

# Death camas

*Toxicoscordion venenosum*

**Common Names:** Hog Potato, Grassy Death

**Species Affected:** Horses, cows, sheep, alpacas, llamas, and chickens

**Toxin:** Neurotoxic Alkaloids

**Description:** Can grow up to two feet tall. Basal leaves are thicker and longer than those along the stem. Unbranched stems terminate in a greenish-white inflorescence.

**Growing Locations:** Found in open plains and hillsides, rangelands, mountainous areas.

**Most Toxic:** In the spring, due to death camas emerging earlier than palatable forage. Toxic when dried and in hay. Sheep are more likely to ingest death camas when soils are moist and the bulbs can easily be pulled from the ground, or when moving through an area and not able to find palatable forage.

**Signs and Symptoms:** Excessive foamy salivation. Vomiting in cows, colic in equines, frequent urination. Convulsions, staggering, rapid/weak pulse and respiration. Small doses of death camas can lead to reduced milk production and weight gain. Death can occur within days after first ingestion of 0.5% - 2% of the animal's body weight.

**Preventative & Control Measures:** Avoid grazing pastures with death camas early in the spring, wait until good palatable forage is plentiful.

*Mechanical:* Digging up death camas when the soil is damp is effective however, the entire plant must be removed. Mowing may slow growth but will not stop it.

*Chemical:* Recommended herbicides are 2,4-D, Imazapyr, and Imazapic.

