

CHINCHILLA



Figure 1 - Chinchilla

Introduction

The chinchilla is a native of the Andes in South America and is a member of the rodent family, the same as rats, mice and guinea pigs. Chinchilla look like a cross between a squirrel and a rabbit and weigh about 600 g. They are nocturnal and eat grass, bark, fruit, roots and leaves and inhabit cool dry environments. They have an excellent jumping and climbing ability.

There are no feral populations of Chinchilla in the Southland region.

What is the problem?

Chinchilla have the potential for environmental impacts on native vegetation should feral populations establish in Southland. Chinchilla eat snow tussock (*Chinochloa* sp.) in their natural South American environment so they have a potential to affect native New Zealand tussock grasslands.

Pest Classification

Chinchilla is an **Exclusion** animal throughout the Southland region

Strategy Rules

1. No person shall possess Chinchilla in the Southland region without a permit from Environment Southland.
2. All male Chinchilla within Southland are required to be neutered.
3. No person shall possess, sell, offer for sale, propagate, transport or release any Chinchilla within the Southland region.
4. Any person possessing a Chinchilla shall keep the Chinchilla in a securely fastened cage at all times from which the Chinchilla is unable to escape.

Advice & Information

To find out more information contact:

Biosecurity Officer
Environment Southland
Private Bag 90116, Invercargill

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