



Research Article

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Epidemiological and histopathological Studies of Haemonchus contortus among goats in Taif, KSA.

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ABSTRACT

Hemonchosis is a very common disease in small ruminants caused by *Haemonchus contortus*, a blood sucking parasite causing anaemia that may be fatal particularly to young animals. The present study was conducted to determine the prevalence of *Haemonchus* spp. in slaughtered goats at Taif abattoir located in the KSA. A total of 35 abomasum from slaughtered animals were examined from March 2012 to August 2013. The result revealed that the percent of infestation with *Haemonchus* spp. was higher in imported breed (9.18%) than in native breed (5.16%). The percent of infection were 5.34% and 4.17% in male and female goats respectively. Relationship between age and rate of infestation with haemonchosis were found (4.17), (7.14), (8.69) and (3.75) percent in native breed goats aged, 6-12 month, 1-1.5 years, 1.5-2 years and over 2 years respectively. While, the rate of the infestation was found (9.30), (8.33), (12.96) and (3.70) percent in imported breed goats aged, 6-12 month, 1-1.5 years, 1.5-2 years and over 2 years respectively. Seasonal incidence revealed that the highest percentage was recorded during summer season (12.5), while the lowest was recorded during the Spring season (4.20). The relationship between total incidence and months showed that the highest was recorded in July (17.14) and the lowest percent was in April (1.64). On microscopic examination, infiltration of mononuclear cells and eosinophils in gastric glands, periglandular hyperemia and hemorrhage, mucous gland hyperplasia, connective tissue proliferation and necrosis were observed.

Key words: Abomasum, Haemonchosis, *Haemonchus contortus*, goat, small ruminants, Taif, K S A, epidemylogy and Histopathology.

INTRODUCTION

Abomasum is one of the most important sites for living bursate nematodes belonging to *Trichostrongylidae* family in small ruminants. It is the site location for 3 pathogen species of GI nematodes e.g., *Haemonchus* spp., *Teladorsagia* spp., *Ostertagia* spp. and *Trichostrongylus* spp., meanwhile it was shown that gastrointestinal nematodes could be harmful to the health mortalities, reduce weight gain and other production losses [1,2]. Small ruminants play an important role in maintaining family stability by providing meat, milk, skin and wool, earn cash income and play traditional social and religious roles. Health disorders in all classes of small ruminants represent the

major problems and largely on the economics of sheep and goat production [3]. The gastrointestinal nematode, *Haemonchus contortus* (Barber's pole worm), is a major pathogen of ovine throughout the temperate and tropical regions of the world and is a significant cause of production losses. Debilitating infection with this parasite is most commonly seen in young animals while resistance to infection develops, with exposure, in older ovine [4]. Female worms are 18-30 mm long and are easily recognized by the 'barbers pole' appearance of the white ovaries and uteri twisting for the length of the worm around a red blood-filled intestine and males are 10-20 mm long and uniformly reddish-brown [5]. This parasite is a gastrointestinal nematode of special importance in associated with small ruminant production in warm climates [6] and is a blood feeding nematode which parasitises the abomasum and presents a serious constraint to ovine production in areas with predominantly summer rainfall [7]. The fourth larval (L4) and adult stages of this worm suck blood and in addition, move and leave wounds that hemorrhage from the abomasal wall of the host. A blood sucking *H. contortus* can suck about 0.05 ml blood per day in ovine [8]. *Haemonchus contortus* is of primary concern since it is a highly pathogenic blood-feeder helminth that causes anaemia, reduces productivity and can lead to death in infected animals [9]. The diagnosis of Haemonchosis is usually based upon clinical signs and fecal examinations. Eggs are found in feces when the damage has already been done. So ELISA enables detection of sub clinical infection [10]. Fayza Ahmed Omer *et al.* [11] showed that histopathological changes of the abomasum were of severe mucosal and submucosal haemorrhages. Epithelial cells indicated degeneration and other revealed hypertrophy. Gastric glands demonstrated some changes and contained mononuclear cells dominated with eosinophils. Previous infection with *O. ovis* in the nasal cavity also reduces the development and fertility of *H. contortus* in the abomasum. This reduction is associated with eosinophilia and globular leukocytes, as well as an inflammatory response in the abomasal mucosa [12, 13]. Among the diseases that impose the survival and productivity of ovine and goats, gastrointestinal nematode infection ranks highest on a global index, with Barber's pole worm being of overwhelming importance [14].

