

**EPIDEMIOLOGIC PROFILE OF THE RABIES OF HERBIVORES IN THE STATE OF
PIAUI IN THE PERIOD 2007 TO 2011**

*(PERFIL EPIDEMIOLÓGICO DA RAIVA DOS HERBÍVOROS NO ESTADO DO PIAUÍ NO
PERÍODO DE 2007 A 2011)*

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Rabies is one of the oldest and most widespread zoonosis in the world. It affects most warm-blooded animals and is caused by a neurotropic virus that causes a fatal, acute encephalomyelitis. The bat, *Desmodus rotundus*, is the main carrier of the rabies virus in rural areas of Brazil. In addition to being a zoonosis important to public health, it is also responsible for huge economic losses to livestock. The aim of this study is to report the cases positive for rabies of herbivores in Piauí, from 2007 to 2011, based on the results of laboratory diagnostics performed by the Laboratory of Animal Pathology of the Agência de Defesa Agropecuária in Piauí, ADAPI. The technique used to diagnose the disease was the direct immunofluorescence (DIF). A descriptive analysis of epidemiological data and clinical signs, obtained from the Disease Research Forms (Formulários de Investigação de Doenças Inicial, FORM-IN), was performed while the data were processed to generate graphs and tables using Excel. Of the 92 test results analyzed, samples of herbivores with suspected rabies that were referred for diagnosis, 39 (42.4%) were positive. The cases in cattle accounted for 89.7% of the total, with outbreaks occurring in different seasons. Of the animals affected by rabies, 74% were young, under two years of age and 54% had no record of rabies vaccination. There was no predilection for sex. Predominant clinical signs of the disease in herbivores were some kind of paralysis, showing signs of spinal cord injuries. Preventive measures, particularly vaccination of livestock, carrier population control, as well as sanitary education activities for the communities and farmers should be performed, since rabies in herbivores is an endemic and highly prevalent disease in Piauí.

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