Caprine tuberculosis in vivo diagnosis is reached through the tuberculin skin test. The results are interpreted using the same criteria as with cattle. The objective of this study is to communicate the results of different experiments designed to evaluate the performance of the test among goats. The research was conducted among 121 flocks from 7 regions of Argentina. Adult goats (10,790) were tuberculinized with bovine PPD at the caudal fold. From different regions and flocks 41 positive animals were selected for necropsy and for drawing samples for histopathological and bacteriological diagnosis. The isolates were typified by spoligotyping. 440 animals showed reactions to the skin test. In 36 necropsies performed in animals from 6 regions, we did not observe relationship between the skin test and the macroscopic, microscopic and bacteriological findings. The difference between measurements of PPD reactions did not exceed 10mm (average 6 mm). During the slaughters for their own consumption, the owners of these goats did not report lesions or clinical symptoms compatible with tuberculosis. A different situation was observed in 4 flocks from the 7th region in which the animals had respiratory symptoms and died. The prevalence of positive goats was 43% to 53% with reactions of average 16 mm. Macroscopic and microscopic lesions compatible with tuberculosis and isolation of Mycobacterium bovis spoligotype identified as SB0140 in the international database were found in five necropsied animals from two of this flocks. We present two scenarios: one with sharp reactions to skin test. These reactions correspond with pathological and bacteriological findings. There is another scenario with mild reactions and in which no lesions or isolation were observed. Some explanations for these could be: the ability of the immune system to eliminate or control the bacillus so it remains in a latent state, which would result in sensitivity of positive animals with small reactions but without lesions or isolation; the virulence of the strain; the infecting dose; or the cross reactions due to other mycobacteria. Since a positive tuberculin reaction does not mean illness, we believe that to consider a flock infected we should assess other factors: precedents, clinical symptoms, size of the reactions, lesions and mycobacteria isolation. We can conclude that it is absolutely necessary to continue and deepen the research on this topic.

Keywords: Goat, skin test, tuberculosis