The objective of this study was: - Studying the epidemiology, histopathological and identification of *Haemonchus contortus* (gastric worm) among goats in Taif governorate.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A total of (351) abomasas were collected from slaughtered abattoir at Taif during the period from 2012 to 2013. They were examined for the presence of *Haemonchus contortus* adult worms.

Abomasal examination:

Collection of parasites from abomasum were done by following standard procedure as (14 and 15).

Identification of adult worms of *Haemonchus contortus*:

The collected worms were mounted in 3 steps according to [16] and [17].

One hundred worms were randomly chosen for identification and morphology of male *Haemonchus* species.

Histopathological examination

A 10-mm-long sample of the abomasal segment without any injury was removed as a control sample and another samples were taken from the affected abomasas for fixed and prepared for histopathological examination. Tissue fragments were fixed in 10% neutral buffered formalin solution (for 72 hours), after stabilizing embedded in paraffin, sectioned at 5 μ m thickness and then, stained with hematoxylin and eosin (H&E).

Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis using SPSS software and Chi-square test was applied for the statistical analysis of the data [18].

EXPERIMENTS AND RESULTS

A total of (351) abomasa of goats were collected from slaughtered house at Taif abattoir during the period from March 2012 to August 2013. They were examined for the presence of *Haemonchuscontortus* adult worms, for getting the following relations: -

1-The relationship between total incidence and breed (native or imported) among goats suffering from *Haemonchuscontortus* in Taif governorate

Results are shown in Table (1).

Breed	No. of total examined animals	No. of infested animals	Percentage infestation of
Native	155	8	5.16
Imported	196	18	9.18
Total	351	26	7.41

2-The relationship between total incidence and age and its affect by breed (native or imported) among goats suffering from *Haemonchuscontortus* in Taif governorate

Results are shown in Table (2).

Breed	Native			Imported			
	Age	Total ex. animals	Infested animals	% of infestation	Total ex. animals	Infested animals	% of infestation
More than 6-12 month		24	1	4.17	43	4	9.30
More than 1-1.5 year		28	2	7.14	72	6	8.33
More than 1.5-2 year		23	2	8.69	54	7	12.96
More than 2 year		80	3	3.75	27	1	3.70
Total		155	8	5.16	196	18	9.18

3-The relationship between total incidence and seasonal changes among goats suffering from *Haemonchuscontortus* in Taif governorate

Results are shown in Table (3).

Season	No. of total ex. animals	No. of non-infested animals	No. of infested animals	% of infestation
Spring	119	114	5	4.20
Summer	88	77	11	12.5
Autumn	88	82	6	6.82
Winter	56	52	4	7.14
Total	351	325	26	7.41

4-The relationship between total incidence of *Haemonchuscontortus* and breed (native or imported) and its affect by seasonal changes among goats in Taif governorate

Result are shown in Table (4).

Breed	Native			Imported			
	Season	Total ex. animals	Infested animals	% of infestation	Total ex. animals	Infested animals	% of infestation
Spring		27	2	7.40	42	6	14.29
Summer		81	6	7.41	57	2	3.51

Autumn	36	zero	zero	52	6	11.54
Winter	11	zero	zero	45	4	8.89
Total	155	8	5.16	196	18	9.18

5-The relationship between total incidence and monthly prevalence of goats suffering from *Haemonchuscontortus* in Taif governorate

Results are shown in Table (5)

Month	The number of examined abmasal Samples	The number of positive samples	The percentage of Positively
June	33	3	9.09
July	35	6	17.14
August	19	3	15.79
September	37	2	5.41
October	57	4	7.02
November	31	2	6.45
December	74	6	8.11
January	19	4	21.5
February	71	6	8.45
March	55	1	1.81
April	61	1	1.64
May	66	7	10.61
Total	558	45	8.06

P< 0.05 for monthly prevalence and total worm burden; Values in bracket are mean worm burden.



Figure (1): Abomasal contained hundreds of the adult worms *Haemonchuscontortus* were moving freely in the abomasal contents and other were attached to the mucosal surface.



