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ABSTRACT BOOK



SEASON DISTRIBUTION OF TICKS OF SHEEP KEPT UNDER SEMI-INTENSIVE CONDITIONS IN NORTHEAST SERBIA

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ABSTRACT

Small ruminants production, among them goat production, in northeast part of Serbia play important role in providing economical income and high quality animal protein for diet especially for those who live in the rural area. Sheeps in this region are usually kept under semi-intensive (pasture/stable) condition. One of the main health problems in this kind of production system is connected to infestation with parasites, which results in direct and indirect economical losses. The present study was conducted in 61 sheep flocks from the territory of northeast Serbia in the period of March to November 2019, using into consideration the seasonal occurrence and prevalence of ticks. Ticks were from sheep by means lightly sprung forceps. All specimens were placed into glass specimen bottles which had a piece of hard paper inserted bearing the name of locality name of host and date and hour of collection. The tick species and sex/gender were identified by morphometric characteristics. In total, we examined 342 sheep and tick infestation was detected in 46.24% of examined animals. The most abundant species was *Ixodes ricinus* found in 48.91%, followed by *Dermacentor marginatus* (29.91%), *Rhipicephalus bursa* (11.22%), *R.sanguineus* (9.72%), *D.recticulatus* (4.21%) and *Haemaphysalis punctata* (3.17%). Of the total number of collected ticks, 54.15% were females and 45.85% were males. The population maximum for three species *Dermacentor marginatus*, *D.recticulatus* as well as *Haemaphysalis punctata* occurred in April. May was the month of the population peak for *Iricinus* and it was noted that this species started to decrease in abundance in June. *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* and *R.bursa* reached their maxima decreasing gradually until August, and disappearing completely in September and October. The autumn population peak in September occurred for the *Iricinus* and *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* and in October for the *Iricinus* and *R.bursa*.

Keywords: sheep, ticks, northeast Serbia, semi-intensive breeding, season distribution