**Arbutus unedo**

**Common name:**
Irish Strawberry tree

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Moderate.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Moderate.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to all animal species.

**Poisonous Principle:**
 Probably arbutin, a glycide of hydroquinone.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Incoordination, wandering,
. Gastric pain.
. In man, affects the motor nerves, produces mental confusion, and permanent insanity.

*Health and Production Problems;*
. Animals may be just found dead.
. Fruit is usually unpalatable to humans, but if eaten in quantity, can be narcotic.
. No poisoning reported in Australia.
. Overseas, poisoning has been reported in goats, cattle, sheep and horses.

*Treatment;*
. Be aware of potential problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Be aware of potential risks.

**Comments:**
. Garden plant.
. A small to medium evergreen tree, growing to 10m high, by 10m spread.
. Leaves are alternate, oval, shiny dark green and leathery.
. Young stems are hairy, older stems have red flakey bark. The wood is very hard.
. Drooping clusters of bell-shaped, whitish, perfumed flowers are produced in autumn.

. Fruits from the previous year ripen at about the same time as the flowers open.
. Large, round, warty berries, ripen from green to deep orange, in autumn. Berries are not very palatable, and contain pulp and many small hard seeds.
. Spread by seed, with birds and foxes as the main vector.
. Large lignotubers persist after fire, and resprout quickly after rain.
. Native of Ireland and Mediterranean area.
. Found in SE areas of Australia.
. Tolerates hot dry summers and full sun.

*Further Reading;*
. Swarbrick and Skarratt.. Bushweed 2 Database. 1994

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