**18.021**

**Bacterial Causes of Ovine Abortion and Neonatal Mortality in Iran**

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**Background:** Abortion and prenatal lamb mortality is the major cause in lowering of productivity of sheep. The objectives of the present study were to explore the problem in lambs in Iran and to identify the causal bacteria.

**Methods:** During one year survey a total of 45 aborted fetuses and 47 neonatal deaths from different farms were examined to determine the bacterial causes. Tissues were collected aseptically for microbiologic examination. Routine examination included aerobic and micro-aerobic culturing of lung, liver and stomach content. New diagnostic assays such as PCR was added to standard protocol for confirming Salmonella isolates by detecting invA gene which are specific for Salmonella.

**Results:** Bacterial agents were diagnosed on the basis of isolating an organism from several fetal tissues in pure or nearly pure culture. Bacterial agents associated with inflammatory reaction were detected in 16 cases of aborted fetus (35.56%) and 17 cases of neonatal death (36.17%). Bacteria responsible for abortion were: Salmonella spp. (9%), Brucella melitensis (4.5%), Campylobacter fetus subspecies (4.5%), Moraxella spp. (4.5%), Escherichia coli (4.5%), Corynebacterium spp. (4.5%). Bacteria responsible for neonatal mortality were: Salmonella spp. (8.5%), Escherichia coli (8.5%), Pasteurella multocida (6.4%), Mannheimia haemolytica (6.4%), Campylobacter fetus subspecies (4.2%) and Brucella melitensis (2.12%).

**Conclusion:** Salmonella spp. was the most frequent bacterial species identified as cause of abortion and neonatal mortality in lambs in Khorasan province of Iran. We found other organisms in pure culture with low virulence related to abortion and neonatal deaths. Because of suppression of immune reaction at the junction of the fetal and maternal placentas, any infectious agent that is able to reach the junction of the maternal and fetal placentas could be free to multiply and cause lesions unhindered by immune reaction. Under these immunologic conditions, bacteria of low virulence may cause abortion and neonatal deaths.

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Seroprevalence of avian influenza A/H5N1 among poultry farmers in rural Indonesia

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Background: Since 2003, about a third (>100 cases) of human cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A/H5N1 worldwide are reported from Indonesia. There is concern for viral reassortment and a pandemic. Seroprevalence studies that may reveal unrecognized cases are lacking. We aimed to measure H5N1 seroprevalence among poultry farmers in rural Indonesia.

Methods: The present cross-sectional study is an extension of an agricultural HPAI project by Dutch and Indonesian Ministries, who recruited 12 farms in a Postulated endemic area in West-Java. In 2007, poultry workers and farm residents were interviewed about possible risk factors. H5N1 serostatus was determined by hemagglutination inhibition tests at NIHRD Jakarta and neutralization tests at NIID Tokyo.

Results: In the 12 farms, 495 of 622 (80%) farmers participated. Of these, 95% lived on the farm, 71% were male and median age was 29 years (Interquartile range 23–36 years). In the previous six months, confirmation of H5N1 in poultry was available for one farm. Masks were never worn by 54% of participants. Eighty-six percent were afraid to become infected. Fever, cough and shortness of breath were reported as not being a symptom by 23%, 31% and 33%. Validation of serological tests is pending.

Conclusions: Validation of serological tests is pending. These results influence the rationale for concern for frequent mild infections in poultry farmers. Incomplete evidence for H5N1 in the poultry sheds doubt on the H5N1 exposure. In light of the severity of human HPAI infection and the risk of a pandemic, we recommend to sustain ongoing efforts to educate poultry farmers about HPAI prevention and symptoms.

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Seroresponse Against Avian Influenza A/H5N1 Among Poultry Workers in Jakarta

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Background: Since 2005, Indonesia has reported more than 100 human cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A/H5N1. Cases were typically associated with poultry exposure and 20% were from Jakarta. Human infections raise concern for viral adaptation to humans and a pandemic. Seroprevalence studies that may reveal additional unrecognized mild infections are lacking. We aimed to measure H5N1 serosresponse and identify associated determinants among poultry workers in Jakarta.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was an extension of an agricultural HPAI project by Dutch and Indonesian Ministries. We approached 40 collector houses in Jakarta, where poultry is channelled from the countryside to markets. Collector house poultry workers contributed blood for H5N1 serological testing and were interviewed about possible determinants. H5N1 serosresponse was measured by hemagglutination inhibition tests at NIHRD Jakarta and neutralization tests at NIID Tokyo.

Results: In 34 of 40 collector houses, 218 of 276 (79%) workers participated. Of these, 206 of 218 (94%) lived in or next doors to the collector houses, 206 of 218 (94%) were male and the median age was 29 years (Interquartile range 24–37 years). Validation of serological tests is pending.

Conclusions: Validation of serological tests is pending. These results influence the rationale for concern for frequent mild infections in poultry farmers. If serosresponse is confirmed, this finding highlights the importance of ongoing HPAI education efforts among poultry workers.

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