

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

FREQUENCY OF LARVAL NODULES OF *DERMATOBIA HOMINIS* (CATTLE GRUB) IN THE BODY OF NATURALLY INFESTED CATTLE (COMPLETE)

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Dermatobia hominis (cattle grub) is one of the most important ectoparasites of domestic animals and is widely distributed in the tropical and subtropical regions of Latin America. The larvae forms of this fly, obligatory parasites found in subcutaneous tissue of domestic animals, are responsible for several economic losses in cattle farms, including the losses in commercialization of cowhide. In Brazil, the damages caused by this ectoparasite are estimated at approximately US\$ 380 million. Previous studies emphasize that 60 % of skin lesions are due to handling of the animals in the rural property and 40 % are due to presence of ectoparasites. The objective of this study was to quantify the larval nodules of *D. hominis* present in bovine body surface, highlighting the sites with the highest incidence. The study was carried out in different rural properties located in 12 counties of the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais. From the herd of each farm, crossbreeds (Zebu x European), males, naturally infested with cattle grub larvae, that had not received endectocides or ectoparasiticides in the last 120 days, totaling 363 cattle were selected. Nodule counts containing live larvae of *D. hominis* (cattle grub) were performed by compression of the area (tactile-visual inspection). The number of larval nodules was recorded and plotted accurately in 15 anatomical regions. The results were statistically analyzed by the F test and the means compared by the Kruskal-Wallis test ($p \geq 0.05$). This work demonstrated that the larvae were grouped preferentially in the regions formed by the areas of the scapula and dorsum, with 35.31% and 32.57% of nodules, respectively. There were no significant differences ($P > 0.05$) in relation to infestation by *D. hominis* larvae on the right and left antimeres. These data are in agreement with other similar studies and suggest that the regions most affected, scapula and dorsum, should receive more attention in treatments. These are considered noble parts due to the quality of the leather, whose depreciation can cause enormous damages to the cowhide industry. These results also provide relevant information for dermatobiosis prevention, allowing the application of ectoparasiticides (depending on the pharmacology) with greater precision in the regions most affected by this diptera.

Keywords: Cattle, Cowhide, *Dermatobia hominis*, Ectoparasites.

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