

Studies on mycosis and mycotoxicosis in cattle

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Abstract

The present study was conducted on forty diseased and apparently healthy cases of cattle (20 serum samples of each) at Cairo Governorate. 100 samples of milk of mastitic animals, nasal swabs, vaginal swabs and feeds samples used in breeding of diseased animals (25 of each) were collected. The mycological examination of collected samples revealed isolation of *Aspergillus* species as the predominant cause from the above samples of infected animals, where in cattle isolated from (88%, 96%, 80%, and 100%) respectively. Other genera and species of moulds and yeast were obtained at comparatively lower significant rates. Sera of diseased cattle contained significant levels of aflatoxins and zearalenon. Meanwhile, 60% of cattle had the mean levels of aflatoxins (15.20 ± 0.01 ppb) and zearalenon in 80% cattle with the mean level of (62 ± 0.10). The used feed samples in breeding of these animals had the amounts of AFB₁; OA; ZEAR and T₂ detected in (60%; 40%; 32%; and 36%) of feed samples, with the mean levels of (55.00 ± 1.50 ; 45.00 ± 0.30 ; 31.00 ± 0.20 and 26.00 ± 0.02 ppb), respectively. The biochemical study on sera of infected cattle fed with feed contaminated with aflatoxins and untreated with ammonium hydroxide 3% , demonstrated that the AFB₁ and zearalenon lead to a marked elevation in the serum enzymes activity of (AST, ALT and GGT, which give indication about hepatocellular damage. The levels of serum urea and creatinine were significantly high in toxicated animals as compared to apparently healthy animals. Mycotoxins in cattle induced significant decreased values in serum total protein, albumin, alpha globulin, beta globulin, and gamma globulin . The mycotoxicated animals had significant increase in serum levels malondialdehyde (MDA) and NO which caused induction of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOs) protein. The feeding of treated feed with ammonium hydroxide resulted in significant improvement of all previous alterations in biochemical parameters which resulted from toxicosis. The significance of the present result was fully discussed.

Key word: Aflatoxins (AF); OA; ZEAR.; T₂; *Aspergillus* spp.; Biochemical parameters; Electrophoresis patterns; NO.& MD.

Introduction

Up to date the environmental pollution is considered the essential cause of animal diseases particularly pollution of the used feed and water with fungi and their toxins as well as contamination of human food. Hence, great attention has been paid to the increased importance of fungi and their mycotoxins, which are serious fungal metabolites. Mycotoxins are formed by certain fungal species, whenever environmental factors are conducive during the growth of these frequently occurring mycomycetes on food stuffs and animal feeds; the process takes place as a secondary metabolism.

These natural toxins have broad spectrum effects (Hassan, 2003). Unlike many bacterial toxins, they are in general highly stable facing environmental influences. This also means that, when foodstuffs for human consumption are preserved or prepared by the conventional heating process, the mycotoxins are capable of surviving undamaged thus reaching the eventual consumer. These fungi and mycotoxins have serious effects upon the growth rate and health of human being and animals, as some mycotoxins had been found to be carcinogenic, tremorgenic, haemorrhagic and dermatitic (Hassan, 1998). The mycotoxins of greatest

agricultural and public health significance include aflatoxins, ochratoxins, trichothecenes, fumonisins, zearalenone, and ergot alkaloids (Hassan *et al.*, 2008). However, the fungi and their toxins are widely distributed through the world where they occur in soil, on plants, plants debris and similar organic substrates. They cause significant economic losses in agriculture, morbidity and mortality in animals and immunological compromised humans, where it is capable of killing cells by causing extensive damage to cellular membrane (Ajello and Hay, 1998 and Mogda, Mansour *et al.*, 2002). It had wide range of biological effects, including pulmonary oedema in pigs and ruminants (Harrison *et al.*, 1990), nephrotoxicity and liver cancer in different animal species (Gelderblom *et al.*, 1996 and Hassan *et al.*, 2004). The International Agency for Research on Cancer has declared that mycotoxins are potentially carcinogenic to human. Aflatoxin B₁ had been statistically associated with a high incidence of liver cancer in certain areas of Transkei; South Africa; China and Egypt (Chu and Li, 1994).

