

## *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.