

SMALL RUMINANTS LENTIVIRUS INFECTION IN THE REGION OF TRÁS-OS-MONTES, PORTUGAL – PRELIMINAR RESULTS



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INTRODUCTION

Small ruminant lentiviruses (SRLVS) are a group of viruses responsible for Maedi-Visna in ovine and for Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis in caprine species. These diseases result of progressive and chronic infections which affect animal health as well as are one of the major causes of severe economic loss.

In the north-eastern region of Portugal (Trás-os-Montes) small ruminant farming has a great economic and social value. On current days, in Portugal, there is few information about SRLV infection.

The main aim of this research is to quantify seroprevalence as well as risk factors associated to lentivirus infection of small ruminant in this region of Portugal.



METHODS

Seroprevalence of SRLV research was done in the region of **Trás-os-Montes** based in a stratified sample and proportional to the number of ovine and caprine herds. Small ruminant herds were randomly selected, and their farmers invited to answer a survey to identify possible risk factors. Were collected between 14 to 19 blood samples based on the total number of animals in each herd.

The serological analyses were carried out at the Provincial Animal Health Laboratory in Zamora. SRLV infection was determined by means of a commercial test of indirect ELISA (**ID Screen® MVV/CAEV Indirect**).

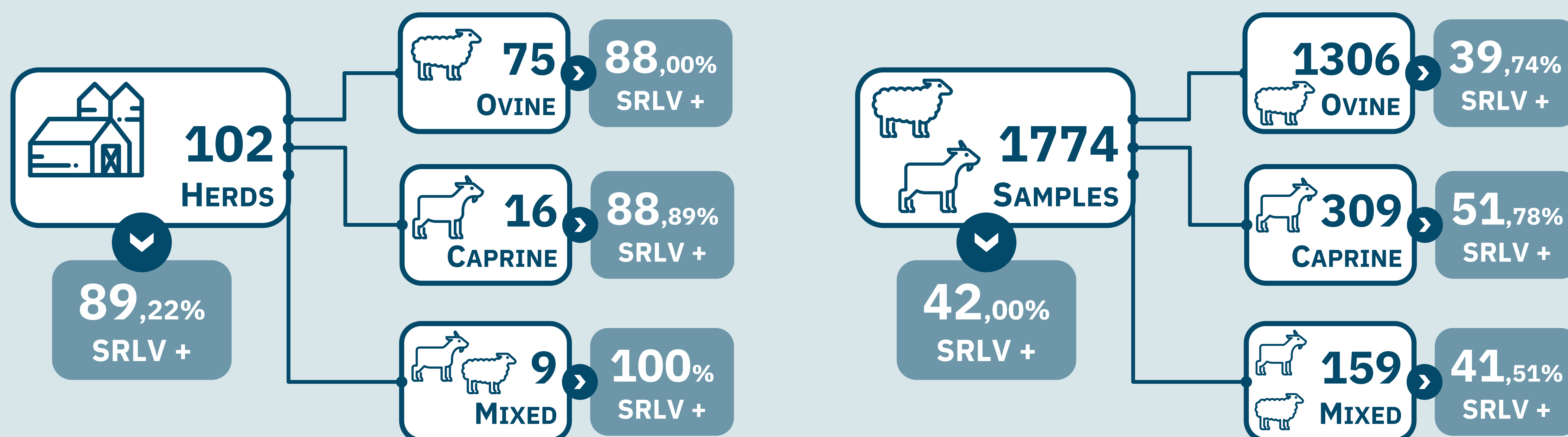
A herd was defined as positive if there was at least one seropositive animal.

JMP Statistical Discovery (v7) was used to statistic inference.



RESULTS

We obtained the following data:



Risk Factor statistic analysis showed:

SRLV INFECTION | P < 0,0001

ANIMALS > 2 YEARS OLD OR=2,17
IC 95%: 1,76 – 2,66

PRODUCER AS FIRST JOB/MAIN ACTIVITY OR=2,12
IC 95%: 1,56 – 2,86

HERDS WITHOUT REGULAR MEDICAL VETERINARY ASSISTANCE OR=1,99
IC 95%: 1,47 – 2,70

Concluded that SRLV infection is a **severe problem in small ruminant production** in this region, not only to animal health as well as to profit of it. This way, there should be done sensibilization campaigns to small ruminant producers about the existence of this virus, its consequences to animal health and to economy. It should be promoted, implemented, and audited biosecurity measures to diminish viral transmission with the final aim to eradicate this disease. So governmental authorities should promote eradication and control programs to reduce the prevalence of this disease in small ruminant herds of Portugal.

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