

Serologic response in eight alpacas vaccinated by extralabel use of a large animal rabies vaccine during a public health response to a rabid alpaca in South Carolina

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CASE DESCRIPTION

- A female alpaca was evaluated because of clinical signs of aggression
- Alpaca was kept at pasture with 12 other female alpacas, 2 crias, and 5 goats



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CLINICAL FINDINGS

- Signs of aggression included biting other animals and disorientation (12.21.2014)
- Alpaca euthanized three days after becoming symptomatic because of suspicion of rabies virus infection (12.24.2014)



TREATMENT & OUTCOME.....

No physical injuries were found on rabid alpaca. Brain tissue specimens were confirmed positive for rabies basis of direct fluorescent antibody test results.

Molecular typing identified the rabies virus variant as one that is enzootic in raccoons.

The farm was placed under quarantine, restricting movement of animals on and off the property for 6 months. To prevent further rabies cases, 14 alpacas (12 adults and 2 crias) were vaccinated by extralabel use of a large animal rabies vaccine.

Of the 14 vaccinated alpacas, 8 had paired serum samples obtained immediately before and 21 days after vaccination; all 8 alpacas had adequate serum anti-rabies antibody production in response to rabies vaccination.

As a result of an adequate serologic response, the quarantine was reduced to 3 months. In the year after the index rabies case, no other animals on the farm developed rabies.



CLINICAL RELEVANCE

- Extralabel use of rabies vaccines in camelids was used in the face of a public health investigation.
 - Case provides an example of handling similar rabies cases for future public health investigations
 - Also provides guidance for “abnormal” rabies vaccination recommendations on the basis of the unique characteristics of an event.
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