**Crotolaria spp**

**Common name:**
Rattlepods

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Seldom eaten.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Moderate risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Toxic to horses, cattle, pigs, and to a lesser extent, sheep.

**Poisonous Principle:**
- Pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
- Sometimes chronic weight loss.
- Sometimes acute jaundice, with or without photosensitization.
- Sometimes sudden death, with no other signs.

*Health and Production Problems;*
- Chronic ingestion of this plant may lead to significant liver damage and subsequent reduced long term productivity.
- Chronically damaged livers in some ruminants are inclined to accumulate excessive amounts of copper, which can ultimately be released and kill the animal in the process.

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

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
- Do not feed garden clippings to any livestock.
- Variable control, as some species are ornamental, others are fodder plants, yet others are toxic.

**Comments:**
- Goats and sheep may tolerate many months of ingestion, but eventually risk being poisoned if the plant has been eaten in significant amounts for more than one season.
- Leaves are alternate.
- Growth habits are very varied, but all have pea shaped flowers, mostly yellow, with the keel petal forming a narrow beak.
- Of the 37 species native or naturalized in Australia, about 16 are toxic to livestock.
- The ripe seeds become loose in the pods, and rattle when shaken.
- Found in NSW, Queensland, and the NT.
- This species causes the widest range of tissue damage in domesticated animals, giving rise to liver damage, lung lesions, kidney lesions,

**Further Reading:**
- Simmonds, Holst and Bourke, Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000.

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