

Prevalence of ovine footrot in the tropical climate of southern India and isolation and characterisation of *Dichelobacter nodosus*

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Summary

The present communication records the first determination of the prevalence of footrot in the unexpected situation of the tropical climate of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, two states in southern India where the maximum temperature rises to 42°C. In total, 73 outbreaks of footrot in Nellore brown sheep were investigated in 11 districts of Andhra Pradesh and one district of Tamil Nadu during the period March 2009 to March 2011. The overall prevalence of ovine footrot was 15%, with severity scores of 2 to 4 (lesion severity scale 0 to 4). The outbreaks occurred mostly during the rainy season, which is usually from June to December. From a total of 1,050 samples of lesions in naturally infected sheep, 478 (45.5%) were positive for *Dichelobacter nodosus*. Serogrouping of the isolates revealed six serogroups: A, B, C, E, F and I. Among the positive samples, 448 (93.7%) were a single serogroup and 30 (6.3%) carried a mixed infection with two serogroups. Taking single and mixed infections together, serogroup B was most frequent at 50.4% and was found in all districts, followed by serogroup I in 29.3% of samples, A in 14%, F in 6.7% and C in 5.6%. Serogroup E was detected in only one sample. Serogroups A and F were detected for the first time in India. All of 58 *D. nodosus* isolates in a sub-sample representing different serogroups were found to be virulent, based on the production of thermostable proteases and the presence of the integrase A gene *intA*. Thus, the present paper reporting isolation and characterisation of *D. nodosus* confirms the occurrence of virulent footrot in the tropical climate of southern India.

Keywords

Dichelobacter nodosus – Footrot – Ovine footrot – Serogroup – Sheep – Southern India – Virulent footrot.

Introduction

Footrot is a highly contagious and economically important disease of ruminants, especially sheep and goats. The disease is characterised by an exudative inflammation followed by necrosis of the epidermal tissues of the interdigital skin and hoof matrix, which results in separation of the hoof from the underlying soft tissue. Affected animals exhibit

lameness, loss of body condition, reduced production of wool and meat, and decreased fertility (1, 2). Footrot is mainly considered a disease of temperate climates with moderate to heavy rainfall. Muddy pastures, frequent rain and foot injuries predispose animals to the infection (2, 3, 4).

The disease results from the synergistic action of several bacterial species, of which *Dichelobacter nodosus* is the

essential causative agent (2). The bacterium is slow growing and requires a special medium under anaerobic conditions. Currently, *D. nodosus* strains are classified into at least ten serogroups (A–I, M) (5, 6) based on fimbrial antigens. The identification of serogroups of *D. nodosus* in a footrot lesion previously required isolation and purification of the organism by subculture, followed by antigenic analysis using serological methods, which could take three or four weeks. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) with 16S ribosomal RNA (rRNA) gene-specific primers is now used for identification of *D. nodosus* (1) and multiplex PCR (m-PCR) with serogroup-specific primers for serogrouping, without the need for culture (7). Strains of *D. nodosus* can be categorised as virulent, intermediate or benign (8, 9), based on the production of thermostable proteases and/or the integrase A gene *intA*, and relate to the corresponding forms of the disease (2).

In India, footrot has been reported only from the Himalayan state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the climate is temperate (10, 11). However, there has been strong suspicion of ovine footrot in the tropical climatic extremes of southern India, based on clinical symptoms and lesions but without any laboratory confirmation. Thus, the aim of the present investigation was to determine the prevalence of footrot, with isolation and characterisation of *D. nodosus*, in the unexpected situation of tropical Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu states in southern India.

Materials and methods

Inspection of animals

A total of 73 outbreaks of footrot in Nellore brown sheep (a hairy-type meat breed of southern India) reported by local veterinary officers were attended in 11 districts of Andhra Pradesh (Chittoor, Nellore, Kadapa, Kurnool, Guntur, Krishna, Nizamabad, Prakasam, Srikakulam, Mehaboobnagar, Nalgonda) and the Tiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu (Fig. 1) during the period March 2009 to March 2011. Overall, a total of 16,889 animal feet in 295 household flocks (Table I) were inspected for signs of the disease and scored on a scale of 0 to 4 according to the severity of the lesions (12).

