

DISTRIBUTION PATTERN OF DERMATOPHYTES AND OTHER KERATINOPHILIC FUNGI ON GOATS HAIR AND SHEEP WOOL, TAIZ CITY, YEMEN

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ABSTRACT

*The mycoflora of 80 samples of goats hair and sheep wool (40 each) from Taiz city at Yemen were examined and the frequency of occurrence and the relative importance value for different fungal species found were calculated. Using two methods of isolation at 28°C. Thirty eight species belonging to 21 genera were isolated during this investigation. The results revealed that goats hair were highly contaminated than sheep wool. The most common genera from the two substrates were: *Chrysosporium*, *Aspergillus* and *Scopulariopsis*. The dermatophytes represented by *Microsporum canis*, *M. gypseum* and *Trichophyton verrucosum* were rarely recorded. Goats hair and sheep wool seem to represent an adequate reservoir for several pathogenic fungi.*

Key words: *Keratinophilic fungi, dermatophytes, goats hair, sheep wool, Yemen.*

INTRODUCTION

The epidermal surface and the hair coat of mammals are biotopes for a variety of bacteria and fungi (Meyer *et al.*, 2001). The composition of hair microflora in different genera and species may vary according to external seasonal climatic changes. With wet times of year generally increasing microbial density was seen (Merritt and Watts, 1978; Hay and Mills, 1982 and Yeruham *et al.*, 1995).

The presence and frequency of occurrence of dermatophytes and other keratinophilic fungi mainly forming hair mycobiota of domestic animals have been investigated by many workers (Guzman- Chavez *et al.* 2000; Muhsin and Salih, 2000, Efuntoye and Fashanu, 2001 a & b, Bentubo *et al.* 2006, Borman *et al.*, 2007 and Chermette *et al.*, 2008).

Studies on dermatophytes and other keratinophilic fungi on healthy hair or wool of domestic animals are of considerable significance. This present study aimed at the analysis of distribution pattern of keratinophilic fungi on goats hair and sheep wool in animals markets at Taiz city. Special emphasis was laid upon the role played by goats and sheep as possible reservoirs for these fungi.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Forty samples of each of healthy goats hair and sheep wool were collected from different localities in Taiz city, Yemen during the period from September 2008 to April 2009. The samples were placed in sterile polyethelene bags and transferred immediatly to Microbiological laboratory and stored in a refrigerator (3-5°C) until examination. For isolation of mycobiota associated with wool or hair samples, two techniques were used.

1- Soil-plating technique: Soil-plating technique as described by Rees (1967) with some modifications was employed. Wool or hair samples (3 fragments from each sample) were placed on dry sterile clay soil (50 g) in each sterile Petri-dish (3 plates for each sample) moistened with sterilized distilled water (25-30% moisture content) and remoistened whenever necessary. The soil used was autoclaved four times (every 24h for 4 days) at 12°C for 30 min to insure a good sterilization. Plates were incubated at 28°C for 8-10 weeks. The fungi appeared on the hair or wool fragments were transferred to the surface of Sabouraud's dextrose agar medium (Moss and McQuown, 1969), supplemented with chloramphenicol (0.5 mg/ml) and cycloheximide (0.5 mg/ml). The plates were incubated at 28°C for 2-3 weeks and the developing fungi were counted, identified (based on morphological and microscopic characters) and calculated per 360 segments for all of goats hair and sheep wool.

2- Hair-plating direct technique: Three segments from each wool or hair sample were scattered on the surface of Sabouraud's dextrose agar medium. Three plates were used for each sample. The plates were incubated at 28°C for 3-4 weeks and the growing fungi were counted, identified and calculated per 360 hair fragments for all samples.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A 38 species related to 21 genera from goats hair and sheep wool were identified (Table 1). The highest count of fungal colonies (303 and 220 colonies /360 segments) was recorded on goats hair, while low counts (185

and 140/360 segments) were noticed on sheep wool. These results were more or less similar to those obtained by Abdel-Gawad (1998a). She isolated 27 species and one variety belonging to 15 genera from 50 hair samples from goats. Efuntoye and Fashanu (2001a) studied the mycoflora associated with 220 samples from different animals (including sheep and goats) and could isolate 28 fungal species represented 10 genera. Meyer *et al.* (2001) reported that pathogenic (keratinophilic) fungi comprise about 75% of all fungi recorded from the hair of sheep.

