

Ailanthus altissima

Common name:

Tree of heaven.

Palatability to Livestock:

Occasionally eaten, at all stages.

Toxicity to Livestock:

Not toxic.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Domestic pets, and humans,

Poisonous Principle:

. Ailanthrin, querceline, saponins.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . In humans, a purgative.
- . Nausea, vomiting, weakness.
- . Skin and eye irritant.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Bark and seeds may be toxic,
- . Can cause contact dermatitis in humans,
- . Leaves hold some allelopathic substances,
- . Contaminated drinking water can cause dermatitis and gastritis.

Treatment;

See Vet or Doctor.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Sheep and goats feed on the branches that they can reach.
- . The parent tree suckers profusely.
- . Chemical control is effective but can be difficult, as infestations can consist of large trees.
- . Cultivation encourages massive regeneration of new suckers.
- . Try Picloram® or Metsulfuron® on foliage, or Triclopyr® on basal bark.

Comments:

- . Garden Plant gone feral,
- . An erect, deciduous tree or shrub, growing up to 25 metres high, producing many suckers.

- . Trunks have slightly rough brown bark.
- . It has a deep taproot, and shallow laterals, from which new stems are produced to form dense thickets.
- . Leaves are up to a metre long, alternate, and compound, composed of up to 20 pairs of dark green opposite leaflets, and a terminal leaflet, produced on new wood.
- . Leaves have an offensive smell if bruised.
- . Flowers are white or greenish, in terminal clusters about 60 cms long.
- . The tree flowers at about two years old; the male flowers produce a foul smell that attracts insects, about December and January.
- . Seeds are surrounded by a large wing, yellow-green changing to red, in late summer.
- . Reproduces by wind-blown seed, root suckers, and root fragments.
- . Leaf extracts contain allelopathic compounds which prevent other plants from growing.
- . Native of China, now found in Vic, NSW, Qld and WA.



Picture: *Ailanthus altissima* Wikipedia

Further Reading.

- . AGDEX 647 NSW Dept Ag.
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- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds in Aust 2001
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.
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- . Swarbrick and Skarratt. Bushweed 2 Database. 1997.