Collection of samples

Sterile cotton swabs were used to collect 1,050 duplicate samples of footrot exudate (Table II) from among the 2,548 animal feet with lesions of severity 2 (interdigital dermatitis) to 4 (under-running of the hard horn of the hoof) on the scale. The samples were taken from the apex of the cleft between the horn of the hoof and the sensitive underlying tissues. One of the samples was inoculated onto a solid medium and the other was used for DNA extraction for direct detection of *D. nodosus* as described below.

Isolation of *Dichelobacter nodosus*

Swab samples were immediately streaked onto trypticase arginine serine agar containing 4% hoof powder and placed in anaerobic jars (Hi-Media, India) with gas packs (Becton Dickinson and Company, United States of America [USA]). The jars were transported to the laboratory within 2 h to 3 h and incubated at 37°C. After five days of incubation, suspected colonies were subcultured on the same medium to achieve pure isolates of *D. nodosus*. Plates that did not show any characteristic growth were incubated for a further five days before being discarded as negative. Colonies were confirmed as *D. nodosus* by demonstration of the typical cellular morphology in Gram-stained smears and detection of the species-specific 16S rRNA gene in PCR.

Extraction of bacterial DNA

Material present on the swabs was suspended in 100 µl of sterile phosphate buffered saline in 1.5 ml microcentrifuge tubes by gentle vortexing. After removal of the swabs, the samples were boiled for 5 min, cooled on ice

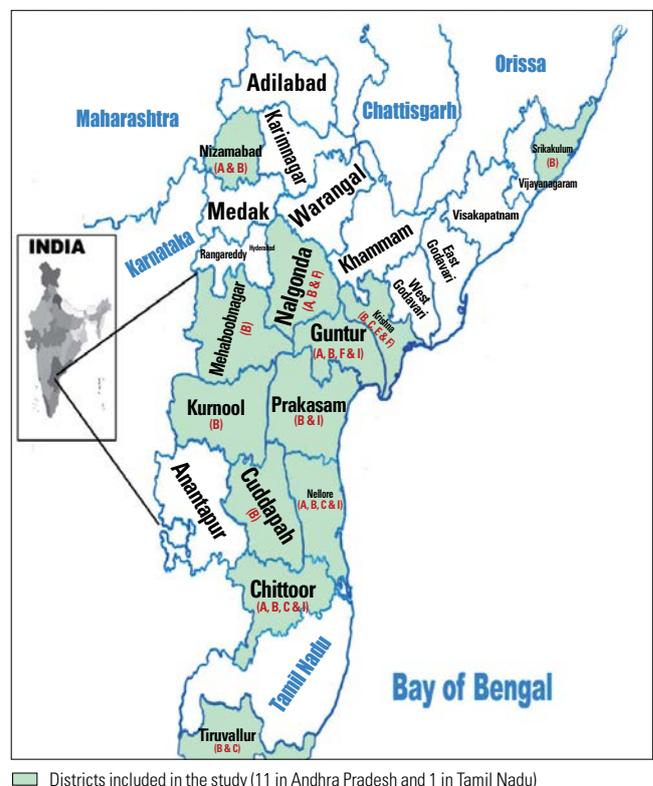


Fig. 1
Distribution of footrot and serogroups of *Dichelobacter nodosus* in districts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu states of southern India

The serogroups identified in each district are given in brackets

Table I
Prevalence (%) of footrot in sheep in the tropical climate of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu states in southern India

District no.*	District name	No. of footrot outbreaks attended	No. of household flocks examined	No. of animal feet inspected	No. of animal feet affected	
1	Chittoor	18	86	4,583	824	18%
2	Nellore	22	108	5,326	1,006	19%
3	Kadapa	8	23	644	32	5%
4	Kurnool	2	12	523	42	8%
5	Krishna	6	14	1,020	214	21%
6	Guntur	1	5	352	42	12%
7	Prakasam	9	19	2,053	164	8%
8	Nizamabad	2	8	650	78	12%
9	Srikakulum	1	3	263	18	7%
10	Mehaboobnagar	2	8	897	80	9%
11	Nalgonda	1	6	458	36	8%
12	Tiruvallur	1	3	120	12	10%
Total		73	295	16,889	2,548	15%

*Districts 1 to 11 are in Andhra Pradesh; district 12 is in Tamil Nadu

Table II
Serological diversity of *Dichelobacter nodosus* in the tropical climate of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu states in southern India

District no. ^(a)	District name	No. of samples collected	No. of samples positive for <i>Dn</i>	No. of samples in each serogroup ^(b)								
				A	B	C	E	F	I	A+B	B+C	B+I
1	Chittoor	264	150	20	51	7	0	0	62	2	0	8
2	Nellore	350	204	31	88	12	0	0	58	5	2	8
3	Kadapa	99	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Kurnool	25	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Krishna	90	52	0	20	1	1	29	1	0	0	0
6	Guntur	30	12	1	9	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
7	Prakasam	80	8	0	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
8	Nizamabad	33	15	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Srikakulum	20	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
10	Mehaboobnagar	25	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Nalgonda	18	8	2	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Subtotal		1,034	467	58 (12.4)	205 (43.9)	20 (4.3)	1 (0.2)	32 (6.9)	124 (26.6)	9 (1.9)	2 (0.4)	16 (3.4)
12	Tiruvallur	16	11	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	3	0
Total		1,050	478	58 (12.1)	211 (44.1)	22 (4.6)	1 (0.2)	32 (6.7)	124 (25.9)	9 (1.9)	5 (1.0)	16 (3.3)

a) Districts 1 to 11 are in Andhra Pradesh; district 12 is in Tamil Nadu

b) Numbers in parentheses indicate percentage

Dn: *Dichelobacter nodosus*

for 10 min and centrifuged at 10,000 × g for 1 min. Similarly, suspected colonies showing characteristic morphology on the culture plates were directly suspended in 100 µl of sterile distilled water. Suspensions were boiled for 5 min, cooled on ice for 5 min and then centrifuged at 10,000 × g for 5 min. Portions (2 µl) of the supernatants were used as templates for the PCR reactions.

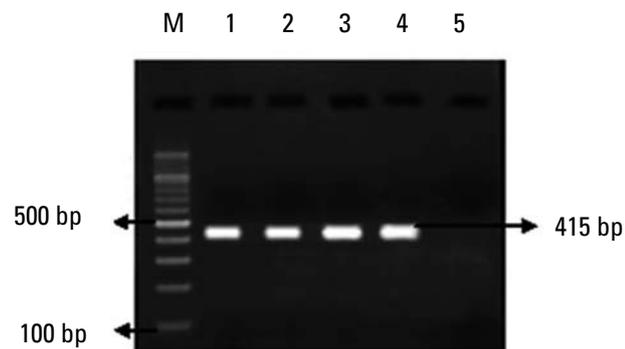
Detection of the 16S rRNA gene of *Dichelobacter nodosus* using polymerase chain reaction

For detection of the 16S rRNA gene of *D. nodosus*, PCR conditions and primers were essentially the same as described previously (1). The DNA extracted from

D. nodosus strain JKS-5B (serogroup B) was used as a positive control and sterile distilled water served as a negative control. Details of the primers used in this study are shown in Table III.

Serogrouping of *Dichelobacter nodosus*

Multiplex PCR with nine (A–I) serogroup-specific primers was used for serogrouping the *D. nodosus* isolates (Fig. 2), as described by Dhungyel *et al.* (7). Serogroup-specific DNA supplied by Dr O.P. Dhungyel was used as a positive control.



Lane M: 100 bp DNA ladder
Lanes 1 to 3: samples positive for serogroup A
Lane 4: positive control
Lane 5: negative control

Fig. 2
Serogrouping of *Dichelobacter nodosus* using multiplex polymerase chain reaction

The PCR products were analysed in 1% to 2% agarose gels, stained with ethidium bromide, visualised under ultraviolet illumination and photographed using an Alphamager® HP automatic gel imaging analyser (Alphamager Corporation, USA).

Identification of virulent and benign strains of *Dichelobacter nodosus*

Gelatin gel test

To determine whether a strain was virulent or benign, 58 *D. nodosus* isolates representative of different serogroups (A = 8, B = 25, C = 5, F = 5, I = 15) were screened for thermostable proteases in the gelatin gel test (9), with slight modification. The selection of representative isolates was based on a high score for lesion severity. Briefly, agarose (0.8% w/v) and gelatin (0.6% w/v) (Sigma Chemicals, USA) were solubilised in gel buffer (0.2M TRIS, 0.01M CaCl₂; pH 8.8), poured onto a petri plate and allowed to cool for 10 min. Wells were cut at 25 mm intervals and the bottom of each well was sealed with a small amount of melted gel.

