

SARCOCYSTOSIS IN WILD GAME

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Summary. In 1999 - 2000, the prevalence and intensity of *Sarcocystis* spp. infection was investigated among deer (*Cervus elaphus*), roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) and for the first time in Lithuania, moose (*Alces alces*). The diaphragm samples were collected from West, North and Middle parts of Lithuania. Determination of sarcocysts was carried out by examining muscle sections stained with methylene blue using methods of compressor microscopy. 37 out of 41 (90,2 %) investigated wild boars, 32 out of 38 (84,2 %) deer, 34 out of 38 (89,5 %) roe deer and 35 out of 43 (81,4 %) moose showed infection with sarcocysts. The intensity of *Sarcocystis* spp. infection was low in 63,2 % of cases in deer, 62,8 % in moose and 48,8 % in wild boar, while 76,3 % of roe deer were subject to rather high intensity of infection. Among all cervid species prevalence and intensity of infection in two age and sex groups varied insignificantly. Three *Sarcocystis* species (*S. gracilis*, *S. capreolicanis* and *S. cf. hofmanni*) in roe deer, two (*S. cf. capreolicanis* and *S. cf. hofmanni*) in deer, two (*S. alceslatrans* and *Sarcocystis sp.*) in moose and one (*S. miescheriana*) in wild boar were identified. The authors believe that high prevalence of sarcosporidians among wild game in Lithuania is caused by significant population density of parasite's definitive hosts: foxes, wolves and racoon dogs.

Keywords: *Sarcocystis*, sarcocystosis, prevalence, intensity, *Cervus elaphus*, *Capreolus capreolus*, *Alces alces*, *Sus scrofa*, Lithuania