

Avena spp

Common name:

Wild oats,

Palatability to Livestock:

High.

Toxicity to Goats:

Nil, in favorable conditions.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Nil, in favorable conditions.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Nitrates.
- . Capable of poisoning stock under some circumstances (Everist).
- . Oat crops affected with “yellow dwarf” virus can cause problems, in autumn.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Nitrate poisoning,
Rapid breathing, rapid heart rate,
Blood becomes a chocolate colour,
- . Grass tetany ,(magnesium deficiency)
Excitability, muscle tremors,
- . Photosensitization, (unknown cause),
- . Smut fungus poisoning,

Health and Production Problems;

- . Grazing oats can cause problems, especially in cold, windy weather when cold stress becomes a factor.
- . Nitrate and nitrite poisoning.
- . Grass tetany, a magnesium imbalance.
- . Rickets and bone fragility,
(carotene – calcium – phosphorus imbalance.)
- . Photosensitization.

Treatment;

Be aware of potential stock problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Use goats.

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- . Chemical control.
- . Top-dressing with nitrogenous fertilizers increases the risk of toxic amounts of nitrate accumulating in the plant.

Comments:

- . An annual tufted grass growing up to 45 cms high.
- . Plants look similar to common oats, but the seed heads droop.
- . Leaves are bluish-green, with a soft hollow centre.
- . Germinates in autumn, and grows in winter.



Picture: *Avena spp*

Further Reading;

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
- . Huggins and Lucy.
Weeds of Southern Queensland. 1997.
- . Holmes, Plucknett, Pancho and Herberger.
World's Worst Weeds. 1977.
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants, Handbook.1983.