

Peganum harmala

Common name:

African rue,

Palatability to Livestock:

Not known to be eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

Moderate risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to sheep and cattle.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Nitrate compounds,
- . Beta-carbolide alkaloids, harmine.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Nitrate poisoning, -
- . Depression, excess salivation,
- . Staggering, stiff, uncoordinated gait,
- . Trembling limb muscles,
- . Rapid, weak pulse,
- . Laboured respiration,
- . Bluish mucous membranes.

Beta-carbolide poisons -

- . Weakness of the hind limbs, with knuckling over in the hind fetlocks, progressing to limb paralysis.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Animals may die within hours, those recumbent, may die of thirst or pneumonia.

Treatment;

- . See Vet.
- . Paralyzing effect on skeletal and cardiac muscles.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Dig out and burn,
- . Use herbicides,
- . Declared "Noxious" in SA and WA.

Comments:

- . An erect perennial growing from a thick, strong rhizome.
- . Bushy, stiff stems, with many branches, growing up to 45 cms high.
- . Leaves are alternate, bright green and succulent, up to five cms long, deeply divided into three narrow fern-like segments.
- . Single flowers on long stalks with five white petals.
- . Fruit is a three celled capsule, with many angular seeds.
- . Native to the Mediterranean region.
- . Found in central west NSW, patches in SA.



Picture: *Peganum harmala* wikipedia

Further Reading:

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
- . Harden. Flora of NSW. 1992.
- . McBarron. Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons in NSW. 1979.
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds of Australia 2001
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000