

Prevalence of Gastrointestinal Parasites of Rams brought into Abeokuta Small Ruminants Markets in Preparation for a Festive Season

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Abstract

In an effort to gain a better understanding into the role played by food animals in the epidemiology of gastrointestinal parasites, we assessed the prevalence of gastrointestinal parasites in different breeds of rams brought into Abeokuta during a festive season by microscopic examination of faecal samples. A total of 206 rams of different breeds were randomly sampled. The faecal samples collected were subjected to simple floatation and sedimentation tests. McMaster egg counting technique was used to estimate the faecal oocyst load in positive samples. Overall prevalence of gastrointestinal parasites was 51.46%. There was significant ($p < 0.05$) difference between the prevalence of *Eimeria* spp (37.38%) and helminth eggs (13.59%). Among the 29 samples that tested positive for helminth eggs, 6 (20.7%), 19 (65.5%) and 4 (13.8%) were cestode, nematode and trematode eggs, respectively. The genera of nematodes eggs identified include *Strongyloides* spp, *Haemonchus* spp, *Mashallagia* spp, *Bunostomum* spp, *Ascaris* spp, *Dictyocaulus* spp, *Gongylonema* spp and *Ostergia* spp; trematodes were *Fasciola* spp and *Dicrocoelium* spp while cestodes were *Moniezia* spp and *Avitellina* spp. The only protozoan parasite identified was *Eimeria* spp. This study has clearly shown that rams brought to Abeokuta during festive seasons carry different gastrointestinal parasites of which *Eimeria* spp had the largest share. Parasites of zoonotic importance (*Fasciola* and *Moniezia*) were also detected. Therefore, there is need for regular screening of animals being introduced from one state to the other and also from neighbouring countries for effective monitoring and control of parasitic diseases in domestic animals and human population.

Keywords: GIT parasite, ram, helminth, protozoan.

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Target audience: Sheep farmers, Sheep traders, Veterinarians, Health workers