Figure (2): The posterior end (Y shape dorsal ray) of the adult *Haemonchus contortus* male [X 10].

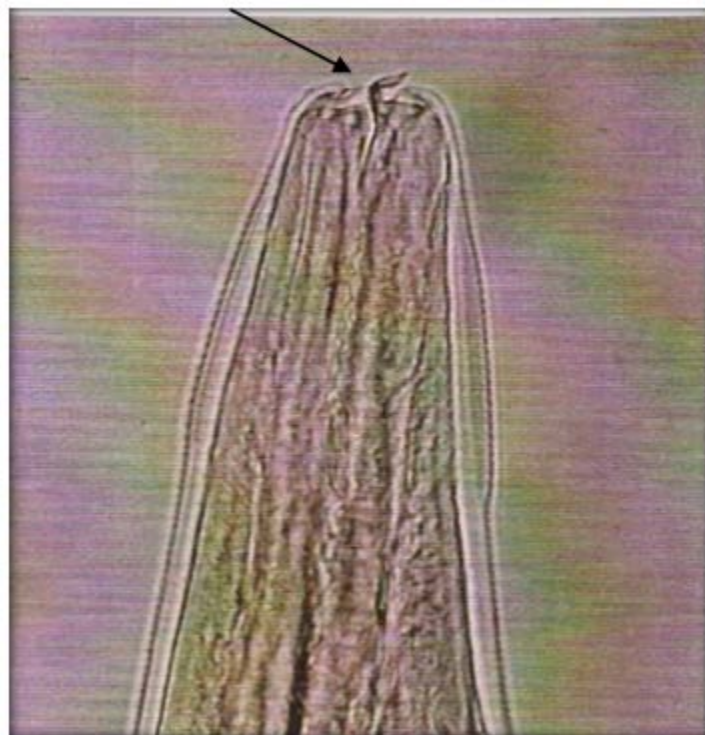


Figure (3): The anterior end of the adult *Haemonchus contortus* in Taif governorate Male and female, Dorsal lancet tooth [X40].

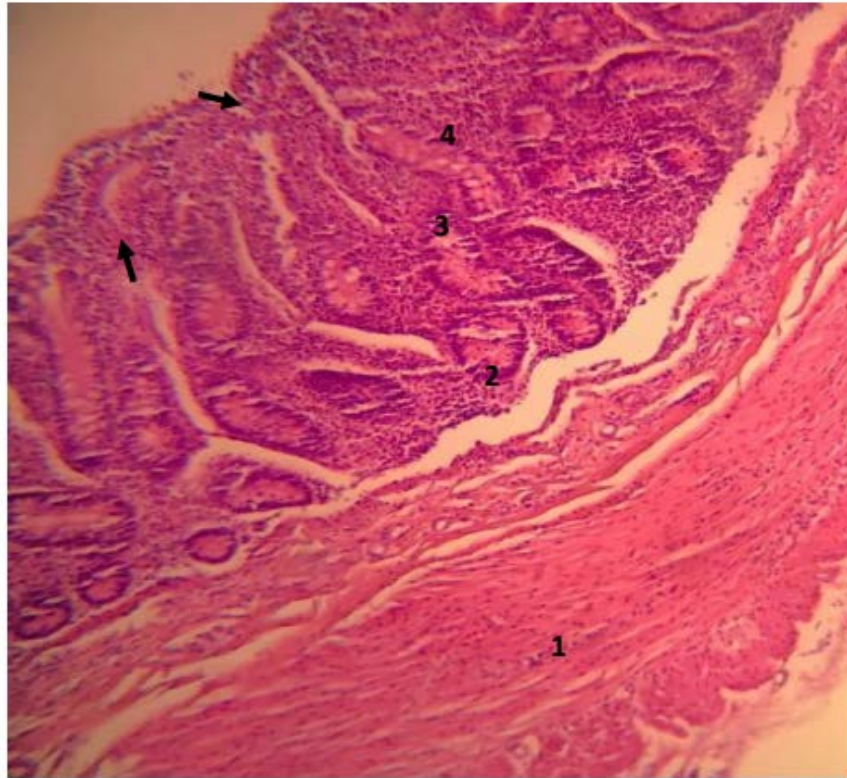


Figure (4): Thickening (1) of abomasum mucosa and muscularis mucosa, broadening of villi with some detachment of tips (arrow), hyperplasia of mucous (2) and gastric glands (3) with heavy cellular infiltration (4) in abomasum mucosa suffering from *Haemonchus contortus* [H&E,100].

