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Immunization of horses with a polyvalent live-attenuated African horse sickness vaccine: Serological response and disease occurrence under field conditions

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ABSTRACT

African horse sickness (AHS) is a non-contagious, fever-borne disease of equids caused by a RNA virus (AHSV), which belongs to the genus Orbivirus, family Reoviridae. The disease is endemic in sub-Saharan and western Africa, where prevention strictly depends upon vaccination. The present paper aims at evaluating the serological response and the occurrence of AHSV in horses bred under field conditions and regularly immunized using the commercially available live attenuated vaccine (LAV) produced by Onderstepoort Biological Products. The study was carried out in a farm located in the district of Windhoek (Namibia), where the disease is endemic. A total of 12 cross-bred horses, out of the 150 born on the farm, were vaccinated in six age groups, from 2 to 7 years old. Each group consisted of 12 heads which were born during the same breeding season and had undergone from four to nine vaccination courses. AHSV specific immune response
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