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Outbreak of Morels Disease (Sheep Abscess disease) in the Sudan

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Abstract

We report here for an outbreak of abscess disease in a flock of sheep in Al Samra village, Khartoum North, Sudan. The flock consisted of 100 animals of different ages ranging from 4 - 12 months. The animals were free grazing during the daytime and they were kept in a pen at the evenings, where they receive some type of feed supplemented with concentrates. Thirty animals were showing one or two abscess of superficial (prescapular or parotid) lymph nodes. Abscesses were round with diameter of 4 - 10 cm, soft in consistency when palpated. All abscesses were incised following aseptical procedures (shaving, rubbing with tincture of iodine and 70 % alcohol) and the contents were expelled from which samples were taken in sterile containers. The contents of almost all abscesses were odourless, viscid, yellowish white to creamy in colour and were enclosed in a thick connective tissue capsule. Bacteriological examination of the contents of abscesses of 28 (93.33 %) animals revealed pure cultures of Gram-positive cocci arranged in pairs, tetrads and clusters. Biochemical tests for these bacteria were typical to those of *Staphylococcus aureus* subspecies *anaerobius*, the aetiological agent of sheep abscess disease, which was firstly described by Morel in 1911 in France. Abscesses of the remaining two animals yielded growth of *Corynebacterium* spp., the causative agent of caseous lymphadenitis of sheep. Results of this report confirm findings of previous investigations on abscess syndromes of sheep in the Sudan, in which *Staph. aureus* subsp. *anaerobius* was found to be the first organism to be incriminated in superficial lymph node abscess in sheep, especially of small ages and in sheep in steaming up operations.

Keywords: *Corynebacterium* spp., Morels Disease, sheep abscess, *Staphylococcus aureus*