Plants Causing Physical Injury

Many plants have characteristics that can cause injury to grazing animals. A variety of grasses can be palatable when young, but injurious once they have matured with long awns that cause injury to the nose, eyes, mouth and ears of grazing animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Pasture Plants Causing Physical Injury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bromus spp.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cenchurus lonispinus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holcus spp.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hordeum spp.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tribulus terrestris</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urtica doica</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ripgut Brome, *Bromus diandrus*

**Identification:** One to three foot annual, hairy sheaths, unevenly fringed membranous ligules. Open inflorescence with drooping spikelets bearing long, stiff awns.

**Habitat:** Waste areas, roadsides and railroads, and rangelands.

**Animals Affected:** All livestock

**Toxin Family:** Physical injury

**Symptoms:** Awns cause physical injury to nose and eyes of grazing animals

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway
Cheat, *Bromus secalinus*

**Identification:** Cool-season annual with open drooping panicles. Slightly flattened spikelets and hard lemmas with rounded backs and long awns.

**Habitat:** fields and open disturbed areas

**Animals Affected:** All livestock

**Toxin Family:** Physical injury

**Other:** Awns cause physical injury to nose and mouth of grazing animals.

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway
Longspine Sandspur, *Cenchrus lonispinus*

**Identification:** Eight inch to three-foot warm-season annual. Tufted stems, usually grows horizontally, forming mats. Leaf sheaths are flat and loose, smooth with hairy margins. One- to three-inch long spikes bear clusters of 10-30 burs with stiff, sharp spines.

**Habitat:** Cultivated fields, pastures and waste areas, favoring sandy or well-drained gravelly soils.

**Animals Affected:** Grazing animals

**Toxin family:** Burs

**Other:** Cultivated fields, pastures and waste areas, favoring sandy or well-drained gravelly soils.

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway
Foxtail Barley, *Hordeum jubatum*

**Identification:** Pale green perennial with bushy nodding spikes. Panicle is purpleish, fading to white as it matures and spikelets have awns 1-2.1/2" long. Prolific seed production

**Habitat:** Wet or alkaline soils, rundown meadows and pastures and roadsides

**Animals Affected:** Grazing livestock

**Toxin Family:** Physical injury

**Other:** Physical injury to nose, mouth, throat and eyes from mature awns. Palatable and non-injurious at young stages.

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway
Medusahead, *Taeniatherum caput-medusae*

**Identification:** Winter annual, open sheaths with long-hairy collar and glabrous auricles. Sessile spikelets, lemmas with minute barbs and long awn. Glumes awn-like with minute barbs. Heads can bend to nearly horizontal at maturity.

**Habitat:** Disturbed sites, grassland, range. Likes moisture.

**Animals Affected:** Livestock

**Toxin Family:** Physical injury

**Other:** Awns cause physical injury to nose and mouth of grazing animals. High silica content deters grazing as it reaches maturity.

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway
Puncture Vine, *Tribulus terrestris*

**Identification:** Prostrate, pubescent annual. Pinnately compound opposite leaves with oblong leaflets. Solitary yellow flowers in leaf axils. Fruit is a small, spiny capsule.

**Habitat:** Waste areas and roadsides.

**Animals Affected:** All livestock.

**Toxin Family:** Steroidal sapogenins and physical injury.

**Other:** Causes insoluble crystalloid substance in bile ducts, blocking the biliary system and causing photosensitivity. Can also cause neurological symptoms and incomplete paralysis. Burrs are injurious to livestock and humans.

Provided by Karin Neff, Andy Hulting, Mylen Bohle and David Hannaway.
Stinging Nettles, *Urtica dioica*

**Identification:** Two- to nine foot perennial with coarsely toothed heart- to lance-shaped leaves. Tiny flowers in dense drooping clusters in leaf axils.

**Habitat:** Meadows, stream-banks, open forest, disturbed areas, barnyards, waste areas, rich soil

**Animals Affected:** All livestock and humans

**Toxin Family:** Physical injury, formic acid in stinging barbs

**Other:** Dermatitis