

Prevalence of Gastrointestinal Parasites in Cattle in Badulla District (With Special Reference to *Cryptosporidium* spp)

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Due to the recognition of subclinical infections with negative impacts on production as diseases, control of gastrointestinal (GI) parasites in cattle is becoming established. Cryptosporidiosis is a gastrointestinal zoonotic disease and there is no effective therapy for this disease. This study examines prevalence of gastrointestinal parasites in Badulla district including *Cryptosporidium* spp and identifies the significance of age, water source and feeding pattern for the prevalence of *Cryptosporidium* in cattle. The prevalence of gastrointestinal parasites including *Cryptosporidium* in faeces of 250 cattle in three age categories was examined. The eggs of gastrointestinal parasites were identified using the Mc Master method. Larval culture was done to identify the Genera of parasites.

Qa Oocysts of *Cryptosporidium* were demonstrated using the Shearther's sucrose flotation method followed by staining with modified Ziehl Neelsen technique. Prevalence of gastrointestinal parasites and *Cryptosporidium* in Badulla district was 57.20% and 15.20% respectively. *Trichostrongyl* spp, *Haemonchus* spp, *Strongyloid* spp, *Toxocara* spp, *Trichuris* spp, *Moneiza* spp, *Eimeria* spp were the common gastrointestinal parasites in cattle in Badulla district. Prevalence of *Cryptosporidium* is significantly higher in cattle of <6 months (57.89%) compared with 7-12 months and >12 months of age ($P < 0.05$). *Cryptosporidium* oocysts were detected in cattle using surface and well water with the highest prevalence of infection (81.58%) were with surface water. There was no significant association of prevalence of *Cryptosporidium* oocysts with feeding pattern ($P > 0.05$). These animals are likely to play an important role in the epidemiology of cryptosporidiosis in cattle and humans. These findings clearly demonstrate that cattle farmers and the people living in villages amidst cattle in Badulla district are more exposed to the infection.

Key Words: *Cryptosporidium* spp, Gastrointestinal parasites, Cattle