The aim of the present work was to investigate the problem of fungal disease and mycotoxicosis in cattle and detection of the role of feed pollution as main environmental factors of animal diseases.

Materials and Methods

1. Serum and feed samples:

Forty diseased cases of cattle in farms at Cairo Governorate were investigated. From districts of diseased cases, 40 serum samples of cattle and 100 samples of milk of mastitic animals, nasal swabs from animals had respiratory manifestations, vaginal swabs of cows suffered from abortion and feeds samples) used in breeding of diseased animals (25 of each) were collected.

2. Mycotoxins standards:

Standards and immunoaffinity column of AF-B₁, B₂, G₁, G₂ and OA; ZEAR and T₂ were purchased from Sigma Chemical Company (USA).

3. Mycological examination of samples:

The collected samples of feeds, milk and swabs were subjected for isolation and identification of fungi as recommended by Conner *et al.* (1992).

4. Detection of mycotoxins in feed and sera of diseased cattle :

By fluorometric methods as described by Hansen (1993) using immune-affinity column method.

5. Detoxification of aflatoxicated feeds by addition of ammonium hydroxide 3% (Hassan, 1994):

The feed samples contaminated with permissible limits (over 700-1000 ppm/ Ton of feed) were treated by addition of ammonium hydroxide 3%. After 7 days of treatment, the treated feeds were given to group of apparently healthy cattle calves in comparison to other group given toxicated feeds without any treatment. The feeding was continued for 1 month. All the animals were tested biochemically every 10 days during treatment for evaluating the influence of ammonium hydroxide on the toxicities of aflatoxins on the function of vital internal organs and patterns of serum protein electrophoresis.

6. Biochemical investigations of sera of diseased cattle :

Blood samples were collected in small labeled dry and clean vials without anticoagulant in centrifuge tube, allowed to clot and then centrifuged at 3000 rpm for 15 minutes for separation of serum which were used to assay the biochemical parameters as aspartate aminotransferase (AST) and alanine aminotransferase (ALT) activities according to Reitman and Frankel (1957), serum urea according to Wybenga *et al.* (1971), serum creatinine level according to Henry (1974). Estimation of serum total protein and electrophoretic pattern were carried out after Davis (1964) and Sonnenwirth and Jareet (1980), respectively. Serum lipid peroxide levels of malondialdehyde (MDA) were determined according to the method described by Yoshioka *et al.* (1979). Blood GSH concentration was measured using the method described by Beutler *et al.* (1963).

Serum NO levels of the cattle were measured by enzymatic Greiss reaction (**Burgner et al., 1999**). Estimation of vitamins E; A and C were performed according to **Henry (1974)**.

7. Statistical Analysis:

The obtained data were computerized and analyzed for significance, Calculation of standard error and variance according to (**SPSS 14, 2006**).

Results and Discussion:

The past three decades have witnessed dramatic change in man's and animal's environment and their immune defenses. Consequently, the fungi have assumed a major role in respiratory and systemic infectious diseases. In the present study the most common isolated fungi from mastitic milk samples of cattle were *Aspergillus* sp. (88%), *Fusarium* sp. (40%), *Penicillium* sp. (8%), *Cladosporium* sp. (8%), *Alternaria* sp. (4%), *C. albicans* (60%), *C. tropicalis* (24%) and *Rhodotorula rubra* (16%). The percentage of moulds in raw milk samples varies depending on geographical location and season of the year. The specific qualities of climate, vegetation and land are the important factors affecting the prevalence of moulds in connection with a certain geographical location. Mould spores can disperse in the air with the wind or in combination of wind and rain (**Mikulec et al., 2005**). The most frequent organisms implicated in mycotic mastitis were yeasts, especially of the genus *Candida* spp. are always present on the skin of the udder and teats, and could have entered the teat canal either due to inappropriate use of instruments or due to contaminated antibiotic preparations used for infusion (**Timoney et al., 1988** and **Hassan et al., 2010**).

