

**DESCRIPTION OF RABIES CASES IN HERBIVORES IN THE FIRST HALF OF
2012, IN DESCALVADO, SP, BRAZIL**

*DESCRIÇÃO DOS CASOS DE RAIVA EM HERBÍVOROS OCORRIDOS NO PRIMEIRO
SEMESTRE DE 2012, NO MUNICÍPIO DE DESCALVADO, SÃO PAULO, BRASIL*

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Rabies is a zoonosis that affects warm-blooded animals and causes an acute and fatal encephalomyelitis resulting from the virus transmitted primarily through the bite of an ill animal, domestic or wild. The importance of rabies for public health lies in its high lethality, and also the emotional and psychological impact while facing the fear of contracting the disease. In cattle, rabies manifests itself as paralysis and the vampire bats of the species *Desmodus rotundus* are considered the main transmitting agents of disease. This study describes the incidence of reported cases of rabies in herbivores, during the first half of 2012, in Descalvado, SP. The data reporting the notified rabies cases, as well as the results of laboratory tests were obtained from the reports sent to the Descalvado Epidemiological Surveillance and letters sent by the Office of Agricultural Defense (Escritório de Defesa Agropecuária, EDA) in Araraquara. Data were evaluated along with cases of rabies in cattle occurred in the State of São Paulo, in the period 2000-2011. About 117 properties were inspected, totaling 11,894 cattle; 6 buffaloes; 431 equines; 3,684 pigs; 361 sheep; and, 12 goats, in addition to the inspection of 10 vampire bat (*Desmodus rotundus*) shelters, where 68 bats were captured. Since the beginning of the outbreak until May 2012, 19 and 17 cattle of the first and second farms, respectively, that notified the disease, died. The possibility that vampire bats adapt to numerous new shelters, not originally used, may show a close proximity to food supply. This indicates that epidemic rabies in the countryside can behave in a diffuse way and be constrained by natural features of the landscape, compounded by the gradual transformation of the environment caused by human action.

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