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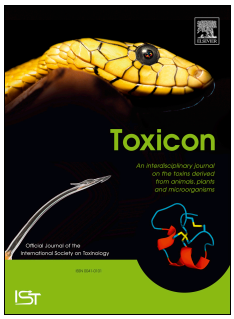

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Experimental poisoning by *Vernonia rubricaulis* in sheep

Kelly C. S. Godoy[a], Paula V. Leal[a], Marcelo A. Araújo [b], Alda I. Souza [b]Arnildo Pott[c], Stephen T. Lee[d],Claudio S.L. Barros[b], Ricardo A. A. de Lemos [b]

[a]Programa de Pós-graduação em Ciências Veterinárias, Faculdade de Medicina Veterinária e Zootecnia (FAMEZ), Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), Av. Senador Felinto Muller, 2443, 79070-900 Campo Grande, MS, Brazil.
[b]FAMEZ, UFMS, Campo Grande, MS, Brasil
[c]Laboratório de Botânica, Centro de Ciências Biológicas e da Saúde (CCBS), UFMS, Cidade Universitária, s/n, Campo Grande, MS, 79070-900, Brasil
[d]Poisonous Plant Research Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1150 E. 1400 N., Logan, UT 84341, USA

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*Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: k.c.s.godoy@gmail.com (K.C.S. Godoy)*,paulavleal@hotmail.com (P.V. Leal), marcelo.augusto@ufms.br(M.A. Araújo),aldaizabel@hotmail.com (A.I. Souza),arnildo.pott@gmail.com(A. Pott),stephen.lee@ars.usda.gov (S.T. Lee), claudioslbarros@uol.com.br (C.S.L. Barros), ricardo.lemos@ufms.br (R.A.A. Lemos)

ABSTRACT

In order to evaluate the susceptibility of sheep to *V. rubricaulis* and to establish the clinical signs, serum biochemistry, and pathological findings, eight sheep were fed varying doses of *V. rubricaulis*. The onset of clinical signs occurred 6-48 hours after the ingestion of *V. rubricaulis*. Clinical courses lasted 6-56 hours after the ingestion of the plant. Serum activities of aspartate aminotransferase, gamma-glutamyl transferase, and alkaline phosphatase were highly elevated and glucose blood levels were low in affected sheep. Clinical signs consisted of apathy, anorexia, dry muzzle, respiratory distress, abdominal pain, and mushy feces with streaks of blood and mucus. Two sheep had neurological signs including muscle fasciculation, nystagmus, paddling movements, and blindness. Liver necrosis could be detected antemortem through liver biopsy. Five sheep died and three recovered. The liver was affected in all necropsied sheep; it increased in volume and had marked accentuation of the lobular pattern with red, depressed areas intercalated with a pale yellow network. Ascites and