**Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever Virus in Ticks from Imported Livestock, Egypt**

To the Editor: Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever, a tick-borne illness caused by Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever virus (CCHFV), is endemic to Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. The hard ticks (Ixodidae), especially those of the genus *Hyalomma*, serve as reservoirs and vectors for CCHFV, and a variety of animals, such as cattle, sheep, and camels, are considered amplifying hosts for the virus. Although CCHFV may cause little or no disease in zoonotic hosts, the virus can cause severe disease in humans who may be exposed by tick bites or by contact with blood or tissues from infected patients or animals (1). Surveillance for CCHFV in animal and vector populations provides an opportunity to monitor a disease of potentially severe impact.

In North Africa and the Middle East, trade in live animals, meat, and meat products poses noticeable risk to human and animal health (2,3) and can serve as a mobile pool of diseases with potentially large economic and health effects. Animals often originate in distant areas of a country or its neighbors, where they may be exposed to zoonotic pathogens not endemic to their final location, and may collect vectors that carry additional pathogens.

As part of a broader study examining occupational risk of exposure to vector-borne and zoonotic pathogens in a high-risk abattoir worker population, we collected ectoparasites from freshly-slaughtered livestock and examined them for CCHFV. This study and was conducted in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act and in accordance with the principles set forth in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (4).

Sample collection took place over a 2-week period in July 2009 at the Muneeb abattoir in the Giza Governorate of Egypt. Ectoparasites were removed from 43 freshly slaughtered animals by using blunt forceps and were placed in glass vials. In total, 342 ectoparasites were collected: 70 (20.5%) from 14 cattle, 52 (15.2%) from 17 buffalo, 6 (1.8%) from 2 sheep, and 214 (62.6%) from 10 camels. Cattle, buffalo, and sheep originated in Egypt; camels were imported from Sudan and Somalia.

Ectoparasites were transported to US Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 in Cairo, Egypt, for taxonomic identification and pathogen detection. Ninety-seven percent (334) of the ectoparasites were ticks from the family Ixodidae. The genus *Hyalomma* accounted for 254 (76.0%) of these
ticks, including nearly all of those collected from sheep (100%) and camels (99.5%) but only 60.4% and 9.1% of those collected from buffalo and cattle, respectively. The remaining 9.1% of those collected from buffalo camels (99.5%) but only 60.4% and 5.2% of those from sheep (100%) and goats in Sharkia Governorate. Among domestic cattle, buffalo, sheep, and goats in Sharkia Governorate (7). We plan to further investigate the presence of CCHFV within camel and ectoparasite populations in Egypt by expanding protocol activities to a camel market in the same area as the abattoir.

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