With reference to Table 1, it is obvious that the most common isolated moulds from cows' nasal swabs were *Aspergillus* sp. (96%), *Fusarium* sp. (64%), *Mucor* sp. (8%), *Cladosporium* sp. (16%), *Alternaria* sp. (4%), *C. albicans* (24%), *C. tropicalis* (68%) and *Rhodotorula rubra* (12%). The present results coincide to some extent with that of **Nilsson and Persson (1984)**; **Maity and Deb (1993)**; **Mahendra et**

al., (1998) and **Hussein (2004)**. Breeding factors such as animal housing, feeding on moldy hay and ventilation system or environmental factors such as temperature, wind and dew increase the odds of contracting the infection (**Chihaya et al., 1991** and **Moubasher, 1995**). Fungi can produce reproductive failure in animals either by direct infection of the genital system or by producing toxin metabolites (mycotoxins), which are subsequently ingested and absorbed. Moreover, mycotic abortion is the most important consequence of fungal infection of the genital tract (**Garoussi et al., 2007**).

From the obtained results in (Table 1), a total of 20 fungal species related to 8 genera were isolated from 25 samples of vaginal swabs collected from cases of cows suffered from abortion. The main isolated genera of fungi were *Aspergillus* spp. (80%), *Fusarium* spp. (16%), *Penicillium* spp. (32%), *Cladosporium* spp. (12%), *Alternaria* spp. (8%), *C. albicans* (40%), *C. tropicalis* (32%) and *Rhodotorula rubra* (3%). The results concur to some extent with the findings of **Panangala et al., (1978)**; **Patgiri and Uppal (1983)** and **Abdel-Rahman and Ibrahim (2007)** who isolated species of *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, and *Cladosporium*, *Candida*, *Fusarium* and *Penicillium* from vaginal swabs of repeat breeder cows. The predominance of dark-colored fungi may be explained by their higher resistance to dissiccation, strong light and ionizing radiation than non-pigmented forms (**Mirchink et al., 1969**). On the contrary, *A. fumigatus* has been reported by **Knudtson and Kirkbride (1992)** as the most common cause of mycotic placentitis. *Candida albicans* and *C. tropicalis*, were the most frequent yeast species obtained from cows' vaginal swab samples as yeasts have been implicated as causes of bovine reproductive problems, including abortion in cows and infertility in bulls (**Chengappa et al., 1984** and **Morsy, 2007**).

It is clear that the most common isolated mould from cows' feed were *Aspergillus* spp. (100%), *Fusarium* spp. (24%), *Mucor* spp. (28%), *Penicillium* spp. (52%), *Cladosporium*

spp.(8%), *Alternaria* spp. (28%), *C.albicans* (80%), *C. tropicalis* (40%) and *Rhodotorula rubra*(32%). These findings were in agreement with the results of **Arakawa (2007)** and **Hassan *et al.*, (2008)**. Also, it has been estimated that 25% of the world's crop production is contaminated with mycotoxins. **Pusterla *et al.* (1996)** suggested that the primary infection was attributed to inhalation of spores originating from moldy hay or soil.

In the present study, the current data in table (2) showed that, sera of twenty cases of diseased cattle that suffered from loss of weight gain, low productivity, diarrhea, disturbance in fertility and sudden mortality of some cases, contained significant levels of aflatoxins and ZEAR. Meanwhile, 60% of cattle had mean levels of aflatoxins (15.20 ± 0.01 ppb) and zearalenon detected in 80% of cattle with the mean level of (62 ± 0.1), respectively (Table, 2). Mycotoxins in cattle sera in Egypt in association with symptoms of toxicities were previously reported by **Hassan (1994)**. The effects of mycotoxins in human and animals varied from carcinogenic; nephrotoxic and immunosuppressive health effects (**Morriss, *et al.*, 1997** and **Hassan *et al.*, 2009**). Although the main route of human exposure to mycotoxins has been identified as the direct ingestion of contaminated cereals, grains and food of animal origin (**Morriss, *et al.*, 1997**), there are many studies about whether or not the ingestion of meat, milk, and eggs originating from mycotoxin-exposed food-production animals is a significant pathway for mycotoxins among humans (**Wafia and Hassan, 2000** and **Hassan *et al.*, 2003**). Feed samples were examined for fungal contamination and detection of mycotoxins. They were subjected for detection of aflatoxins, the results revealed that the amounts of AFB₁, OA, ZEAR. and T₂ were detected in (60%; 40%; 32%; and 36%) with the mean levels of (55.00 ± 1.50 , 45.00 ± 0.30 and 31.00 ± 0.20 and 26.00 ± 0.02 ppb), respectively (Table, 3). The significant levels of mycotoxins in the present feed samples and serum of diseased animals gave a large possibility that mycotoxins were responsible for disease