In the present study, the most prevalent genera on the two substrates were *Aspergillus*, *Chrysosporium* and *Scopulariopsis* (Table 1). These genera were usually prevalent on hairs of different domestic animals including goats. However, dermatophytes represented by *Microsporum canis*, *M. gypseum* and *Trichophyton verrucosum* were rarely recorded in our work. This species were also isolated with different frequencies on the hair of different animals as reported by (Guzman-Chavez *et al.* 2000; Mancianti *et al.* 2002 and Copetti *et al.* 2006). In this respect, Abdel-Gawad (1998a) reported that *Candida*, *Chrysosporium*, *Trichophyton*, *Microsporum*, *Scopulariopsis* and *Chaetomium* were the most common genera on the hair of goats, ewes and bovines udder. In addition, Efuntoye and Fashanu (2001b) reported that the mycoflora recovered from examined samples included true keratinophilic species like *Chrysosporium*, *Microsporum*, *Trichophyton* species and non-keratinophilic fungi such as *Aspergillus*, *Penicillium*, *Mucor*, *Geotrichum* and *Alternaria* species. Also, the above genera were isolated in high frequency of occurrence as indicated by

numerous reseachers (Ali- Shtayeh *et al.* 1989; Mbuthia *et al.* 1993; El- Said and Abdel-Sater 1994; Nasser and Abdel-Sater 1997; Mitra *et al.* 1998 and Gradisar *et al.* 2000).

a) Fungi recovered from goats hair

A total count of 303 and 220 colonies/360 segments were isolated from goats hair on Sabouraud, agar at 28°C. Thirty species appertaining to 20 genera were identified from goats hair. The broadest species were recovered on soil-plating technique (20 genera and 30 species) and the lowest on direct-hair plating methods (14 genera and 26 species).

Chrysosporium appeared to be the most predominate genus. It was recorded in 73% and 53% of the samples constituting 57.1% and 52.3% of total fungi, obtained by the two isolation methods, respectively. This genus was also isolated from goats hair in high frequency. In Egypt Abdel- Hafez (1987) found that *Chrysosporium* was presented by 97.3% in goats hair samples matching around 92% of total isolates in Gaza Strip. Also, in Bagy and Abdel- Hafez (1985) observed that *Chrysosporium* was the most frequent (91.7%) genus on goats hair in Al-Arish. In El- Bahrin, El- Said and Abdel-Sater (1994) indicated that *Chrysosporium* was the most prevalent fungi on hair of goats and sheep, emerging in 92% and 96% of the examined samples, respectively. Furthermore Abdel-Gawad (1998a) showed that *Chrysosporium* occupied the second prevalent genus on three animals, occurred in 36% of the goat samples tested. Efuntoye and Fashanu (2001b) examined hairs of different animals (including goats and sheep) and noticed that *Chrysosporium* was the genus most commonly recovered.

Among the chrysosporium species identified in the present study, *C.tropicum* was found to be the most common. Ince, it was isolated from 48% and 35% of the studied samples. Matching 86.1% 85.2% of total *Chrysosporium* and 49.2% and 44.6% of total fungi using the two isolation methods, respectively. The remaining two identified species, *C.indicum* and *C.keratinophilum* were less encountered and isolated in rare frequency of occurrence (Table 1). This result is in agreement with the results obtained on goats hair from Japan, as reported by Takatori *et al.* (1980) who isolated, *C. keratinophilum* and *C. tropicum* from healthy hairs of domestic animals in high occurrence. In Egypt, Bagy and Abdel-Hafez (1985) found that *C. keratinophilum* and *C.tropicum* represented 55% and 45% of goats hair, respectively. Abdel-Gawad (1998a) observed that *C.keratinophilum* (26%), *C.tropicum* (30%) and *C.sulfureum* (24%) appeared to be quite common on the hair of goats. On the other hand, Ali-Shtayeh *et al.* (1988 a) reported that *C.keratinophilum* and *C.tropicum* were found respectively in 7.9% and 6.7% of goats hair from West Bank of Jordan. In addition, Efuntoye and Fashanu (2001a) noticed that among the 4 *Chrysosporium* spp. Isolated, *C. keratinophilum* occurred more frequently (18.2%) followed by *C. tropicum* (9.5%) in Nigeria. These species were also isolated from mammals in many parts of the world as reported by Gugnani *et al.* (1975); Otcenasek *et al.* (1980) and Terragni *et al.* (1995).

