Gastrolobium grandiflorum

Common name:
Desert poison bush, Heart-leaf poison, Wallflower poison,

Palatability to Livestock:
Seldom eaten, although some individual plants are readily eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:
High risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:
Toxic to cattle, sheep, horses, donkeys and camels, and to dogs as scavengers.

Poisonous Principle:
- Fluroacetates, (1080 poison).
- All parts are toxic, highest at flowering.
- Blocks the citric acid cycle.

Effects:
Signs and symptoms;
- Accelerated, weak, arrhythmic heart beat,
- Rapid noisy panting, respiratory distress,
- Staggering then falling,
- Bleeding from the mouth.

Health and Production Problems;
- Death within minutes, to hours.
- Occasionally a recovery.
- Flowers and seeds are highly toxic.
- Suckers are very poisonous.
- Leaves are less palatable, and less toxic.

Treatment;
See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:
- Grubb out and burn all lignotubers.
- Fence off, and apply herbicide.
- Most species can be controlled by cutting off at ground level.
- Other species can sucker from the remaining roots, and must be grubbed out.

Comments:
- Leafy plants with dull-green, opposite leaves, notched at the tip, thick and stiff.
- Shrub grows up to two metres high.
- Usually has several stems arising from lignotubers.
- Flowers are pea-shaped, dark red to purple.
- Pods, small, light brown and pointed.
- Native to Australia, usually found in arid areas. One of the most toxic plants in Australia.
- Spread by seed.
- Animals are affected in the paddock, or while traveling.
- Mostly sheep and cattle. Horses rarely eat this plant. Browsed as a source of green feed, but not as first choice.
- May be eaten and controlled by goats, but toxic at times. These plants are not very palatable, intermittently toxic, and seasonal toxicity varies.
- Trials of genetically modified rumen bacteria are being carried out, to protect sheep and cattle from poisoning.

Further Reading:
- Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses. 1998
- Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds of Australia. 2001
- Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000
- Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997

Picture: Gastrolobium grandiflorum  Qld DPI

Information include in this Info Sheet was obtained from the source documents, and no responsibility will be accepted by the compiler.