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SURVIVING OF GASTROINTESTINAL PARASITE LARVES IN SHEEP IN THE PRE-DRYED SILAGE OF LOTUS PEDUNCULATUS

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RESUMO

Gastrointestinal parasites are the main responsible for productive and economic losses in sheep flocks around the world. One of the factors, linked to this situation, is the parasites' resistance to the active ingredients available in the market for the respective control. Thus, some methodologies are being applied, in order to reduce parasitic infestations, as well as the use of medications to control them. Among the tools that can be applied, in order to reduce parasitic infestations, is the containment system. The fiber used to feed animals in this system can be conserved in different ways. One form of storage that has been widely used is pre-dried silage (hylage), which can be carried out with various forage plants, among them legumes of high nutritional value, such as *Lotus pedunculatus*. In this sense, the objective of this work was to evaluate the survival of larvae of gastrointestinal parasites in pre-dried silage silos of *Lotus pedunculatus* supplied to lambs in a confinement system. This work was carried out in sheep's sector of Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuária (INIA) "La Estanzuela", located in Colonia Del Sacramento, Colonia Department of - Uruguay, from January to March 2019. During the experiment, 30 silos of pre-dried silage of *Lotus pedunculatus*, which were made on October 30, 2018, from paddocks previously grazed by sheep. Representative samples of the entire silo structure were collected to assess the larvae survival and processed in animal parasitology laboratory, and the applied methodology was the recovery of larvae in pasture. For the 30 sampled silos, in 24 of them did not detect gastrointestinal nematode (NGI) larvae. In six of them, free-living larvae and L3 larvae of *Haemonchus contortus*, *Cooperia* sp. and *Trichostrongylus* sp., however it was not a significant amount. As the samples were obtained from silos already opened, where the lambs sometimes had access, we cannot rule out that these larvae are the product of contamination from these animals' feces. In addition, we cannot affirm that NGI survive to the pre-dried silage process of *Lotus pedunculatus*, due to the low number of infective larvae found in our work, we believe that this is a safe alternative with regard to parasitic infestations. New controlled studies should be done to determine the survival of the silage process of NGI eggs and larvae and their infective capacity after their recovery.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Nutrition and production of ruminants, Gastrointestinal parasite, Hylage, Lambs, Pre-dried silage

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