outbreaks in animals. The Food and drug administration has established recommended maximum levels for aflatoxins in animal feed are 20 µg/kg of feed (**FDA, 1994**). The permissible limits of aflatoxin for large ruminants varied between 700-1000 ppm/ Ton of feed this limit will cause loss of weight gain, high food consumption and low feed efficiency (**Keyle *et al.*, 1970**). Whereas, the O.A produced significant pathological changes in each pregnant animal at the levels of 2.5 ppm of animal body weight for 5 days when given orally (**Nesheim, 1971**). On the other hand the trichothecenes mycotoxins (T₂) produced such changes at doses high as 10 ppm (**Epply and Baily, 1993**).

The detected levels of mycotoxins were significantly over the permissible limits in feeds as a result of continuous feeding of toxicated feed. The same findings were detected by many authors as (**Hassan *et al.*, 2002**), in association with significant high mycotoxin levels in feed and sera of diseased animals.

The detoxification of toxic feed become a critical demand and ammonium hydroxide was the most safe chemical compound used for this purpose.

In this study, we demonstrated that the AFB₁ and zearalenon in serum of cattle lead to a marked elevation in the serum enzymes activities of (AST, ALT and GGT) table (4) which indicated the hepatocellular damage, as previously reported (**Orsi *et al.*, 2007** and **Nayak and Sashidhar, 2010**). This elevation could potentially be attributed to hepatic degeneration and subsequent leakage of enzymes into circulation after rupture of the plasma membrane and cellular damage (**Lyuch *et al.*, 1971** and **Afzali and Devegowda, 1999**). Such hepatic toxic effect of aflatoxin is attributed to its active metabolite in liver as epoxide, **Netke *et al.*, (1997)** which covalently bind to DNA and may affect structural and enzymatic protein function (**Cullen and Newbern, 1994**). Moreover the elevation of serum GGT activity suggested hepatic necrosis, thickness of bile duct and intrahepatic cholestasis (**Kaneko *et al.*, 1997**). The levels of serum urea and creatinine

were significantly high in aflatoxicated groups as compared to healthy and that group of animals fed on the treated feed with ammonium hydroxide. This increase in concentrations in toxicated animals might be due to nephrotoxic action, which causes renal impairment by destruction of epithelial cells of proximal and distal convoluted tubules and alterations in tubular function (**Nashwa *et al.*, 2008**). Microbial protein synthesis in the rumen is inhibited by mycotoxins and more free ammonia remains in the rumen, then absorbed into the blood, and is metabolized to urea, resulting in elevated blood urea concentrations and reduced hepatic fractional protein synthesis rates (**Chowdhury and Smith, 2005** and **Danicke *et al.*, 2005 and 2006**).

Mycotoxigenesis in cattle and buffaloes induced significantly decreased values in serum total protein, albumin, alpha globulin, beta globulin, and gamma globulin (Table, 5). Decrease in serum globulin in mycotoxicated animals might be due to the adverse effect of mycotoxins on synthesis of total proteins and globulin. These results agree with **Osuna and Edds (1982)** in pigs; **Hassan and mogda (2003)** in quails and **Madheswaran *et al.*, (2004)** in chickens. Mycotoxins cause inhibition of DNA and protein synthesis as well as immunosuppression due to the inflammation and cirrhosis of liver and kidneys (**Harvey *et al.*, 1991 and Salem *et al.*, 2007**). At the same table (5) the globulin component showed drop in a1, a2, b1 and g1 globulin in all the diseased animals, while an increase of g2 globulin was recorded in healthy animals. These results coincided with the tune of total proteins and albumin. This may be attributed to that AFB₁ causes hepatotoxic, nephrosis and liver and kidneys hemorrhages (**Tietz, 1996**). In addition, mycotoxins has immunosuppressive effect inhibit nearly cellular and humeral immunologic reaction (**Tietz, 1996 and Hassan *et al.*, 1997**). The decrease in serum level of globulin might be due to the adverse effect of mycotoxins on synthesis of total proteins and globulin (**Agag, 2004; Awaad *et al.*, 2011 and Hassan *et al.*, 2011**)

