

***Neospora caninum* INFECTION IN CATTLE WITH HIGH ABORTION RATES IN  
BARBOSA, SÃO PAULO**

(*INFECÇÃO POR Neospora caninum EM BOVINOS COM ALTO ÍNDICE DE ABORTAMENTO EM  
BARBOSA, SÃO PAULO*)

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*Neospora caninum* is a protozoan parasite that causes abortions in cattle, whose definitive hosts are canids. This study aims to diagnose the infection by this protozoan of dairy cows with a high rate of abortion in Barbosa, São Paulo. Therefore, in December 2012, 61 blood samples were collected from Holstein dairy cows, with 16.39% abortion rate in the last two years. The farm is located in the peri-urban area of the municipality. Serum samples extracted by centrifuging the blood were screened for the presence of antibodies (IgG) against *N. caninum* by the indirect immunofluorescence technique (IIF). Serum samples were considered positive when titres were greater than or equal to 200. A research conducted prior to this study showed that all animals were negative for the presence of antibodies against *Brucella abortus* and *Leptospira* spp, agents that both are increasingly important in the epidemiology of abortion in cattle. Of the 61 samples, 26.23% (16/61) were positive for the antibodies (IgG) anti-*N. caninum*. The high serological incidence diagnosed for *N. caninum* plus the previous negative results for the other agents investigated (*Brucella abortus* and *Leptospira* spp) lead us to conclude that this protozoan was the possible cause of the abortions occurred in that area, which may have been aggravated by the presence of infected dogs stemmed from the city. The data expressed herein highlight the need to diagnose neosporosis in both definitive (canids) and intermediary hosts, especially cattle raised in peri-urban areas, thus preventing economic losses resulting from these abortions.

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