**Citrullus lanatus**

**Common name:**
Bitter melon, Wild melon

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Low palatability.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk toxicity.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to all grazing animals.

**Poisonous Principle:**
Unknown.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
Severe diarrhoea, in humans.

*Health and Production Problems;*
Dehydration and weight loss.

**Treatment;**
Be aware of potential stock problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Use goats.
. Repeated cultivation and herbicides.
. Hand pull and burn before fruits form.
. This is a declared “Noxious Weed” in Victoria and parts of Western Australia.

**Comments:**
. Rarely eaten by livestock.
. An annual, prostrate or climbing vine, up to three metres long.
. Reproduces by bird, animal or windblown seed.
. The leaves are deeply lobed, with short hairs on the lower surface.
. The fruit is fairly small, green mottled with white, and bitter to taste.
. Germinates in spring, rapidly developing a deep taproot.
. Produces vines in summer, flowers, and then dies off.
. Drought tolerant.
. The plant has a foetid odour when crushed, and otherwise, an unpleasant smell.
. It is rarely eaten by most livestock, except when ripe.
. Common on roadsides, and in cultivation, both on the coast and inland.

Picture: *Citrullus lanatus*

**Further Reading:**

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