**Lactuca serriola**

**Common name:**
Prickly lettuce, Compass plant,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
High at all stages.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to sheep, cattle and horses.

**Poisonous Principle:**
Unknown.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Acute respiratory distress.

*Health and Production Problems;*
. Affected animals may die.

**Treatment;**
Nil.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Be aware of potential stock problems.
. Chip out, or cultivate.
. Use herbicides.

**Comments:**
. A bristly, biennial growing up to a metre high.
. Erect stems have a white, milky, bitter sap, few branches, and are slightly hairy.
. Leaves are long, thin and dull bluish-green, alternate, stiff, and finely toothed, the margins and midrib have spines.
. Depending on the species, leaves may be smooth, hairy, or spiny.
. Small flowers are pale yellow, like dandelions, in loose clusters, flowering is from spring to autumn.
. Seeds have a tuft of white hair.
. A common weed of gardens, roads, and wasteland, as well as degraded pastures.
. A native of Europe, found all over Australia.
. Probably only young plants are toxic, and then only to very hungry animals.
. The plant is particularly attractive to horses.
. Seems to have pain-killing properties.
. Plant is attractive to birds.


Further Reading:
. McBarron, Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons in Australia. 1976

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