This study showed that the mycotoxicated animals had significant increase in serum level of malondialdehyde (MDA). Mycotoxins particularly AFB₁ are well known to generate free radicals, disturbing the antioxidant status and ultimately leading to oxidative stress and carcinogenesis (**Rastogi *et al.*, 2007**). Lipid peroxidation plays an important role in carcinogenesis (**Banakar *et al.*, 2004**) and may lead to the formation of several toxic products, such as malondialdehyde (MDE) and 4-hydroxynonenal. Also, AFB₁ epoxide is a very reactive and unstable metabolite of AFB₁ that will bind to cellular macromolecules like DNA, RNA, lipids and proteins, leading to lipid peroxidation and cellular injury. (**Stresser *et al.*, 1994**). The hepatic damage is associated with an increase in the tissue malondialdehyde (MDA) level, an indirect index of lipid peroxidation (**Shyamal *et al.*, 2010**)

The present study shows that serum NO level significantly increased in mycotoxicated cattle and buffaloes. It has been reported that elevated levels of lipid peroxidation stimulates host cells, mainly monocytes/ macrophages, to produce and release NO by induction of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS) protein, resulting in cytotoxicity and DNA damage (**Raso *et al.*, 2001**).

Our finding of low serum retinol, and a-tocopherol, in toxicated cattle compared to apparently healthy and treated animals (table, 6) was in agreements with previous studies by **Clarke *et al.*, 1984 and Vatassery *et al.*, 1986**. Aflatoxin causes oxidative stress by inducing the epoxide reactive ring, reducing the antioxidant defense systems of cells via depleting non enzymatic antioxidant system (vitamins and glutathione) and/or increasing susceptibility of cells to oxidative attack by altering the membrane integrity and fatty acid composition (**Lee *et al.*, 2009; lim *et al.*, 2004 and Lee and Jacobs, 2005**).

This study, reported the dangerous effects of fungal diseases and their mycotoxins and its pollution of animal feed which resulted significant losses in animal health which is an important contributor to the country's economy in

the form of meat, milk, wool and leather, with respect to the effects of environmental factors. Therefore, frequent testing program of the ani-

mal feeds and their environment for fungi and mycotoxin contamination is a critical demand to secure the animal and human health.

Table (1). Prevalence of fungal species in clinical samples of cattle.

Fungal isolates	Milk of mastitic animals (25)		Nasal swabs (25)		Vaginal swabs (25)		Feeds (25)	
	No. of +ve	%	No. of +ve	%	No. of +ve	%	No. of +ve	%
<i>Aspergillus</i> sp.:	22	88	24	96	20	80	25	100
1- <i>A. candidus</i> .	6	24	1	4	0	0	15	60
2- <i>A. clavatus</i> .	2	8	2	8	2	8	1	4
3- <i>A. flavus</i> .	20	80	20	80	13	52	18	72
4- <i>A. fumigatus</i> .	21	84	16	64	7	28	5	20
5- <i>A. niger</i> .	10	40	20	8	23	92	12	48
6- <i>A. ochraceus</i> .	0	0	0	0	5	20	5	40
<i>Fusarium</i> sp.:	10	40	16	64	4	16	6	24
1- <i>F. oxysporum</i> .	10	40	1	4	0	0	6	24
2- <i>F. verticillioides</i> .	2	20	2	8	4	16	1	4
<i>Mucor</i> species.	0	0	4	8	0	0	7	28
<i>Penicillium</i> sp.:	2	8	0	0	8	32	13	52
1- <i>P. citrinum</i> .	1	4	3	12	0	0	0	0
2- <i>P. duclauxii</i> .	0	0	0	0	3	12	2	8
3- <i>P. funiculosum</i> .	0	0	10	40	2	8	0	0
4- <i>P. islandicum</i> .	0	0	1	4	2	8	0	0
5- <i>P. oxalicum</i> .	1	4	0	0	4	16	11	44
6- <i>P. purpurogenum</i> .	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8
<i>Cladosporium</i> species.	2	8	4	16	3	12	2	8
<i>Alternaria alternate</i> .	1	4	1	4	2	8	7	28
<i>Candida albicans</i> .	15	60	6	24	10	40	20	80
<i>Candida tropicalis</i> .	6	24	17	68	8	32	10	40
<i>Rhodotorula rubra</i> .	4	16	3	12	3	3	8	32

