

MOLECULAR DETECTION OF *Trypanosoma evansi* IN HORSES FROM THE STATES OF AMAPÁ AND PARÁ, EASTERN AMAZON, BRAZIL

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Trypanosoma evansi is the etiological agent of equine trypanosomiasis, also known as surra. In Brazil, this disease is widely distributed and the main transmission routes of *T. evansi* are through hematophagy of mechanical vectors and iatrogenic transmission through sharing of contaminated needles. The objective of the study was to detect *T. evansi* infection in horses from the Eastern Amazon, Brazil. Whole blood samples were collected aseptically by venipuncture of the jugular vein of horses from the states of Amapá and Pará, and stored in tubes containing ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid and stored at -20°C for molecular analysis. After DNA extraction, all samples were subjected to PCR with primers GAPDH-F and GAPDH-R, which amplify a 437-base pair (bp) product of the gene encoding the enzyme glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase, to confirm the absence of reaction inhibitors. To screen for *T. evansi* DNA, PCR was performed with primers Bec-UF2 and Equi-R, which amplify a 205-bp product of the RoTat 1.2 VSG gene of this hemoflagellate. A total of 64 horses were examined, and *T. evansi* DNA was detected in 6.2% (4/64) of the animals, all from the state of Pará. It is concluded that *T. evansi* infection occurs in horses in the state of Pará.

Keywords: animal health, equine, hemoparasites, molecular analysis, Amazon.