

Miscellaneous Veterinary Diagnostic Cases

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Mouse in a beer bottle

- Called by technician from Beer Institute in Chicago, Illinois
- Had an opened beer bottle with suspected mouse inside
- Wanted verification it is a mouse
- Wanted to get manufacturing code off neck of bottle – brewer had many contracted breweries
- Wanted to know what happened
- No claims being made by purchaser of beer

Mouse in beer bottle – cont.

- Wanted to know:
 - Was mouse in bottle before/during filling?
 - Was it put in bottle after being killed (malicious act)?
 - Had it gotten in bottle on its own and then drowned (vermin problem in the manufacturing plant)?
 - Did mouse get in bottle after being opened?
 - Did the mouse crawl into bottle after being opened?
 - Mice do like hops, which is a component of beer
 - Mouse was small enough to get in the bottle

How to investigate?

- For malicious act mouse had to be killed or found dead
- Do whole body radiographs
- Radiographs were negative for broken bones
- Do necropsy – no gross lesions
- Mice supposedly cannot inhale water during drowning (also maybe true with other animals)
- Do histopathology – no microscopic lesions (especially hemorrhage) (was hindered by post-mortem changes)

Final diagnosis

- Inconclusive
- Assumption was that mouse crawled in the bottle after filling



Mouse in a bag of roasted peanuts

- Called by representative of grocery store chain
- Two people found a dead mouse in a 3 pound bag of roasted peanuts after they ate some of the peanuts
- They claimed they got sick afterward eating some of the peanuts in the bag
- Went to a physician and reported vague clinical signs
- They wanted compensation from the grocery store chain and the peanut manufacturer
- Could I determine if they could have gotten sick by eating some peanuts and maybe touching the mouse
- They sent the bag containing the mouse to me







Mouse in bag of roasted peanuts – cont.

- Not many diseases transmitted from mice to man
- Only 3 likely microbial agents – and they are rare
 - Hantavirus
 - Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus (LCMV)
 - Rodentolepis nana - a tapeworm requiring no Intermediate host
- I could only test for the presence of bacteria
- Used sterile technique to do aerobic and anaerobic bacterial cultures of outside of carcass and inside of gut
- Mouse was very dry, hard and leathery (mummified)
- If negative cultures, it would indicate the mouse was roasted and sterilized: therefore, I had to conclude it could not have transmitted any infectious disease

Mouse in a bag of roasted peanuts

- Surprisingly, bacterial cultures were positive for 2 species – could this be contamination by me?
- We asked the two people for their medical records and to describe their clinical signs
- We basically challenged them
- They dropped the case
- I think the mouse was roasted, but cannot explain the bacterial culture results



Two Dead Rabbits in Outdoor Hutch

- Neighbors notified a county Animal Welfare Department (AWD) that two rabbits were seen dead for days (4 – 5) in a neighbor couple's rabbit hutches
- Welfare officer went to home, took rabbits, and wrote a report saying that the rabbits were starved
- Practitioner on contract with AWD did necropsy
- Necropsy was incomplete and no tissues were harvested
- Carcasses were frozen and stored for weeks
- Lawyer for owners of rabbits called me









Results of necropsy

- There was abundant food and hair in the stomachs
- There was no evidence to conclude that starvation was the cause of death
- The rabbits could have died of many diseases
- The major fault was not disposing of the dead rabbits in a timely manner
- The accused couple made a plea bargain
- The investigation was flawed in many respects

Suffocated ferrets in a research facility

- Caretaker needed to change bedding and water in ferret cages
- The dog carriers were absent this time
- He put the ferrets in a big rat cage and stacked other cages on top to prevent escape
- Then took a 15 minute coffee break
- When came back the ferrets were dead
- Did necropsies
- Suffocation produced wet chin hairs

Cat with amputated front leg

- Nurse had a cat that was shot
- Had to amputate left front leg
- Stump did not heal well
- Second veterinary treated cat
- Cat died and was buried
- Thirty days later cat was exhumed and mailed to me.
- Radiographed the whole carcass and found a bullet in the left back leg
- Did full necropsy under hood
- Found no evidence of infection on stump end

Idiosyncratic drug reaction

- Had multiple cases of unexpected death of young dogs after routine barbiturate anesthesia
- None were drug overdose problem, as the owners' often suspected
- Full necropsy with full set of histopathology slides helps substantiate a diagnosis of idiosyncratic drug reaction

Epitheliogenesis imperfecta

- In some Belgian draft horses
- A recessive genetic disease in some animal species
- Had two cases within short period of time
- Wanted to do field examination