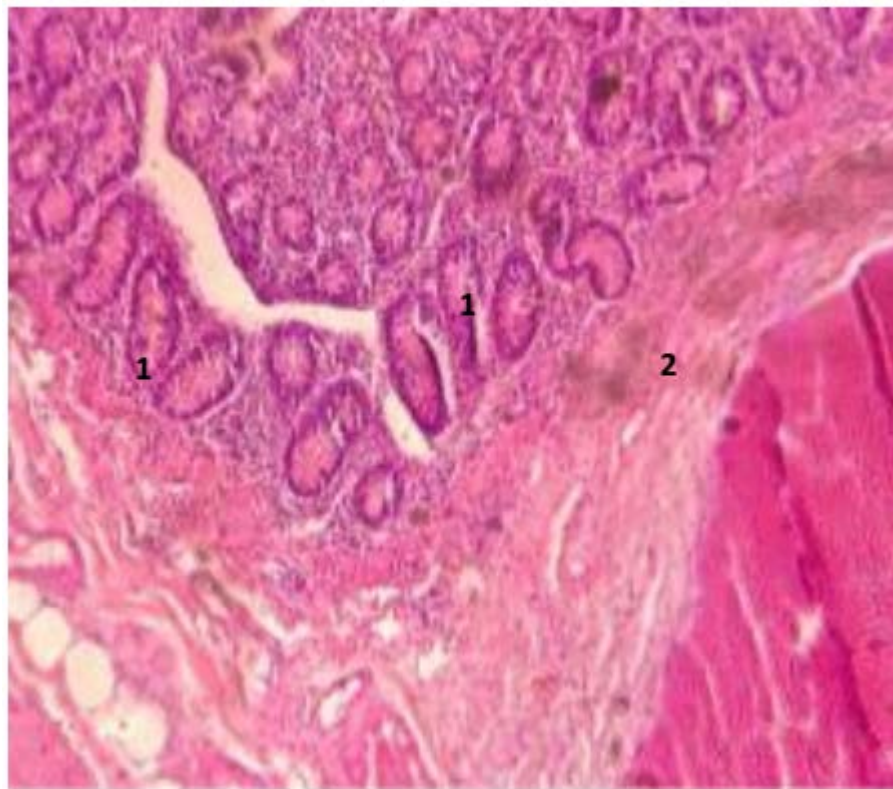


Figure (5): Hyperplasia of mucous glands of abomasal mucosa suffering from *Haemonchus contortus* (1) with connective tissue proliferation and necrotic patches (2) [H & E, 100].

