

Livestock Newsletter

Ashe County Center

October 2016



Inside This Issue

Buckeye and Wild Cherry Trees

Buckeye and Wild Cherry Trees

What makes buckeye and wild cherry trees toxic to livestock?

The buckeye contains a toxin called aesculin. Aesculin is a glycoside that breaks down blood proteins similar to warfarin, a common rat poison. Wild black cherry trees contain hydrogen cyanide, also known as prussic acid. Hydrogen cyanide is not found in the healthy plant, but is present when the tissue is damaged. Damage can occur through chewing, frost or broken limbs. Younger leaves have a higher hydrogen cyanide level than that of older leaves.

Why do livestock eat buckeyes and wild black cherry leaves?

- * There is not enough forage – grass or hay.
- * Available forage is too mature or ripe and toxic plants are more palatable – tasty.
- * Rain, snow or dew increases palatability of toxic plants.
- * Livestock have gone without water too long. Animals are hungry and after receiving water will consume what they see.

What are symptoms?

Symptoms of buckeye poisoning are muscle weakness, paralysis, vomiting, diarrhea and inflammation of mucus membranes. Symptoms of wild black cherry poisoning are excitement, staggering, convulsions and irregular breathing. Small amounts of buckeyes or wild black cherry can poison or kill ruminant animals (*sheep, goats and cattle*). However monogastric animals (*pigs and horses*) can also be affected.

How to treat buckeye or wild black cherry poisoning?

The best remedy is to pour ½ gallon of mineral oil in to the stomach of a 1000 pound animal or one quart into the stomach of a 100 pound animal. Then contact a veterinarian.

How to prevent buckeye or wild black cherry poisoning?

- * Be able to recognize buckeye and wild black cherry trees.
- * Avoid grazing in these areas. Use temporary fencing if needed.
- * Clean up debris from the trees.
- * Cut down trees if possible.
- * Provide supplemental feed to animals during drought or after grass gets too high or short.
- * Keep an eye on the water supply.

For additional information contact Micah Orfield, Extension Agent, Agriculture at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center at (336) 846-5850.



Contact Us

North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Ashe County Center
134 Government Circle, Suite 202
Jefferson, NC 28640

Phone: (336) 846-5850
Fax: (336) 846-5882

<http://ashe.ces.ncsu.edu/>

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension agent.



Sincerely,

Micah Orfield
Extension Agent, Agriculture

NC State University
A&T State University
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions