Abstract

Buffalo calf mortality has been identified as one of the major impediments to the development of the buffalo industry in Sri Lanka. An islandwide survey conducted in the early eighties on the buffalo production systems have demonstrated that around 40 per cent of the calves die before the animals reach 2 years. Analysis of data from institutional buffalo farms have also reported that around one fifth of the buffalo calf population do not survive beyond 6 months of age. The objective of this study was to identify the aetiology and the pathogenesis of the diseases responsible for calf mortality.

In this study, buffalo calves managed in institutional farms and in small holdings were monitored by periodic visitations. The animals were examined clinically and relevant material were collected for laboratory examination. Faecal samples collected from buffalo calves revealed the presence of parasitic eggs of Toxocara vitulorum, strongly and Trichostrongyl species. In addition the faeces contained coccidial oocysts. Nasopharanygeal swabs collected from buffaloes in institutional farms demonstrated the presence of Pasteurellae species. The significance of these findings are discussed in the report. Several constraints encountered during the execution of this project severely affected the progress of the work.