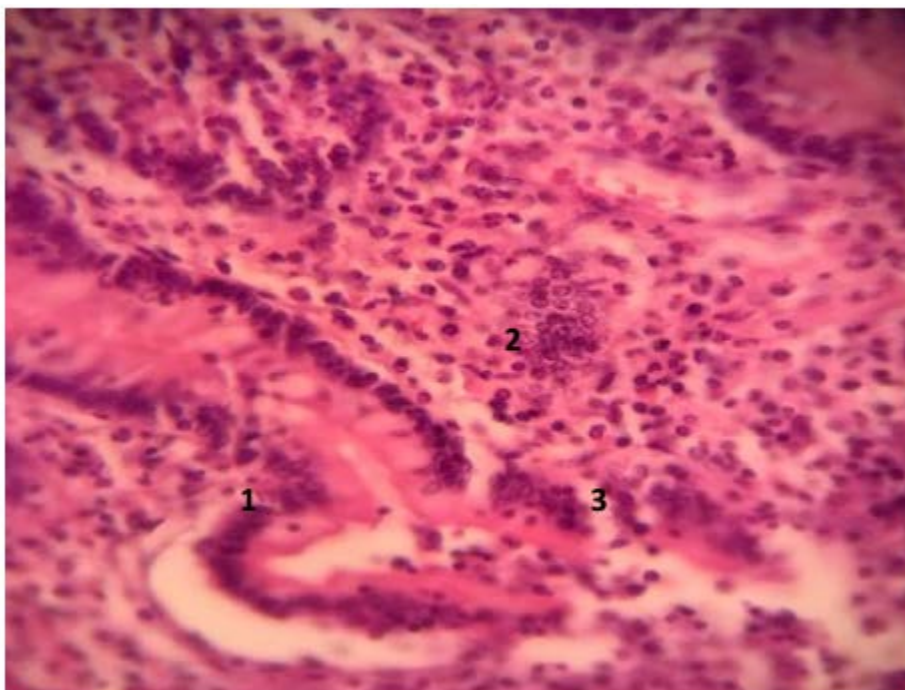


Figure (6): Hypertrophy, oedema and necrosis of abomasal gastric glands (1) with prominent cellular infiltration (2) and haemorrhage (3) [H & E, 200].

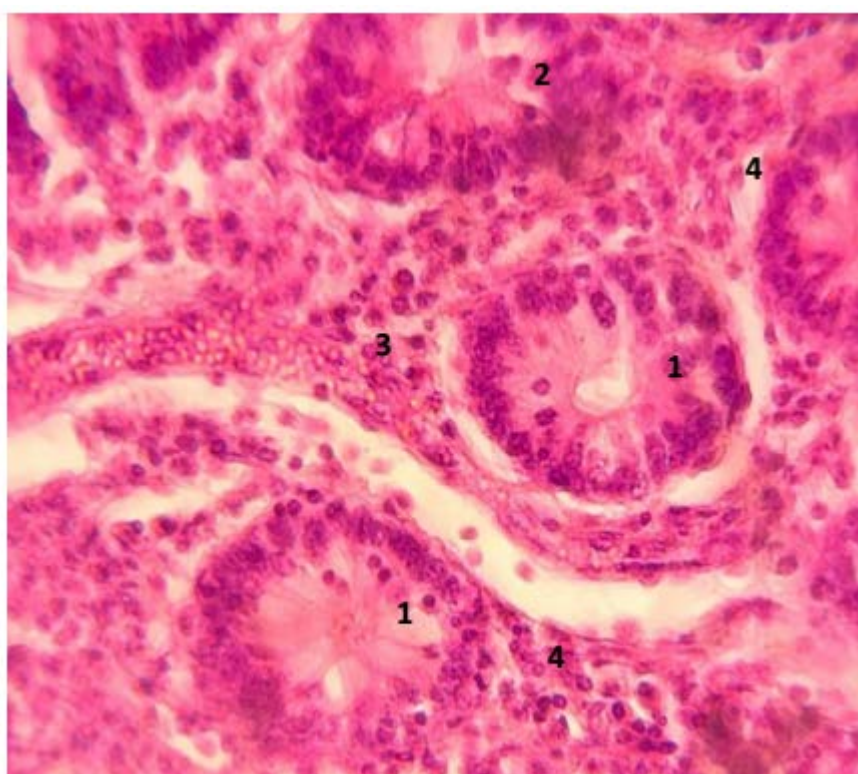


Figure (7): Gastric glands (1) showing hypertrophy, massive oedema and necrosis (2) with haemorrhage (3) and heavy cellular infiltration (4) [H & E,200].

