



Pasture Poisonous Plants to Horses

Western Washington Poisonous Plants

Western Washington Plants Known to Be Poisonous to Horses (USDA-SCS)

Buttercup, creeping (*Ranunculus repens*)

Location or Season: Moist soils

Probable Toxic Dose: Very Large

Toxin: Protoanemonin

Symptoms: Inflammation and narcosis

Comments: Rarely eaten unless pasture overgrazed

Camas, death (*Zigadenus venenosus*)

Location or Season: Spring

Probable Toxic Dose: less than 9 lb.

Toxin: Steroidal, glycosidal, alkaloid

Symptoms: Salivation, weakness, respiratory difficulty, nausea, convulsions, coma

Comments: Deadly, easily confused with edible camas after bloom

Fern, bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*)

Location or Season: Fall, when pastures overgrazed

Probable Toxic Dose: Cumulative Large quantities

Toxin: Thiaminase

Symptoms: Appetite loss, timid, stupified, incoordination

Comments:

Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia sp.*)

Location or Season: Overgrazed pastures

Probable Toxic Dose: Single dose 20 lb. or cumulative

Toxin: pyrrolizidine

Symptoms: Liver damage & failure, depression, dermatitis, incoordination, death

Comments: Similar poison to Tansy Ragwort

Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Location or Season: Acid soils

Probable Toxic Dose: VERY TOXIC (1/4 lb.)

Toxin: Digitoxin & other glycosides

Symptoms: Contracted pupils, labored breathing, convulsions, death

Comments: Rarely eaten fresh, dangerous in hay

Hemlock, poison (*Conium maculatum*)

Location or Season: Ditches, moist disturbed areas

Probable Toxic Dose: Very toxic (5 to 10 lb.)

Toxin: Coniine and other alkaloids

Symptoms: Narcosis, paralysis, death

Comments: Hay MAY be somewhat less toxic as the poison will slowly evaporate

Hemlock, water (*Cicuta douglasii*)

Location or Season: Low, wet areas; in spring roots pull out of ground easily

Probable Toxic Dose: VERY TOXIC (.2 to .8 lb.)

Toxin: Cicutoxin

Symptoms: Teeth grinding, muscle spasms, respiratory failure, death

Comments: Roots & stem base most toxic. The most poisonous plant known in N. America



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Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

Location or Season: Moist areas

Probable Toxic Dose: Large quantities Cumulative

Toxin: Thiaminase

Symptoms: Thiamine deficiency causes appetite loss, incoordination

Comments: Poisoning occurs when dry plants are fed in hay

Knapweed, Russian & Yellowstar thistle (*Centaurea spp.*)

Location or Season: Disturbed areas

Probable Toxic Dose: Cumulative 600 lb.?

Toxin:

Symptoms: Brain deterioration resulting in "Chewing disease"

Comments: Can eventually cause death by starvation

Larkspur (*Delphinium spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose: Very toxic (1 lb.)

Toxin: Alkaloids-delphinine

Symptoms: Constipation, bloat, depression, paralysis

Comments: Deadly

Lupine (*Lupinus spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose: 600 to 800 lbs.

Toxin: Alkaloids-lupinine

Symptoms: Spasms, cerebral excitement & death

Comments: Can cause birth defects if eaten during pregnancy

Nightshade, black (*Solanum spp.*)

Location or Season: Late summer, early fall, fencerows

Probable Toxic Dose: 1 to 10 lb.

Toxin: Alkaloid-solanine

Symptoms: Diarrhea, convulsions, incoordination, death

Comments:

Oak (*Quercus spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose: Very large

Toxin: Tannins?

Symptoms: Constipation, blood in urine

Comments: Leaves can cause problems, acorn poisoning more common

Ragwort, tansy & Common groundsel (*Seneclo spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose:

Toxin: Alkaloid-pyrrolizidine

Symptoms: Liver Lesions, weakness, staggering, death

Comments: Liver damage is permanent. Normally avoided when fresh, eaten in hay or when wilted.



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Rhododendron (*Rhododendron spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose: Small

Toxin: Glycosides

Symptoms: Vomiting, vertigo, death from respiratory failure

Comments:

Yew (*Taxus spp.*)

Location or Season:

Probable Toxic Dose: 1 to 10 lbs.

Toxin: Alkaloid-taxine

Symptoms: Gastroenteritis, labored breathing, trembling, collapse

Comments:

Excerpted from: Pasture Management for Horses and Ponies, Gillian McCarthy; and Plants that Poison Livestock in Thurston County, Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Agency.