flowers are grouped in bristly, upright clusters ranging from 6-15 inches in length. The fruits are small, dry and adorned with long showy bristles. Leaves are gray to green in color with a rough texture.

## **Why is it an extreme threat?**

Fountain grass is on the Hawaii State Noxious Weed List, which makes it illegal to grow or transport inter-island. Fountain grass is a poor pasture species and considered to be a serious weed in many dry habitats. It is a highly aggressive, habitat modifying, fire adapted species that readily out competes native plants and re-establishes itself quickly after burning. Fountain grass alters the natural fire regimes in environments it invades by raising fuel loads, thus increasing the intensity and spread of fire. The increased fire activity can result in wildfires that threaten residential housing and damage native vegetation not accustomed to extreme burning. Seeds are spread by wind, water, animals and PEOPLE!

It has been found on the islands of Kauai, Oahu, Lanai, Maui, Molokai, and Hawaii; Oahu and Hawaii having major infestations. Resource managers on the island of Hawaii alone spend over \$500,000 a year controlling fountain grass. Fountain grass is not yet established on Molokai and we need your help to keep it that way. So far, it has been successfully removed from Molokai, Maui and Lanai.

## **What can you do to help?**

- 1). Be AWARE of Fountain grass.
- 2). Report any sightings of Fountain grass to the Molokai/Maui Invasive Species Committee (MoMISC).
- 3). DON'T BUY OR GROW IT!
- 4). DON'T bring it to Molokai from another island!

**If you think you have seen fountain grass call the MoMISC Hotline at 553-5236.  
MAHALO!**