For testing the thermostability of the proteases, 1 ml of each 48 h to 72 h broth culture of *D. nodosus* was diluted with 1 ml of HEPES dilution buffer (0.4M HEPES, 0.01M CaCl₂; pH 8.5) in standard test tubes and 50 µl portions were used in the gelatin gel test before and after heating at 68°C for 8 min and 16 min in a water bath. After 18 h of incubation at 37°C, the test was read for precipitation of unhydrolysed gelatin with a saturated solution of ammonium sulphate.

Table III
Primers used for detection and serogrouping of *Dichelobacter nodosus*

Primer name	Primer sequence (5' – 3')	Primer concentration (µM)	Position in <i>fimA</i>	Target	Serogroup	References
Forward	CGGGGTTATGTAGCTTGC	0.25	–	16S	–	(1)
Reverse	TCGGTACCGAGTATTTCTACCCAACACCT			rRNA		
FP	CCTTAATCGAACTCATGATTG	0.625	25 to 46	<i>fimA</i>	–	
RA	AGTTTCGCCTTCATTATATT	0.25	421 to 441	<i>fimA</i>	A	(7)
RB	CGGATCGCCAGCTTCTGTCTT	0.25	286 to 309	<i>fimA</i>	B	
RC	AGAAGTGCCTTTGCCGTATTC	0.25	331 to 351	<i>fimA</i>	C	
RD	TGCAACAATATTTCCCTCATC	0.25	325 to 345	<i>fimA</i>	D	
RE	CACTTTGGTATCGATCAACTTGG	0.25	367 to 389	<i>fimA</i>	E	
RF	ACTGATTCGGCTAGACC	0.25	250 to 267	<i>fimA</i>	F	
RG	CTTAGGGGTAAGTCCTGCAAG	0.25	283 to 305	<i>fimA</i>	G	
RH	TGAGCAAGACCAAGTAGC	0.25	412 to 435	<i>fimA</i>	H	
RI	CGATGGGTGAGCATCTGGACC	0.25	194 to 215	<i>fimA</i>	I	
intAF	ACATCATGCGACTCACTG AC	0.25	–	intA	–	(8)
intAR	TCT CTG GTC GGT CGT ACA AT	0.25				

A clear zone indicating hydrolysis of the gelatin by the test sample after 16 min of heating was considered positive.

Detection of the integrase A gene *intA*

All 58 isolates tested in the gelatin gel test were screened for the presence of *intA*. Detection of the gene was as described previously (8), with minor modifications. The concentration of magnesium chloride was 2.0 mM. Samples were amplified in 32 cycles, each comprising 1.5 min at 94°C, 1 min at 60°C and 2 min at 72°C. This was followed by a final extension of 5 min at 72°C. The PCR products were examined as described above.

Results

During the period of study, outbreaks of footrot were mainly recorded during the rainy (monsoon) season from June to December. Of the total 73 outbreaks, 21 were recorded in 2009 and 52 in 2010.

The prevalence of footrot in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu during the observation period ranged from 5% to 21%, with an overall prevalence of 15% (Table I). Higher prevalence was recorded in Chittoor, Nellore and Krishna than in the other districts. Among 2,548 affected feet of the naturally infected sheep, lesions of severity 4 were present in 561 (22%) feet, severity 3 (under-running of the soft horn) in 866 (34%) and severity 2 in 1,121 (44%).

In the two states overall, among a total of 1,050 samples of lesions, 478 (45.5%) were positive for *D. nodosus*. Serogrouping of *D. nodosus* isolates revealed the presence of six serogroups (A, B, C, E, F, I) (Table II). Taking samples with single and mixed serogroups together, serogroups A, B, C, E, F and I were detected in 14%, 50.4%, 5.6%, 0.2%, 6.7% and 29.3% of positive samples, respectively.

