

Persea americana

Common name:

Avocado,

Palatability:

Some varieties eaten occasionally without causing ill-effects.

Toxicity to Goats:

Moderate risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to sheep, cattle, horses, pigs, and birds,

Poisonous Principle:

. Persin, a monoglycerid.,

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Severe mastitis, and oedema,
- . Dyspnoea and coughing,
- . Oedema of the head, neck and brisket,
- . Heart failure.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Loss of milk flow, mastitis,
- . Sometimes death,
- . Recovery takes several weeks.

Treatment;

See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Be aware of potential stock problems.

Comments:

- . Not all commercial varieties are equally toxic, the Guatemalan variety of avocados is very toxic.
- . The Mexican variety is not so toxic. The Haas and Reed varieties - good commercial varieties, do not seem to cause a problem.
- . Crushed leaves of the Mexican cultivars smell of aniseed, and have been used as insecticides.

- . Trees grow to 18 metres or more, but are usually pruned to be short and spreading.
- . An evergreen tree with alternate dark green leaves, glossy on the upper surface and white/woolly below.
- . Many small pale green/yellow flowers in racemes near the branch tips in early spring; there are no petals as such, but many stamens.
- . Fruit is pear shaped, ripening to green to purple depending on the variety.
- . The single seed is large and hard, enclosed in a papery seed coat.
- . The stored food in avocados is fat rather than sugar or starch, and dogs enjoy the fruit.
- . The fruit may hang on the tree for a long time before deteriorating.
- . This tree can only be grown in tropical or sub-tropical climates.
- . Leaves, bark, fruit and seeds have been reported to be toxic.



Picture: *Persea americana*

Steve Peruch, Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

References;

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000.