Occurrence of strongyles (*Strongylidae*) in horses from small farms on the basis of necropsy*

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Abstract

Three parts of the large intestine, i.e. the dorsal and ventral colon, and caecum in 41 working horses from small farms in southern Poland were examined. Five species of large strongyles (3 migratory species from genus *Strongylus* and 2 non-migratory from genus *Triodontophorus*) and as well as 17 species of cyathostomes were revealed. The prevalence of large strongyles was observed, accordingly: *Strongylus vulgaris* – 80.5%, *S. equinus* – 9.8%, *S. edentatus* – 4.9%, *Triodontophorus serratus* – 19.5% and *T. brevicauda* – 7.3%. Among cyathostomes, 5 most prevalent species were *Cyathostomum catinatum* – 31.7%, *Coronocyclus coronatus* – 31.7%, *Clycysteophonous calicus* – 24.4%, *Cylicocyclus nassatus* – 24.4% and *C. ashworthi* – 19.5%. The highest prevalence of *S. vulgaris* among all *Strongylidae* isolated specimens suggests that the infection with this parasite should be taken into account in the diagnosis of colics in working horses kept in the small farming system.

Key words: horses, strongyles, necropsy

Introduction

Cyathostomes occur most commonly in horses despite the regular anthelmintic treatment. Large strongyles are of low importance, since deworming on seasonal basis significantly reduces their prevalence (Betlejewska 2000, Gawor 2002, Kornaś et al. 2004, Gawor et al. 2006, Romaniuk et al. 2002, 2003, 2007, Romaniuk and Jaworski 2007). However, when horses are not frequently treated, large strongyles might be common. Both cyathostomes (*Cyathostominae*) and large strongyles (*Strongyllinae*) (migratory species from genus *Strongylus* and non-migratory from genus *Triodontophorus* and *Craterostomum*) occur in the caecum and colon. Horses become infected after the ingestion of infective larvae on pastures or in horse-boxes. Cyathostome larvae as well as larvae of non-migratory large strongyles from genus *Triodontophorus* and *Craterostomum* penetrate the mucosa where they moult into fourth stage. Fourth-stage larvae return to the lumen of the intestine, moult and mature. In the wintertime, larvae undergo arrested...