

Cynodon dactylon

Common name:

Couch

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate.

Toxicity to Goats:

Low risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Potentially toxic to sheep, cattle, horses and pigs.

Poisonous Principle:

Cyanogenetic glycosides, prussic acid, frequently after rain.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Fall down, and struggle to get up,
- . Shiver and shake,
- . Develop a rapid pulse,
- . Difficulty in breathing.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Death within hours, or recovery.

Treatment;

- . Be aware of potential stock problems.
- . Travelling stock are most at risk.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Grazing.
- . Herbicides. Try glyphosates.

Comments:

- . Ruminants, such as the goat, can generally tolerate ingested cyanogenetic glycosides, provided they do not eat large amounts in a short period.
- . A spreading, introduced, perennial grass with strong, creeping, fibrous roots, prostrate creeping stems that cover the ground surface.

- . Roots and stems develop at the nodes.
- . Mats are formed by tough scaly rhizomes, and long branching stolons.
- . Germinating from seed in summer-autumn.
- . Green leaves are in short tufts, up to 15 cms long, varying degrees of hairyness.
- . Flower heads have 2 – 6 spikes, formed like wheel spokes.
- . Seed heads of short spikes, 3-4 thin purplish arms, 3-5cms long at the end of long stem are tightly packed with small hairless seeds, and often have purple pollen sacs hanging from them.
- . Adapted to a wide range of soils, from sand to clay, acid or alkaline, under flood conditions, or drought.
- . Useful forage grass, and soil binder along stream beds.
- . Frost sensitive; not fire tolerant.
- . Rare for stock to be poisoned,



Picture: *Cynodon dactylon* Roundup

Further reading:

- . Everist . Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Schefe, and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995.
- . Huggins and Lucy. Weeds of Southern Qld 1997.
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000