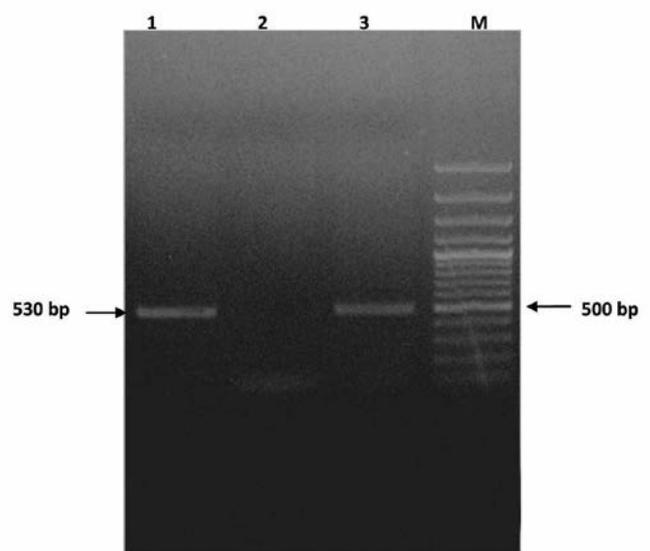
Among 467 positive samples from the state of Andhra Pradesh, 205 (43.9%) belonged to serogroup B and 124 (26.6%) to serogroup I; this was followed by serogroup A in 58 (12.4%) samples, F in 32 (6.9%) and C in 20 (4.3%). Serogroup E was detected in only one sample. Mixed infections with serogroups A+B, B+C or B+I were present in Andhra Pradesh in 27 samples. Serogroup B was detected in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh except Srikakulam, serogroup A was detected in six districts, I in five, C in three, F in three, and E in only one district. Serogroups A and I were mostly confined to the two districts Chittoor and Nellore; serogroup F was mainly confined to the Krishna district. Similarly, among 11 positive samples from Tiruvallur in Tamil Nadu, serogroup B was detected in six samples, serogroup C in two samples, and mixed serogroups B+C in three samples.

The gel test demonstrated that thermostable proteases were present in all 58 isolates tested (Fig. 3). The presence of *intA* (Fig. 4) was detected in 45 (77. 6%) of the 58 isolates (Table IV).



Well 1: unheated culture
Well 2: culture heated for up to 8 min
Well 3: culture heated for up to 16 min

Fig. 3
Gelatin gel test of a *Dichelobacter nodosus* isolate (serogroup B)
A clear zone of gelatin hydrolysis even after heating for 16 min was considered positive for the test and indicates virulence of *D. nodosus*. Absence of hydrolysis after heating for 16 min indicates a benign strain



Lane 1: positive control
Lane 2: negative control:
Lane 3: amplified polymerase chain reaction products of 530 bp specific for *intA*
Lane M: 100 bp DNA ladder

Fig. 4
Detection of the integrase gene *intA* in polymerase chain reaction

Table IV
Characterisation of virulent *Dichelobacter nodosus* isolates from severe footrot lesions in Nellore sheep in southern India

Lesion severity*	Serogroup	No. of isolates	No. of positive isolates	
			Gelatin test	<i>intA</i>
4	B	21	21	19
3	B	9	9	7
3	B	2	2	0
4	I	9	9	9
3	I	5	5	2
4	I	1	1	0
4	A	5	5	4
3	A	2	2	0
4	C	4		4
Total		58	58	45

*Scale 0 to 4

Discussion

Footrot is usually considered a disease of temperate climates that have warm moist conditions. Nevertheless, the presence of footrot, together with the isolation and characterisation of *D. nodosus*, is now described in sheep being reared in the tropical climate of southern India, where the maximum temperature ranges between 27°C and 42°C.

The available literature on the occurrence of footrot in the tropics is limited (13). In the present study, footrot in Andhra Pradesh was seasonally associated with rain, the favourable environmental conditions prevailing from July to December; no footrot was reported during the dry period, which is usually from January to June. The onset of the disease in Andhra Pradesh coincided with the start of the south-west monsoons (June to September). The prevalence of footrot increased gradually, reaching a peak during the period of the north-east monsoon (October to December) when the temperature ranges between 16°C and 32°C. Andhra Pradesh experiences a mild winter (December to January), as the temperature does not usually go below 16°C. The summer season begins in mid-April and continues to mid-June, when the temperature reaches 42°C or more. In the period studied, maximum numbers of outbreaks were recorded in 2010 (15 during the south-west monsoon, 37 during the north-east monsoon) compared with 2009 (five during the south-west monsoon, 16 during the north-east monsoon). This could be attributed to the higher rainfall in 2010 (Fig. 5). It is not known how *D. nodosus* survives during the dry hot season, when there are no outbreaks of footrot; it is possible that the bacteria survive in the hooves of infected animals and later manifest during the favourable monsoon period.