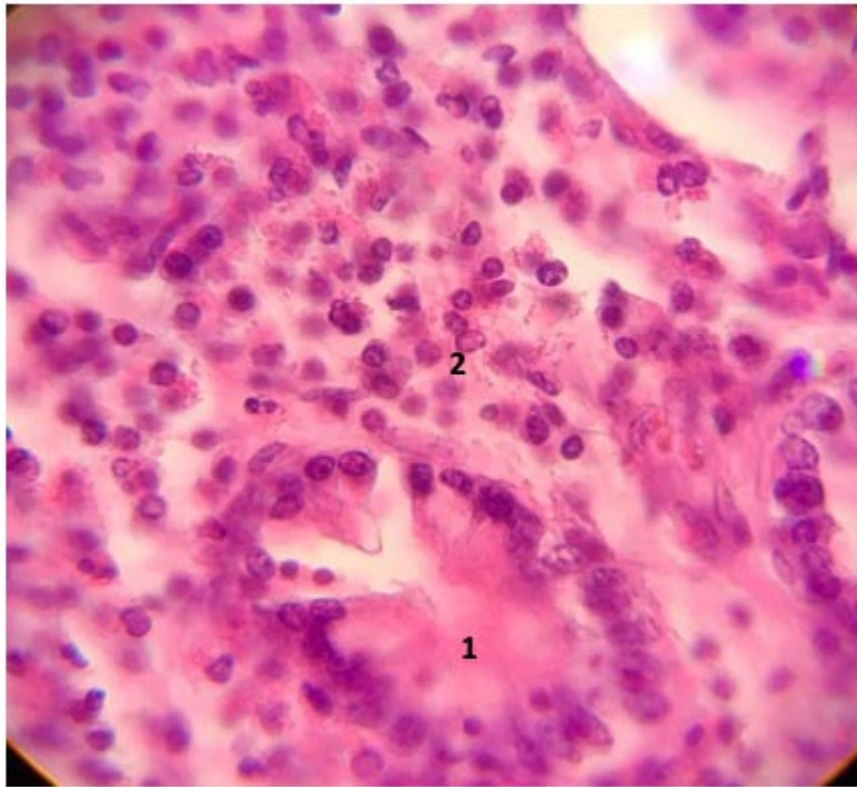


Figure (8): Oedematous mucous secreting gastric gland (1) surrounded with heavy cellular infiltration (2) [H & E, 250].

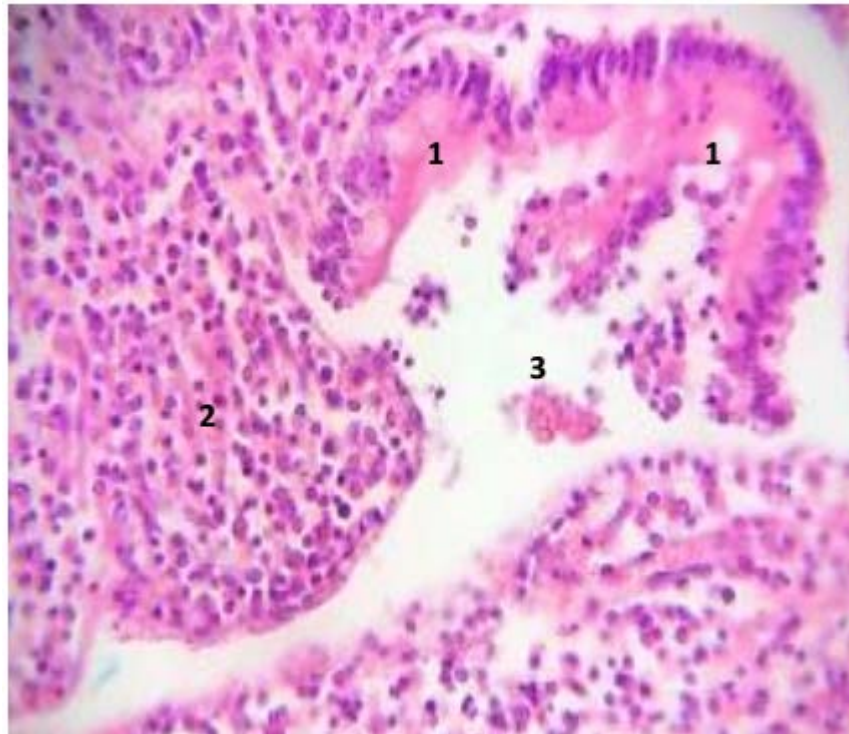


Figure (9): Detachment, desquamation and necrosis of abomasal villi (1) with prominent eosinophilic and lymphocytic cellular infiltration (2) and haemorrhage (3) [H & E,100].

DISCUSSION:

Concerning the relationship between total incidence of *Haemonchus contortus* and breed (native or imported) among goats in Taif governorate.

The relationship between total incidence with haemonchosis among goats in native and imported breed. The result observed was the percent of infestation was higher in imported breed (9.18) than in native breed (5.16). The result are shown in Table (1) .

Many parasitic infections were previously recorded in imported animals in Saudi Arabia, often at higher prevalence rates than indigenous breed. It is, thus, likely that the exchange of these parasites, between imported and indigenous livestock, is contributing to wards the spread of animal parasitism as well as the incidence of parasitic zoonosis in the country [19]. Results of this study agreed with the results by [20] who recorded that higher prevalence of heamouchosis infection among imported compared to indigenous food animals in Jaddah. We concluded that all imported livestock should be quarantined, upon arrival for inspection and medication.

