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Short communication

Epidemiology of gastrointestinal nematodes of sheep managed under traditional husbandry system in Kashmir valley

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Abstract

The present study was conducted with the objective to investigate the seasonal epidemiological prevalence of gastrointestinal tract (GIT) nematodes in different age groups, sexes and breeds (genotypes) of sheep through necropsy and faecal analysis over a period of 2 years in Kashmir valley, India. A total of 1533 sheep were examined [faecal examination: 1035 (year 1: 561, year 2: 474); necropsy: 498 (year 1: 232, year 2: 266)]. Out of these, 945 (61.64%) were found infected [faecal examination: 697 (67.34%, year 1: 390 (69.51%), year 2: 307 (46.99%); necropsy: 248 (49.79%, year 1: 123 (53.01%), year 2: 125 (64.69%)] with GIT nematodes. The over all prevalence of GIT nematodes in sheep in year 1 was 64.76 and 58.37% in year 2 ($P = 0.04$). The parasites in decreasing order of prevalence (%) in sheep were *Haemonchus contortus*

(59.6); *Ostertagia circumcincta* (38.0); *Bunostomum trigonocephalum* (37.7); *Chabertia ovina* (37.7); *Trichostrongylus* spp. (33.9); *Nematodirus spathiger* (29.4); *Oesophagostomum columbianum* (28.4); *Trichuris ovis* (23.5) and *Marshallagia marshalli* (22.1). Season, sex, age, and genotype were the factors that influenced the epidemiological prevalence of GIT nematodes in sheep in the present study. The maximum nematode infection was observed in summer season and lowest in winter ($P \hat{=} \hat{=} 0.0005$). Local Kashmiri breed was less infected as compared to other genotypes ($P \hat{=} \hat{=} 0.05$). Lower age groups were more infected than adult animals ($P \hat{=} \hat{=} 0.05$). Prevalence was higher in rams (males) than ewes (females) ($P \hat{=} \hat{=} 0.05$). The present study will initially be of great significance to add to the existing knowledge of the epidemiology of GIT nematodes of small ruminants and the findings will be quite helpful to devise the appropriate control and prophylactic strategies for GIT nematodiasis of sheep reared under the temperate agro-climatic conditions.



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Keywords

Age; Breed; Epidemiology; Nematodes; Prevalence; Sex; Season; Sheep

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