- 25 samples of each were examined.

Table (2). Determination of mycotoxins in serum of cattle.

Animal	Total No.	Aflatoxin B ₁			Zearalenone		
		Positive cases	%	Mean levels ppb	Positive cases	%	Mean levels ppb
Apparently healthy cattle	20	2	10	2.50±0.01	1	5	5.00±0.00
Diseased cattle	20	12	60	15.20±0.01	16	80	62.00±0.10

-ppb : Part per billion.

Table (3). Mycotoxins in feed consumed by cattle.

Mycotoxin in feeds	Aflatoxin B ₁			Ochratoxin A			Zearalenon			T ₂			Fumonisin BI		
	Positive		Mean of levels ppb	Positive		Mean of levels ppb	Positive		Mean of levels ppb	Positive		Mean of levels ppb	Positive		Mean of levels ppb
	No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%	
Animal feeds	15	60	55±1.50	10	40	45±0.30	8	32	31±0.20	12	36	26±0.02	11	44	40±2.1

-Fifty five samples of feed were examined.

- ppb: part per billion.

Table (4) .Changes in biochemical parameters of cattle sera due to mycotoxicosis.

Chemical tests	Apparently healthy cattle	Diseased cattle Groups	Treated cattle Groups
AST (ul/ml)	49.11±4.26	90.45 ± 7.21***	63.33±3.20*
ALT (ul/ml)	30.67± 3.84	51.34± 3.29***	43.33±3.80*
Ggt (ul/ml)	22.64 ± 1.15	64.18±4.49***	49.90±3.54*
Urea (mg/dl)	43.48±1.67	58.86±3.79**	48.65±1.60
Creatinine(mg/dl)	0.94±0.05	1.14±0.06*	0.96±0.96

Table (5). Patterns of protein electrophoresis in diseased cattle.

Patterns of protein	Apparently healthy cattle	Diseased cattle Groups	Treated cattle Groups
T.protein(g/dl)	6.16 ± 0.09	5.42 ±0.16***	6.04±0.21
Albumin(g/dl)	2.38 ±0.04	1.98 ±0.08***	2.26±0.07
Alpha 1(g/dl)	0.82 ±0.02	0.63 ±0.01***	0.72±0.03*
Alpha 2(g/dl)	0.35 ±0.03	0.29 ±0.01	0.34±0.05
T-alph(g/dl)	1.17 ±0.04	0.92 ±0.01***	1.06±0.03*
Beta 1(g/dl)	0.66 ±0.02	0.56 ±0.01***	0.66±0.03
Beta 2(g/dl)	0.40 ±0.02	0.438 ±0.02	0.48±0.06
T.beta(g/dl)	1.06 ±0.01	0.998 ±0.02*	1.14±0.05
Gamma 1(g/dl)	1.26 ±0.03	1.19 ±0.02**	1.29±0.13
Gamma 2(g/dl)	0.29 ±0.01	0.33 ±0.02	0.29±0.02
T.Gamma(g/dl)	1.55 ±0.04	1.52 ±0.05	1.58±0.13
T.globulin(g/dl)	3.78 ±0.05	3.43±0.09**	3.78±0.12
A/G	0.62 ±0.01	0.57±0.01***	0.59±0.008*

*Results are expressed as means ± SEM (n =15), student 't' test

Table (6). Alteration of Levels of antioxidant in toxicated cattle.