Studying the relationship between age and rate of infestation with *Haemonchus contortus* in goats, the rate of infestation was found (4.17%), (7.14%), (8.69%) and (3.75%) in native breed goats aged, 6-12 month ,1-1.5 years ,1.5-2 years and over 2 years respectively. While, the rate of the infestation was found (9.30), (8.33), (12.96) and (3.70) percent in imported breed goats aged, 6-12 month ,1-1.5 years ,1.5-2 years and over 2 years respectively. The results are shown in table (2).

Our results indicated that lambs up to 1.5 years to 2 years recorded the highest percent of infestation in both local and imported breed (8.69 % and 12.96 % respectively). Our results agreed with [21 and 22] who recorded that in relation to age, the occurrence of helminth parasites in younger (<1 year) and in old (≥ 2 years) sheep was 100% but in young ($\geq 1-2$ years) was 76.09%. This high increase in rate of infestation with heamonchosis among this age may be explained as the acquired immunity during the previous period was declined, due to some stress factors under which the animals were existed such as, pregnancy and lactation as well as malnutrition. Our finding was not coincided with the results of [23] reported that the infection rate of haemonchosis was a higher infection rate recorded in animals below 9 months than above 9 month of age, while [24] in Tehran (Iran) reported that no significant relationship was found between prevalence of infection with heamonchosis and different ages. Our finding reported that the curve of infestation in animals over 2 years old show steady decline in rate of infestation, and no significant variation in both local and imported goats (3.75% and 30.70% respectively). This could be attributed to age resistance manifested in developing protective antibodies against the parasites due to their metabolic production.

4-Studing the relationship between total incidence of *Haemonchus contortus* and seasonal changes among goats in Taif governorate

The result revealed that the highest percentage *Haemonchus contortus* was recorded during summer season (12.5), while the lowest percentage was recorded during the spring season (4.20). At the autumn and winter the rate of infestation were 6.82 and 7.14 respectively. The result obtained are shown in Table (3). The results indicated highest rate of infection during summer, while there was a sharp drop in the incidence during spring season (4.20%). These results were supported by [23] who reported that the highest (43.69%) seasonal prevalence in goats was during summer. This could be attributed to the climatic conditions including temperature, relative humidity and rainy weather which were favorable to the survival and development of larval stages of heamonchuscount in Taif governorate. These findings were strongly supported also by [25].

5-The relationship between total incidence of *Haemonchus contortus* and breed (native or imported) and its affect by seasonal changes among goats in Taif governorate

Seasonal incidence of haemonchosis among native and imported goats in Taif governorate revealed that, in native breeds were (7.40), (7.41), zero, zero during spring, summer, autumn and winter respectively. While in imported breeds were 14.3, 3.51, 11.54 and 8.9 % during spring, summer, autumn and winter respectively. The result obtained

are shown in table (4). Our results agreed with [25], [26], [27] and [28] and disagreed with [30] in Rwanda and [31] in Bangladesh.

5- The relationship between total incidence of *Haemonchus contortus* and months among goats in Taif governorate showed that the highest percentage of positively was recorded in July (17.14), while the lowest was in April (1.64). It was observed that the total percentage of infection with haemonchosis was 8.06 as shown in Table (5).

Epidemiology of *Haemonchus contortus* in Taif governorate

During the study year (March 2012 to August 2013) 351 abomasal goats were examined at slaughter houses. Overall infection rate was (7.41%). It was evident from (Table 5) that the highest prevalence of haemonchosis was recorded in slaughtered goats during the month of July (17.14%), followed by August (15.79%), and May (10.61%), whereas the lowest prevalence (1.81 and 1.64) was recorded during March and April respectively. It was observed that the highest prevalence of haemonchosis occurred during summer, followed by autumn and winter, while it was the lowest during spring. These findings are consistent with those of [32], [33], [34] and [35]. They attributed several factors i.e., warmer and wetter grazing seasons, the greater time animals spend on pasture, ineffective deworming practices or the development of anthelmintic resistance in this parasite [36]. In goats, counts of *Haemonchus* egg increased with the rains and peak levels were attained during rainy season. Adult worm burdens were generally low and showed seasonal variation that corresponded with the rainfall pattern in the study area during the period. *Haemonchus* species attained peak counts together in goats (July, August and June).

