

Malva parviflora

Common name:

Marshmallow, Small flowered mallow,

Palatability to Livestock:

Low.

Toxicity to Goats:

Low risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Potentially toxic to sheep, cattle, horses and poultry.

. Causes “staggers” in sheep.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Nitrates,
- . Malvic acid,
- . Unknown substances.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Muscle weakness and staggering gait,
- . Trembling muscles, when forced to exercise,
- . Increased heart rate,
- . Increased respiratory rate,
- . Animals relapse, and recover, in cycles.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Affected animals may die, but most recover when removed from the plant.
- . Eggs from poultry eating seeds or leaves show abnormalities.
- . Do not stress stock till recovered.

Treatment;

- . Be aware of potential stock problems.
- . Good feed in moderate amounts.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Use paraquat type herbicide.
- . Cultivate and fertilise.
- . Easily weeded out when the ground is moist.

Comments:

- . A biennial herb with a single taproot, 60 cms high, semi upright, with a single taproot.
- . Stems are branched, prostrate or erect, purplish in colour.
- . Leaves are alternate, dull dark green, variable in size, rounded 7-lobed blade at the end of a stiff stalk.
- . Flowers on short stalks, in small groups in leaf forks, white or very pale pink/lilac, spring to early summer.
- . Fruit is button shaped, flatish, round and wrinkled on the upper surface, in autumn.
- . Native to Europe, now a weed in all States, in temperate and sub-tropical areas, round buildings, roadsides, stockyards.
- . Most poisonings seem to occur between July and October.
- . Large amounts seem to cause “staggers”.



Picture: *Malva spp* Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

Further Reading:

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Dowling and McKenzie. Poisonous Plants. 1993
- . Huggins and Lucy. Weeds of Southern Queensland. Qld DPI. 1997.
- . Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses. 1998
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants, Handbook. 1983.
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson Sclafe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995.