

Helleborus spp

Common name:

Christmas rose, Lenten rose,

Palatability to Livestock:

Not known to be eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

High risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to all livestock species.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Cardiac glycosides.
- . Narcotic properties.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Dark coloured diarrhoea, with blood and mucous,
- . Frequent urination,
- . Slow irregular heart beat,
- . Excess salivation,
- . Shortness of breath.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Death after several days.
- . Some species can cause dermatitis in humans.

Treatment;

- . Be aware of potential problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Garden plant.
- . Weed out into disposable bags.
- . Do not feed these garden clippings to livestock.

Comments:

- . Low growing, ornamental plants, and cultivated widely as garden specimens.
- . Winter to spring flowering.

- . There are several species both deciduous and ever-green, all perennial.
- . Leaves of various colours and shapes.
- . Flowers usually large and cup-shaped, in soft colours, often creamy with a reddish tinge.
- . Fruit is a pod, and seeds are dark brown.
- . Native to Europe and Asia Minor.
- . All parts, especially the roots, are very toxic, even when dry.
- . A skin irritant to humans.



Pictures: *Helleborus spp* , flower colours



Further Reading:

- . McBarron. Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons in NSW. 1976
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.
- . Simmonds. Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats.2000.
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997.