From the results, it was indicated that environmental conditions during summer in Taif, were quite favorable for the development and completion of *Haemonchus contortus* life cycle that corresponded with the rainfall pattern in the study area.

Macroscopic and microscopic findings

Petechial hemorrhage in the abomasal mucosa (Probably due to the attachment of the parasite) (Figure 1), extensive mucosal hemorrhage, inflammation, mucous secretions around lesions and paleness of internal organs were seen. Thickening of abomasum mucosa and muscularis mucosa, broadening of villi with some detachment of tips (arrow), hyperplasia of mucous and gastric glands with heavy cellular infiltration in abomasum mucosa.

Also abomasal contents were fluidal and partially covered with free blood (Figure 2,3,4). Moreover, mononuclear cells infiltration (lymphocytes, monocytes and plasma cells), prominent eosinophilic infiltration in mucous glands and some even penetrated to the sub mucosa, perivascular hyperemia and lymphocytic infiltration, tissue thickening due to an increase in mucous glands and mucous secretion, connective tissue proliferation and necrosis (in chronic abomasal inflammation and wound healing. Hyperplasia of mucous glands of abomasal mucosa with connective tissue proliferation and necrotic patches. Hypertrophy, oedema and necrosis of abomasal gastric glands with prominent cellular infiltration and haemorrhage. Gastric glands showing hypertrophy, massive oedema and necrosis with haemorrhage and heavy cellular infiltration. Oedematous mucous secreting gastric gland surrounded with heavy cellular infiltration. Detachment, desquamation and necrosis of abomasal villi with prominent eosinophilic and lymphocytic cellular infiltration and haemorrhage (Figure 6, 7, 8, 9).

Macroscopic findings, petechial hemorrhage in the mucosa and severe hyperemia in mucosal folds (Figure 1) were seen as described by McKenna PB [37].

Concerning the microscopic findings eosinophilic infiltration has been observed that while corresponding to those of Nayebzadehet *al.* [38]. Eosinophils are considered to be important elements in the response against *Haemonchus* infections [39]. In the study, there was an increased number of circulating blood eosinophils in the sheep infected with *Haemonchus* larvae. This was in agreement with [12] and [40]. There is also some evidence suggesting that eosinophils may contribute to pathogenesis during parasitic infection [13]. Moreover, it has previously been shown that a number of ovine parasitic gastrointestinal nematodes produce a factor(s) that promote eosinophil migration in vitro [41]. Yacob et al. [52] reported the presence of an early and high eosinophilia and migration of the same cellular components into the abomasal and intestinal mucosa in the absence of nematodes in the gut. Meanwhile, sometimes the focal accumulation of lymphocytes and tissue thickening were seen that is similar to that reported by

[43]. Many studies have been done on this parasite. Ahmed Mir *et al.* [44], [45] and [43] have reviewed pathophysiology of Haemonchosis. Also [46] and [47] reported hematologic changes. Nayebzadeh *et al.* [46] and [48] studied at parasite growth stages and its changes. In Anderson [49] studies, weight loss is reported during the chronic infection with this parasite in sheep. Zacharias *et al.* [45] reported anemia in merino sheep. Also, [50] and [38] reported it too. Additionally, in microscopic examination by [38] proliferation of macrophages and fibroblasts and infiltration of lymphocytes and eosinophils have seen around the adult worms in pyloric region [38]. Moreover, in another study by [43], fundus region thickening was seen, that caused by mucous cells hyperplasia. Also [15] reported that lymphocytes from both naive lambs and immune sheep responded to a similar spectrum of molecular and also this report therefore supports the findings of [49, 50] who had suggested that lymphocyte proliferative responses in naive sheep were important in innate resistance to this parasite weight fraction in soluble antigen. Immunosuppression is known to take place in some gastrointestinal nematode infection models [53, 54]. These observations suggest that the chronic nature of primary *H. contortus* nematode infections may be due to a change in the type of immune response induced by larval and adult nematodes and that the adult nematodes may actively subvert the initial immune response induced after infection.

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