C10 - RECURRENT ANNUAL OUTBREAKS OF SEASONAL BOVINE CONGENITAL DEFECTS IN NORTH OF SPAIN


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Introduction: Congenital anomalies in calves have been related to genetic factors, physical agents, vitamin A and copper deficiencies and infectious or toxic causes. In this study, an outbreak of congenital anomalies of the central nervous system in newborn cattle occurred annually during February-March in a particular valley of the north of Spain is described.

Material and methods: Necropsies were performed on four animals from four different grazing herds, and tissue samples were processed using routinely histological and immunohistochemical techniques. Serum samples from these calves, their dams and other adult animals were collected for laboratory analysis.

Results: The affected animals appeared annually at the same time of the year but these outbreaks of disease only occurred in herds which grazed in a particular valley. Clinical signs were anemia weakness and ataxia, and other neurologic signs as blindness and recumbency could be occasionally observed. Myelodysplasia with the presence of aberrant central canals and the absence of septa were the main histopathological findings found in all the newborns.

Conclusions: A viral etiology or toxic plants are discussed as possible origin of these outbreaks of disease. Nutritional deficiencies have been ruled out.