

Taxus baccata

Common name:

English yew,

Palatability to Livestock:

Not known to be eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

High risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to all farm animals, especially horses and children.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Cardiac glycosides, thevetin.
- . Taxine, an alkaloid that depresses cardiac action causing it to slow, then stop.
- . Hydrocyanic acid.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Trembling, excitement, staggering,
- . Difficulty in breathing,
- . Collapse, then death within minutes.
- . In humans, skin rash.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Most animals are just found dead.

Treatment;

- . Try activated charcoal immediately, plus atropine.
- . See Vet or Doctor.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Weed or prune into a disposable bag.
- . Do not feed to any livestock.

Comments:

- . Garden or park tree,
- . An evergreen shrub or small tree, slow growing, often kept in pots or used as hedges.

. Leaves are on short branches, leathery, short, narrow, with a prominent mid-rib, dark green, sometimes yellowish.

. Male plants have small, globular, pollen covered cones.

. Female plants have terminal, green, solitary buds on side shoots, flowering in spring.

. A red or yellow, fleshy, cup-shaped berry-like fruit on female plants, with a single brown seed.

. Native to northern Europe, an ornamental shrub.

. All parts except the fleshy red outer coating of fruits are very toxic. Toxicity depends on amount eaten.

. A skin irritant to humans.

. Livestock particularly horses, are vulnerable.



Picture *Taxus baccata*

Further Reading:

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia.1981.
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.