

TITLE: *Dermatophilus congolensis* AS A MAIN CAUSE OF DERMATITIS AFFECTING HORSES IN PARANA-BRAZIL.

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ABSTRACT:

Dermatophilosis is a bacterial transmissible disease occurring in a large variety of domestic and wild animals affecting cattles, horses, sheeps, goats, rabbits and deers causing epidermal lesions. This disease is also known as bovine estreptotrichosis and lumpy wool and strawberry foot-root in sheep and in cattle, respectively (Timoney *et al.*, 1988; Pereira *et al.*, 2001). The lesions are non pruritic, characterized by small, confluent, raised and circumscribed crusts composed of epidermal cells and coagulated serous exudate with embebed hairs on the skin of the back mainly (Timoney *et al.*, 1988; Quinn *et al.*, 1994). The infective form of this this microorganism is the motile zoospore which is released when infected skin becomes wet although a mechanic and primary lesion are necessary to start an infection (Timoney *et al.*, 1988). In the bacteriologic hospital routine of the Department of Veterinary a more frequency of cutaneous samples from horses happens in the hot and wet summer seasons probably associated with stress, nutritional deficiencies and superficial trauma. In the last summer, 20 samples of horses dermatitis suspected of dermatophilosis were sent to bacterial and mycologic cultures. Ten of them (50%) were positive to *Dermatophilus congolensis*. The laboratory diagnosis was based on direct microscopy smear stained by Gram and simultaneous culture on surface of Blood Agar incubated at 37°C during at least 72 hours. Typical haemolytic wrinkled golden colonies are firmly adherent to the medium and embedded into the agar. In many samples the isolation of pure culture was impossible because of secondary bacterial contamination but the direct microscopic revealed the characteritic "tram-track" appearance. In one of the samples (10%) *Staphylococcus aureus* was isolated in a pure culture of severe pruritic lesions and the remain samples had a non conclusive diagnosis. Surprisingly, all the samples were negative to dermatophyte infection.

Keywords: dermatophilosis, dermatitis , equine, prevalence.

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