Trichobezoars in Mithun Calves

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Mithun (Bos frontalis), plays an important role in the socioeconomic life of tribal population in the north-east. Trichobezoar is a common phenomenon in ruminant, but the reports are meager in mithun calves. The present case study reports the occurrence of hairball in unweaned mithun calves.

Case History and Observations

Two unweaned mithun calves (<4 months of age) with the symptoms of anorexia, frequent diarrhea, reluctance to move and lethargy were treated with supportive medication and antibiotic. But the calves did not respond to treatment and died few days later. In post-mortem examination, the abomasum was filled with five small and seven large size hairballs and were compacted. The abomasal mucus membrane was inflamed, peeled off easily and small perforating ulcers were noticed.

Discussion

In one calf, the hair balls were hard, densely packed and were weighing of 45 to 54 g and length was 3 to 5 cm. In another calf, most of the hairballs were 12 to 17 g and were soft as in cattle calves. This hairball might be formed due to mineral deficiency especially either copper (Johnson et al., 1989), microbiological agents (Gitter and Austwick, 1957) or stress (Katchuik, 1992) and the calves’ behavior of licking body coats of other mithun calves (Radostits et al., 2000). The ingested hair was formed gradually into oval or round hair balls with gastric juice and enzyme and became hard over a period of time. Pediculosis is also a predisposing factor for occurrence of hairball in calves (Cockrill et al., 1978). There was also a report of obstruction of small intestine caused by hairball in younger beef calves (Sameeh and Otto, 2004).

References


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