The overall prevalence (15%) of footrot observed in the present study was higher than that reported in other parts of the world; for example, 8% to 10% in the United Kingdom (14, 15) and 3.1% in organised sheep farms in Bhutan (16). Nevertheless, the observed prevalence correlates with a report from Kashmir, India, where the prevalence was 16.4% (17). The distribution of the disease in Andhra Pradesh revealed that the greatest numbers of outbreaks occurred in Chittoor, Nellore and Krishna districts. This could be related to the presence of suitable geographic conditions, particularly the waterlogged vegetation.

In the present investigation, serogroup B was found to be predominant (50.4%), followed by serogroups I, A, F and C. The distribution and predominance of *D. nodosus* serogroups vary from country to country but predominance of serogroup B has been reported in Kashmir

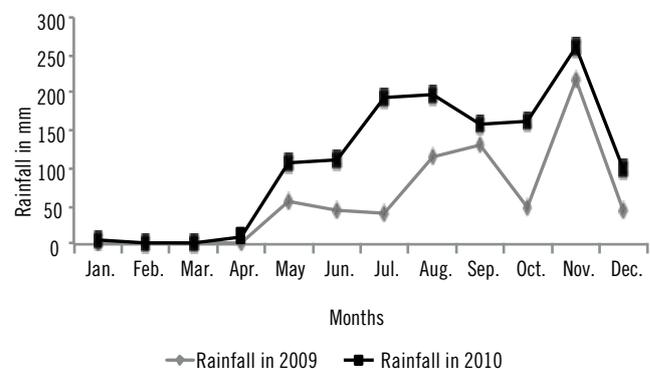


Fig. 5
Average rainfall in 11 districts of Andhra Pradesh state during 2009 and 2010

(10, 17), Australia (8), Great Britain (18), New Zealand (19) and Bhutan (16). In Kashmir, the prevalence of serogroup E was reported as higher (21.7%) than I (3.6%) (10) and serogroup C was also detected in 1.3% samples (17). Detection of serogroups A and F in India is reported here for the first time. Mixed infection with two serogroups (A+B, B+C, B+I) is in agreement with reports from Kashmir, Australia, England and Wales, among others (17, 20, 21). The range of *D. nodosus* serogroups in the tropical climate of southern India appears wider than that reported for the temperate climate of Kashmir.

The presence of virulent strains of *D. nodosus* confirms the virulent nature of the clinical disease. In the present study, 77.6% of isolates tested carried *intA* and were considered virulent strains, confirming the high correlation between the presence of the gene and the ability of strains to cause virulent footrot (8). This is in agreement with other reports in India, where the majority of *D. nodosus* isolates were virulent (22).

Conclusion

The identification and serogrouping of isolates of *D. nodosus* in the present investigation has confirmed the presence of footrot in native sheep in the tropical climate of southern India. The observed 15% prevalence of footrot is suggestive of heavy economic losses among sheep farmers, emphasising the need for development of a multivalent vaccine for effective control of this disease. Further studies covering a larger geographical area and with greater numbers of samples would be required before a control programme against this disease could be formulated.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the National Agricultural Innovation Project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, for financial assistance. Thanks also to Dr O.P. Dhungyel, University of Sydney, Camden, NSW 2570, Australia, for supplying the serogroup-specific positive control DNA.

Prévalence du piétin chez les ovins des zones tropicales de l'Inde méridionale, et isolement et caractérisation de *Dichelobacter nodosus*