The second prevalent genus was represented by *Aspergillus*. This genus contributed the broadest number of species (9 species) colonized with about 28% and 33% of the sam-

ples comprising 6.6% and 11.4% of total fungi on the two isolation techniques, respectively (Table1).

In the current study *Aspergillus* was isolated in high frequency of occurrence. This result was in accordance with the results obtained by Aho (1983). He examined 394 specimens of hair samples from domestic and laboratory animals (include goats) and noticed that *Aspergillus* species were the most common isolates in the whole material. On the other side,

Mitra et al. (1998) identified some dermatophytes from different animals in India (including goats and sheep) and noticed that *Aspergillus* species were the most common among fungi other than dermatophytes isolated from the ruminants. Also, most of *Aspergillus* species were previously isolated in Egypt from the hairs of camel and goats (Bagy and Abdel- Hafez 1985 and Bagy 1986) and from hair of goats and sheep in Gaza (Abdel- Hafez 1987) as well as hairs of animals in many parts of the world (Ali- Shtayeh *et al.* 1988 a.b.; Gradisar *et al.* 2000; Deshmukh 2004; Gupta and Ramnani 2006 and Blyskal 2009).

Scopulariopsis (represented by 2 species) occupied the third place in the number of cases of isolation. The genus was isolated from 23% and 20% of the samples comprising 10.6% and 8.2% of total fungi by the two isolation methods, respectively. In this respect, Abdel- Gawad (1998a) recoded that *Scopulariopsis* was obtained in 36% of goats hair. Also, this genus was isolated in different orders of frequencies from numerous animals as reported by (Kaul and Sumbali 1999; Fili-

pello Marchisio *et al.* 2000; Filipello Marchisio and Fusconi 2001 and Yoder *et al.* 2003, 2007).

Of the two species identified *S. brevicaulis* was the most dominant. It was recovered each from 20% of the samples sharing with 96.9% and 100% of total *Scopulariopsis* and 10.2% and 8.2% of total fungi. *S. candida* was recovered in rare occurrence using only the soil plating technique isolated from one sample. In Italy, Pointelli *et al.* (1981) isolated *S. brevicaulis* and *S. candida* from 23 and 13 out of 60 samples of horse dung, respectively. *S. brevicaulis* also isolated from starlings by Camin *et al.* (1998). Also, members of the genus *Scopulariopsis* were isolated from various domestic and large animals all over the world (Bagy and Abdel- Mallek 1991 and Romano *et al.* 2005). Anbu *et al.* (2007) reported that this genus is a prolific keratinase producer and keratinase production by *S. breviculis* has a good model fit. This will also be useful for keratinases from other *Scopulariopsis* strains as they are common saprophytic fungi with a view to industrial applications.

The remaining genera and species were isolated in rare frequency matching collectively about 24.1% and 13.2% of total fungi on soil and direct hair- plating techniques, respectively (Table1). Abdel- Gawad (1998a) noticed that several cycloheximide resistant fungi were encountered on three animals (including goats). Members of *Scopulariopsis*, *Chaetomium* and *Penicillium* were the most common. The recovery of non-keratinophilic fungi was consistent with the findings of Aho (1983), Bagy and Abdel- Hafez (1985), and Marsella *et al.* (1985), who reported the isolation of mem-

bers of the genera *Aspergillus*, *Penicillium*, *Cladosporium*, *Geotrichum* and *Alternaria*. All of these fungi were previously isolated from the hairs of some animals as reported by Bagy (1986), Bagy and Abdel- Hafez (1985), El- Said and Abdel- Sater (1994).

b) Fungi recovered from sheep wool:

The number of fungi recovered from sheep wool when using soil plating technique (185 colony/360 segments) was higher than that recorded using other method (only 140 colony). Also, the broadest spectrum of genera (18) and species (29) was observed on the first isolation method than the second one (14 genera and 22 species).

