OUTBREAK OF RABIES IN DAIRY BOVINES OF PIAUI, NORTHEAST BRAZIL

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The rabies represents a biggest economic problem and public health for producers of beef cattle and milk in South America, with damage estimated at 30 million of dollars per year in Latin America, of which 22.5 million occur in Brazil. This disease is an anthropozoonosis caused by an RNA virus of the family Rhabdoviridae, genus Lyssavirus, which has seven genotypes, only genotype I was identified as causing disease in the Americas. Affects terrestrial mammals and bats and its main transmitter for these species is the hematophagous bat Desmodus rotundus. This paper aims to report two outbreaks of rabies in cattle occurred in September 2009 in São José do Divino and Piracuruca, both located in the north Piauí State and belonging to the dairy basin region of Parnaiba, Brazil. In São José do Divino was reported deaths of 25 cattle and Piracuruca, six cattle, including young and adult animals, mongrel, more with anti-rabies vaccination. The symptoms included flaccid paralysis of hind limbs, paresis of the tail and decrease of anal reflex, and flaccidity of the tongue, salivation and opisthotonus. Samples of brain and cerebellum of six animals, five of São José do Divino-PI and one of Piracuruca-PI were collected and sent to the Department of Rural Development of the State of Piauí to perform direct immunofluorescence assay (DFA) and biological tests on mice, which were positive in both tests. Moreover, bats of the species Desmodus rotundus (25 specimens) were captured in the property and from neighboring caves and were positive in DFA and biological tests. This study demonstrates the need for adopting measures to prevent and control this disease in cattle in the dairy basin region of Piauí State, since the risk of infection for cattle and humans in this region is high due to strong presence of bats carrying the virus.