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Prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites of sheep in suburban part of Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

A study was carried out to know the presence of various gastro intestinal parasites of sheep in Anantapuramu region of Andhra Pradesh. A total of 520 faecal samples were collected, processed and examined by sedimentation technique during the study period and 71(13.65%) samples were found positive. Gastro Intestinal parasites such as *Haemonchus*, *Strongylus*, *Trichuris* were identified, highest prevalence was observed with *Haemonchus* (53.52%) followed by mixed infections (26.76%), strongyles (9.85%) and *Trichuris* (9.85%). Significantly high prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites was found during monsoon (46.47%) followed by moderate in winter (36.61%) and least in summer (16.90%) in all ages of sheep which were screened.

Keywords: Gastro intestinal parasites, sheep, suburban part

Introduction

Gastro intestinal parasitism plays an important role in affecting the productivity of small ruminants worldwide and are much of economic significance because sheep plays an important role in national economy and rural socio economic conditions of small and marginal farmers. Commonly occurring gastro intestinal parasitic diseases in sheep are haemonchosis, strongylosis and trichostrongylosis among these haemonchosis is the most important, and caused by *Haemonchus contortus* (red stomach worm or wire worm) (Urquhart *et al.*, 1996)^[26]. *Haemonchus* are blood feeders and can cause severe anemia, hypoproteinemia, and resultant edema. This edema is characteristically present in the intermandibular space, resulting in a physical resemblance to a bottle (“bottle jaw”). (Urquhart *et al.*, 1996)^[26] *H. contortus* probably causes more losses than any other species of nematode in ruminants (Mirtodi *et al.*, 2011)^[27] and identified as the most important wire worms (Khan *et al* 2010, Tariq *et al* 2010, Osakwe *et al* 2007)^[8, 24, 13]. There is a need for proper understanding of the epidemiology of parasitic diseases for the rational design of cost effective strategies to control gastro intestinal parasites in small ruminants for better productivity and growth. There is no study on small ruminants gastro intestinal parasitism in Anantapuramu region of Andhra Pradesh. Hence the present study is undertaken to assess the parasitic infection in small ruminants.

Materials and Methods

Study area and study period: Faecal samples were collected in and around shepherd flocks of suburban area of Anantapuramu to know the prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites in sheep during study period of January 2020-December 21

Sample size: A total of 520 faecal samples were examined for the presence of eggs of internal parasites from different aged groups of selected sheep population. Faecal samples were collected directly from the rectum of each animal. Gross examination was carried out for colour, consistency and presence of any adult worms. Faecal samples were processed by sedimentation technique and examined under low power objective (10 X). The ova of internal parasites were identified based on their morphological features.

Results and Discussions

A total of 520 faecal samples were collected in and around shepherd flocks of suburban part of Anantapuramu to know the prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites in sheep during study

period of 2020-21 out of which 71 (13.65%) samples were found positive (Table – 1). Highly significant difference in the prevalence of gastro intestinal parasitism was observed in different age groups of sheep (Gulland *et al.*, 1992; Tasawar *et al.*, 2010; Biu *et al.*, 2009) [6, 25, 2], (Table-2). The variation in prevalence of parasitic infection in different age groups depends upon difference in agro climatic condition and susceptibility of host (Radostits *et al.*, 2000) [5]. Gastro intestinal parasites such as *Haemonchus*, *strongyles*, *Trichuris* and mixed infection were identified, in which the highest prevalence was observed with *Haemonchus* (53.52%), followed by mixed infections (26.76%), strongyles (9.85%) and *Trichuris* (9.85%) in all groups of studied animals (Table –3). This high prevalence of *Haemonchus* was attributed to its high fecundity, leads to rapid contamination of pastures and there by ingestion of larva (Roberts *et al.*, 1982) [18]. Higher incidence of haemonchosis was observed in external grazing animals on pastures (Riche *et al.*, 1973) [17]. Prevalence of gastro intestinal parasitism significantly higher during monsoon (46.47%) followed by winter (36.61%) and least in summer (16.90%) in all ages of sheep (Nwosu *et al.*, 2007; Regassa *et al.*, 2006; Sutar *et al.*, 2010) [12, 16, 23]. Climatic conditions in monsoon might be favorable for the

development, survival and translocation of pre parasitic stages, so there is a build-up of adult worm populations in grazing animals in monsoon, there after sustained during winter and declined during dry season (Mir *et al.*, 2012) [11].

Table 1: Animal population studied

S. No	Category of sheep	Number of animals
1.	Ewe	300
2.	Ram	40
3.	Young ones	110
4.	Lambs	70
	Total:	520

Table 2: Overall prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites in sheep

Category of animal	Total number of samples examined	Number of positive samples	Positive sample percentage (%)
Ewe	300	36	12%
Ram	40	05	12.5%
Young ones	110	18	16.36%
Lambs	70	12	17.14%
Total	520	71	13.65%

Table 3: Species wise prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites in sheep

Category of animal	Total No. of samples examined	Total Positive samples	<i>Haemonchus</i>		<i>Trichuris</i>		Strongyles		Mixed infection	
			No. of positive samples	Positive sample %	No. of positive samples	Positive sample %	No. of positive samples	Positive sample %	No. of positive samples	Positive sample %
Ewes	300	12%	15	41.66%	06	16.66%	05	13.88%	10	27.7%
Rams	40	12.5%	03	60%	---	---	---	---	02	40%
Young ones	110	16.36%	11	61.11%	01	5.55%	02	11.11%	04	22.22%
Lambs	70	17.14%	09	75%	---	---	---	---	03	25%
Total:	520	13.65%	38	53.52%	07	9.85%	07	9.85%	19	26.76%

Table 4: Seasonal wise prevalence of gastro intestinal parasites in sheep

	Season		
	Summer	Monsoon	Winter
No. of faecal samples examined	105	197	218
No. of samples found positive	12	33	26
Positive sample %	16.90%	46.47%	36.61%

Conclusion

Present study concludes that sub urban part of Anantapuramu is highly endemic for various important gastro intestinal parasites especially *Haemonchus* in sheep. More prevalence found in rainy season, followed by winter and summer seasons. Frequent screening of fecal samples gives an idea about the prevalence of various worm infections which in turn helps in the formulation of various preventive strategies in the region.

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