D. Sreenivasulu, S. Vijayalakshmi, D. Raniprameela, A. Karthik, S.A. Wani & I. Hussain

Résumé

La présente communication décrit le premier signalement de cas de piétin enregistrés dans deux États de l'Inde méridionale (Andhra Pradesh et Tamil Nadu), qui se caractérisent par un climat tropical avec des températures pouvant atteindre 42 °C. La présence du piétin dans ces zones tropicales est inattendue. Entre mars 2009 et mars 2011, 73 foyers de piétin ont été enregistrés chez des moutons bruns de race Nellore répartis dans 11 districts de l'Andhra Pradesh et un district du Tamil Nadu. La prévalence globale du piétin ovin était de 15 %, avec un indice de gravité des lésions noté de 2 à 4 (sur une échelle de 0 à 4). Les foyers survenaient surtout pendant la saison des pluies, qui dure généralement de juin à décembre. Au total, 1 052 échantillons ont été prélevés sur des lésions d'ovins naturellement infectés ; *Dichelobacter nodosus* a été détecté dans 478 de ces échantillons (soit 45,5 %). La caractérisation des sérogroupes auxquels appartenaient les souches isolées a mis en évidence la présence de six sérogroupes (A, B, C, E, F et I). L'infection par des souches appartenant à un seul séroroupe a été constatée dans 448 échantillons positifs (soit 93,7 %), tandis que 30 autres échantillons (soit 6,3 %) présentaient une infection à souches multiples appartenant à deux sérogroupes. Que les infections soient imputables à un seul ou à plusieurs sérogroupes, le séroroupe B était le plus représenté, étant présent dans 50,4 % des échantillons et distribué dans tous les districts ; venaient ensuite le séroroupe I, retrouvé dans 29,3 % des échantillons, le séroroupe A retrouvé

dans 14 % des échantillons, le sérotype F retrouvé dans 6,7 % des échantillons et enfin le sérotype C retrouvé dans 5,6 % des échantillons. Le sérotype E a été détecté dans un seul échantillon. Il s'agit de la première détection des sérotypes A et F en Inde. Les 58 souches de *D. nodosus* isolées dans un sous-échantillon contenant différents sérotypes se sont toutes avérées virulentes, comme l'ont démontré la production de protéases thermostables et la présence de l'intégrase A du gène *intA*. Cette étude sur l'isolement et la caractérisation de *D. nodosus* confirme la présence du piétin virulent dans les régions tropicales du sud de l'Inde.

Mots-clés

Dichelobacter nodosus – Inde méridionale – Mouton – Piétin – Piétin chez les ovins – Piétin virulent – Sérotype.



Prevalencia de la dermatitis interdigital ovina en el clima tropical del sur de la India y aislamiento y caracterización de *Dichelobacter nodosus*

D. Sreenivasulu, S. Vijayalakshmi, D. Raniprameela, A. Karthik, S.A Wani & I. Hussain

Resumen

Los autores dan cuenta del primer estudio para determinar la prevalencia de la dermatitis interdigital en Andhra Pradesh y Tamil Nadu, dos estados tropicales del sur de la India donde las temperaturas pueden llegar a los 42°C. La presencia de dermatitis interdigital en zonas de clima tropical resulta inesperada. En total se investigaron 73 brotes de dermatitis interdigital en ovejas Nelore pardas aparecidos en 11 distritos de Andhra Pradesh y un distrito de Tamil Nadu entre marzo de 2009 y marzo de 2011. Se obtuvo una prevalencia global de la dermatitis interdigital ovina del 15%, con un nivel de gravedad de 2 a 4 (escala de gravedad de las lesiones de 0 a 4). Los brotes se dieron principalmente durante la temporada de lluvias, que suele ir de junio a diciembre. De un total de 1.050 muestras de lesiones extraídas de ovejas infectadas de forma natural, 478 (un 45,5%) resultaron positivas para *Dichelobacter nodosus*. La agrupación serológica de las bacterias aisladas deparó 6 serogrupos: A, B, C, E, F e I. De entre las muestras positivas, 448 (un 93,7%) correspondían a un único serogrupo y 30 (un 6,3%) presentaban una infección mixta, con presencia de dos serogrupos. Sumando las infecciones únicas y las mixtas, el serogrupo B era el más frecuente en el 50,4% de los casos y estaba presente en todos los distritos, seguido por el serogrupo I en un 29,3% de las muestras, el A en un 14%, el F en un 6,7% y el C en un 5,6%. El serogrupo E fue detectado solamente en una muestra. Esta es la primera vez que se detectan en la India los serogrupos A y F. La totalidad de los 58 microorganismos *D. nodosus* aislados en una submuestra con representación de los distintos serogrupos resultaron ser virulentos, a tenor de la producción de proteasas termoestables y la presencia del gen *intA* (de la integrasa A). Este artículo, pues, dando cuenta del aislamiento y la caracterización de *D. nodosus*, confirma la presencia de dermatitis interdigital virulenta en zonas de clima tropical del sur de la India.

Palabras clave

Dermatitis interdigital – Dermatitis interdigital ovina – Dermatitis interdigital virulenta – *Dichelobacter nodosus* – India meridional – Ovejas – Serogrupo.



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