

Alkaloid poppy production in NSW – becoming a grower

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Cultivation of alkaloid poppies for therapeutic purposes in NSW is a highly regulated activity.

Poppy growers must interact closely with their contracting processor and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and comply with strict licence conditions.

Any participant in poppy production who does not comply is risking the future of both the NSW and Australian poppy industry.

Overleaf is a simplified flowchart showing the process for growers wishing to cultivate poppies in NSW.

For simplicity, the flowchart assumes that all of the required conditions for poppy production are met (i.e. 'OK').

Questions and answers

How long will it take to assess my licence application?

NSW DPI will process licence applications within 2 months of receipt. This does not include any period when DPI is waiting for further information or evidence from the applicant.

What if my licence application is opposed?

If an application for cultivation or processing licence is opposed, the applicant can apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for a review of the decision.

A NCAT review must be requested within 28 days of notification of the decision. Licence application fees are not refundable.

When can I start cultivation?

Licensed growers cannot cultivate poppies until they have been granted a licence.

What is a risk management plan?

Both growers and processors must submit a plan outlining how they propose to deal with the risks relating to poppy production and comply with the conditions of their licence.

These plans must be approved by DPI before a licence is granted. Compliance with the plan will be monitored by DPI through audits prior to and at harvest. Plans must be kept current during the growing season and any updates are to be approved by DPI.

What happens if I don't comply with the conditions of the licence?

If any licensing conditions are not met, and depending on the reason for this:

- remedial action may be required
- a licence may be suspended, cancelled or not renewed
- individuals or companies may be prosecuted.

What fees apply to the poppy production process?

DPI fees apply to licence applications, and renewals as well as to audits during the growing season.

For a full list of applicable fees, please see the factsheet 'Poppy production in NSW – fees and charges'.

Please note that fees are not refundable.

What do I do if I suspect interference with my crop?

NSW Police will investigate any reports of criminal activity e.g. theft of poppy material. Reports are to be made by telephoning Triple Zero (000).

What happens to my licence if I don't have a contract in a future year?

A cultivation licence is valid for three years (only if a valid licence is current). The licence holder must apply for a renewal of the licence at least three months prior to the anniversary of their licence being issued.

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Figure 1. Application Process

PROCEDURE - General Overview of Alkaloid Poppy Process

