**Papaver somniferum**

**Common name:**
Opium poppy,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Low.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to all livestock species.

**Poisonous Principle:**
. Isoquinoline alkaloids,
. Morphine, codeine and resins,
. Rhoeadine, in milky sap.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Gastro-enteritis,
. Loss of appetite,
. Ill-thrift,
. In humans, increased respiration rate, excitation and coma.

**Health and Production Problems:**
. General loss of productivity,
. Loss of milk production.

**Treatment:**
Be aware of potential stock problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. This is a “Declared Noxious Weed” in all parts of Australia,
. It must be destroyed under police supervision.

**Comments:**
. An annual plant with thick, erect stems up to 1 metre high.
. The leaves are bluish green and smooth, with wavy margins, toothed but not deeply cut.
. Flowers are on long, smooth, erect stalks, with five petals, in shades of white, lilac and purple, late spring flowering.
. The pod is globular, dull green, with ray-like ridges at the top, containing the seeds.
. Dried latex from the unripe pods contains opium,
. There have been no cases of poisoning in livestock reported in Australia.
. May be grown as commercial crops in Tasmania under license. See picture.
. All parts are toxic, especially unripe capsules.

*“Field of poppies”*

Picture: Papaver hybrid. Weed control Lucerne 1992

**Further Reading:**
. Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004

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