

Ficus elastica

Common name:

Indian rubber plant, Fig,

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate.

Toxicity to Goats:

Unknown.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Unknown.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Photosensitiser, 8-methoxypsoralen,
- . Proteolytic enzyme, ficin.

Effects:

Signs and Symptoms:

- . In humans,
- . Reddening and blistering of skin similar to sunburn.
- . Irritant dermatitis.

Health and Production Problems:

- . None proven in livestock.

Treatment:

Nil.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Do not feed to livestock.

Comments:

- . Garden plant, indoor or outdoor,
- . Prefers rich moist soil in a sunny protected position.
- . Native from Himalayas to Indonesia.
- . Large evergreen tree with grayish bark, to 30m by 10m.
- . Leaves glossy upper surface dark green, underneath is dull and paler.
- . Leaves to 30cms long, oblong to oval, hairless in spirals on stem, fine veins, on stalks ten cms long.

. Flowers are tiny, wholly enclosed in fleshy receptacle (fig).

. Fruit, green with darker flecks, turning yellow when mature, eleven cms long, seven cm in diameter, sessile, oblong, hairless, usually in pairs.

. Sap from figs, leaves and trunk can be a minor skin and eye irritant.



Picture: *Ficus elastica*

Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

Further Reading:

- . Shepherd. *Pretty but Poisonous*. 2004.
- . Everist. *Poisonous Plants of Australia*. 1981.