Antioxidants tests	Apparently healthy cattle	Diseased cattle Groups	Treated cattle Groups
Malondialdehyde (MDA)(nmol/ml)	1.94±0.37	4.18±0.39***	2.14±0.35**
GSH(Glutathion)mmol/l)	12.40±6.80	18.20±5.70**	16.33±1.74
Nitric oxide(N O) (µmol/L)	35.17 ± 2.40	55.84 ± 6.50 **	48.01±4.21*
Vitamin A(ug/dl)	33.25± 2.44	28.67 ± 2.51	30.00±1.54
Vitamin E(ug/ml)	14.54 ±3.58	12.91±2.63	13.68±1.65

*Results are expressed as means ± SEM (n =15), student 't' test.

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دراسات عن الامراض الفطرية والتسمم الفطري في الابقار.

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الملخص العربي

تم إجراء هذه الدراسة على 40 حالة من الابقار المريضة و السليمة ظاهريا (20 عينة سيرم من كل) في محافظة القاهرة . كما تم تجميع عدد 100 عينة من البان الحيوانات المريضة بالتهاب الضرع و مسحات أنفية و مسحات مهبلية والعلائق المستخدمة لتغذية الحيوانات المريضة (25 عينة من كل نوع). وقد اوضح الفحص الفطري للعينات ، عزل فطريات الاسبرجيليس بمعدلات واضحة. حيث سجل فطر الاسبرجيليس نسبة عدوى في عينات الابقار الموضحة عالية (88%، 96%، 80%، 100%) على الترتيب. بينما سجلت الاجناس و الانواع الاخرى من العفن و الخمائر بنسب قليلة نسبيا. اوضحت عينات السيرم المجمعة من الابقار المصابة نسب عالية من الافلاتوكسين و الزيرالينون. وقد كان مستوى الافلاتوكسين في 60% من الابقار (0.01±15.20) و كان مستوى الزيرالينون 80% من الابقار (0.1±62) على الترتيب. بينما عينات العلائق المستخدمة في تربية الحيوانات اُحتوت على كميات من AFB₁; OA; ZEAR.; T₂ بنسبة (36%، 32%، 40%، 60%) من العلائق بمتوسط (50.1±0.55) و (30.0±0.45) و (2.0±0.31) و (0.0±0.26) ppb على الترتيب. وعند اجراء الفحص الكيميائي لعينات الامصال من الحيوانات المريضة و السليمة ظاهريا مقارنة بمجموعة من الابقار المغذاة على علائق بها الافلاتوكسين ومعالجة ب 3% هيدروكسيد الامونيوم قد اوضحت النتائج أن الافلاتوكسين B₁ ، و الزيرالينون يسبب ارتفاع واضح في مستوى انزيمات AST, ALT , GGT مما يتسبب في تدمير خلايا الكبد. وكانت نسب اليوريا و الكرياتينين عالية بصورة واضحة في الحيوانات المريضة بالتسمم الفطري مقارنة بالحيوانات السليمة ظاهريا والمعالجة. وأدت السموم الفطرية الى انخفاض واضح لمستويات البروتين الكلي في الدم، الزلال ، الالف ، البيتا، الجاما جلوبيولين. وعند فحص امصال الحيوانات بالمجموعات الثلاثة لعوامل الاكسدة اوضحت النتائج وجود ارتفاع في MDA و اكسيد النيتريك NO الذي يتسبب في تحفيز افراز الانزيم المخلوق لأكسيد النيتريك وعند اجراء التغذية على علائق سامة معالجة بهيدروكسيد الامونيوم ادت الى احداث تحسن واضح في المؤشرات الكيميائية السابقة مقارنة بالتغيرات المرضية في امصال الحيوانات المريضة المسممة ، وقد تمت مناقشة مستفيضة للنتائج الحالية بوضوح تام .