

Introducing veterinary parasitology in school

¹SOUZA, Jorge Lucas Nascimento; ¹SILVA, Carlíkelly Gleicy; ¹SILVA, Ana Keila Queiroz da.; ²MANGABEIRA E SILVA, Iasmim Santos; ³MEDEIROS, Henrique Rocha de, ⁴ZAROS, Lilian Giotto.

¹*Discente do Curso de Ciências Biológicas (UFRN);* ²*Discente do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Produção Animal (UFRN).* ³*Docente, co-orientador da Unidade Acadêmica Especializada em Ciências Agrárias (UFRN),* ⁴*Docente, orientadora do Departamento de Microbiologia e Parasitologia (UFRN)*

Infections caused by gastrointestinal parasites that affect production animals have been widely studied, since the most used treatment has become ineffective due to the development of parasitic resistance. In addition, these drugs accumulate in the products of animal origin and in the environment. Often, the indiscriminate antihelmintics use occurs due to the lack of information from the producers, becoming the educational strategies necessary. Among these strategies, it is highlighted the importance of veterinary parasitology teaching at school, once students take to their home the knowledge acquired in school. The aim of this study was to evaluate the prior high school students' knowledge in the urban and rural areas from the municipalities of Macaíba, Parnamirim, São Gonçalo do Amarante and Ceará-Mirim in the Rio Grande do Norte (RN) state. An extension project was carried out involving health education with the purpose of reporting the actions used to contribute to the veterinary parasitology knowledge, once for many of them this practice is a family income source. The study was carried out by application of an initial questionnaire to evaluate the students' knowledge about veterinary parasitology and to quantitatively characterize those who depend on the practice of animal production as income source. Afterwards, the students participated in lectures and games about the subject, it was made observations of nematode specimens under optical microscope. They were submitted to an assessment through the application of a second questionnaire, which had the purpose of analyzing if the project contributed to the students knowledge, as well as to evaluate if the activity was positive. The activities were performed between 2015 and 2016 and a total of 533 questionnaires were analyzed, which 307 were initial and 226 were final. 83% of students said they had never heard about worms of veterinary importance. The other 17% were actually meant for dogs and cats, not the focus of this work which was farm animals. Thus, it was found that 100% of the students were very unaware about the helminths that compromised production animals. A worrying fact was that 70% of the students, mostly from the rural areas, claimed to be financially dependent on the creation of these animals or had someone in the family who exercised this practice, varying among students from rural and urban areas. Not knowing about these pathologies would be one of the reasons to contribute to helminths appearance of worms in these animals and financially damaging the source of income. Finally after the lectures and educational actions, the students became aware of the problems that were directly linked to their daily life. It is suggested more educational actions related not only to human parasitology but also to veterinary parasitology, since sheep and goat production has become constant in rural areas.

Key words: education; teaching methods; veterinary parasitology