

OCCURRENCE OF ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT POULTRY DISEASES IN THE JAFFNA PENINSULA

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Jaffna Peninsula has enormous potential for rearing poultry. The development of the industry, however, was very sluggish due to civil unrest for the last three decades and also probably due to diseases in recent years. As there are no recent reports on the occurrence of poultry diseases in the Jaffna peninsula, the present study was conducted to estimate the occurrence of economically important poultry diseases.

The source of data for this study were the different offices of the Department of Animal Production and Health located in the Jaffna peninsula, which includes Regional Veterinary Offices, the Veterinary Investigation Centre and the Office of the Assistant Director. Data on poultry diseases were obtained from records for a three year period from January 2010 to December 2012.

The study revealed that there were eight diseases commonly occurring in the poultry population of Jaffna Peninsula, namely; Newcastle disease (NCD), fowl pox, infectious bursal disease (IBD), coccidiosis, worm infestation, colibacillosis, salmonellosis and infectious coryza. The occurrence of these diseases was very low (< 1.5%) in all three years. However, the reported occurrence of NCD (1.39% in 2010), fowl pox (0.50% in 2010), worm infestation (0.70% in 2012), coccidiosis (1.26% in 2010) and infectious coryza (0.51% in 2011) were comparatively higher than those reported for other diseases. There were no significant differences among the yearly occurrence of most of the diseases across the study period, with the exception of NCD having a significantly higher ($P < 0.05$) occurrence in 2010 compared with the other years. Despite the low occurrence of poultry diseases recorded in this study, active surveillance is necessary to monitor poultry diseases in the Jaffna peninsula.