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**Invasions by alien plant species of the agro-pastoral ecotone in northern China:
species-specific and environmental determinants**

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Abstract The establishment, reproduction, dispersal, and distribution of alien plants are affected by various factors during the transition from being newly introduced in a habitat to being invasive. In the agro-pastoral ecotone of northern China, comprising farmlands and natural grasslands, the biological characteristics of alien plant species were the key intrinsic factors (propagation characteristics and competitive ability), followed by such extrinsic factors as human interference and environmental heterogeneity. Among biological characteristics, the life form may be an important

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