

Schinus spp

Common name:

Pepper tree, Pepperina,

Palatability to Livestock:

Not normally grazed, but eaten by goats.

Toxicity to Goats:

Not known to be toxic.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Reportedly toxic to poultry, pigs and calves.

Poisonous Principle:

Volatile resin.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Gastroenteritis, irritation of mucus membranes.
- . Dermatitis and hay fever, in humans.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Leaves and fruit may cause poisoning or death in poultry, pigs and possibly calves.
- . Children may have vomiting and diarrhoea after eating fruit.

Treatment;

Be aware of potential problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Use goats.
- . Control achieved by grazing management.

Comments:

- . Garden escapee. An evergreen tree, growing to about ten metres high.
- . Branches are slender and drooping, sap is aromatic.
- . Leaves are drooping and fern-like, divided, shiny, and aromatic if crushed.
- . Stemless leaflets are alternate and narrow, with margins smooth to toothed, pointed and shiny, resinous and aromatic when crushed.
- . Trunk is often twisted and drips with sap, rough grayish bark.

- . Flowers are greenish-white in small hanging clusters, throughout the year, male and female flowers are on separate plants.
- . Fruits are round shiny and firm, turning green to pink or bluish with a crusty skin.
- . Spread is by seeds or suckers. Germination is improved by passing through the gut of birds or other animals.
- . Mature trees are resistant to fire and drought.
- . The tree will resprout from lignotubers, trunk, and larger branches if damaged.
- . Berries are allogenic to other plants.
- . Native to N and S America, Mexico and Peru.
- . Tolerates drought, poor and sandy soil.
- . Invades riparian vegetation.



Picture: *Schinus spp* Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW.

Further Reading:

- . Blood. Environmental Weeds. Field Guide to SE Australia. CRC Weed Management Systems 2003
- . Covacevich, Davie and Pearn. Toxic Plants and Animals. 1987.
- . Cremer. Trees for Rural Australia. 1992
- . McBarron. Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons in NSW. 1976.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.