MASTITIS AMONG BUFFALOES IN SRI LANKA

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The incidence and etiology of mastitis and udder infections of 493 milking buffaloes belonging to state livestock farms at Polonnaruwa, Kotaliya, Ridiyagama, Nikaweratiya and Chilaw were studied.

Out of 1672 udder quarters (teats) examined 97 quarters (5.8%) were found to be nonfunctional as a result of mastitis during the previous lactations. Of the functional quarters 20% quarters of 43% animals were found to be positive for the California Mastitis Test (CMT). Cultural examination of milk from the functional quarters yielded mastitis pathogens from 12% quarters, (Staphylococus aureus from 1% stroptococcal species from 11%, and E. coli from 0.4%). The incidence of mastitis as judged by the CMT (20% quarters) and the udder infections as judged by cultural examination (12% quarters) is very low compared to the corresponding figures in cattle (Wanasinghe 1972). The incidence of mastitis and udder infections among cattle were about 50% more than the corresponding figures for buffaloes. Thus from the point of view of mastitis, buffaloes could be considered a superior animal for milk production as the incidence of mastitis among buffaloes appear to be comparatively very low.

The udder infections due to S. aureus were seen to be very low (1%) in buffaloes, compared to cattle in other studies, which was about 7% of total infections (Wanasinghe 1980). No definite reasons can be given for the comparatively low incidence of mastitis and udder infections among buffaloes. However, the tightness of the streak canal which acts as a barrier to infections can be suggested as a cause. The wallowing habit of the buffalo and the suckling of calves throughout the lactation could also be contributory factors.

References:

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