The results obtained from sheep wool were nearly similar with those obtained from goats hair of which *Chrysosporium*, *Aspergillus* and *Scopulariopsis* were the most prevalent genera. They were recorded in case of using the two types of isolation methods in 68%, 45% and 33% and 55%, 25% and 15% of the samples shared with 47.1%, 20.6% and 11.4% and 57.2%, 12.9% and 5.7% of total fungi, respectively. In this respect, Abdel-Gawad (1998b) examined 75 samples of healthy sheep from Assiut Governorate. She isolate total of 27 keratinophilic and other fungi belonging to 8 genera from which 22 keratinophilic species with one variety related to 4 genera were encountered. She noticed that the fungal isolates were represented by : *Chrysosporium*, *Trichophyton*, *Microsporum*, *Histoplasma*, *Alternaria*, *Fusarium*, *Penicillium* and *Aspergillus*.

Kushwaha and Gupta (2008) reported that there were true fungi that vigorously degrade

keratin and include important human and animal pathogens. Degradation of hairs, nails, feathers, horns and hooves is carried out by enzymatic action of keratinophilic fungi. The most commonly occurring fungi are *Chrysosporium*, *Microsporum*, *Geomyces*, *Malbranchea* and *Trichophyton*.

From the preceding genera *C. tropicum*, *A. flavus*, *A. niger*, and *S.brevicaulis* were the most common species. The remaining species of the above three genera were isolated in rare frequency of occurrence. The resting genera and species recovered from sheep wool were identified in rare frequency of occurrence (Table 1). Ogawa *et al.* (2008) isolated several fungal species including *Penicillium* sp., *Aspergillus flavus*, *Paecilomyces lilacinus* and *Candida glabrata* from sites other than the skin, but were considered to be environmental contaminants because of their absence in the histological section. These result are in harmony with that previously recorded by Hay and Mills (1982); Cabasse *et al.* (1989); Ali-Shatayeh *et al.* (1989); El-Said and Abdel-Sater (1994); Yeruhum *et al.* (1995); Abdel-Gawad (1997); Nasser and Abdel- Sater (1997); Kaul and Suimbali (2000); Kushwaha (2000) and Meyer *et al.*(2001).

In conclusion the present result revealed that goats hair and sheep wool were highly contaminated with some saprophytic and keratinophilic fungi. These fungi may play a vital role in the breakdown of keratinous substrates into simpler organic compounds. Some of them, due to their ability to grow on keratin residues, may also prove to be pathogens or potential pathogens for man and animals.

Table (1): Total counts (TC, calculated per 360 segments in all samples), numbers of cases of isolation (NCI, out of 40 samples) and occurrence remarks (OR) of various genera and species recovered from goats hair and sheep wool .

Genera & Species	Goats hair				Sheep wool			
	SPT		HPT		SPT		HPT	
	TC	NCI & OR	TC	NCI & OR	TC	NCI & OR	TC	NCI & OR
<i>Acremonium strictum</i> W. Gams	7	6R	6	4R	3	2R	1	1R
<i>Alternaria</i> spp.	5	3R	3	3R	1	1R	3	2R
<i>A. alternata</i> (Fries.) Keissler	4	2R	1	1R	1	1R	2	1R
<i>A. tenuissima</i> (Kunze) Wiltshire	1	1R	2	2R	-	-	1	1R
<i>Aspergillus</i> spp.	20	11L	25	13L	38	18M	18	10L
<i>A. flavus</i> Link	7	4R	5	2R	9	4R	6	3R
<i>A. fumigatus</i> Fresenius	2	1R	1	1R	6	2R	1	1R
<i>A. niger</i> Van Tieghem	5	2R	5	2R	11	4R	2	2R
<i>A. ochraceus</i> Wilhelm	-	-	1	1R	-	-	7	2R
<i>A. oryzae</i> (Ahlburg) Cohn	2	1R	8	3R	5	2R	-	-
<i>A. sydowii</i> (Bain. & Sart.) Thom & Church	-	-	2	2R	3	3R	2	2R
<i>A. terreus</i> Thom	-	-	2	1R	1	1R	-	-
<i>A. ustus</i> (Bain.) Thom & Church	4	3R	-	-	3	2R	-	-
<i>A. versicolor</i> (Vuill.) Tiraboschi	-	-	1	1R	-	-	-	-
<i>Candida</i> spp.	6	4R	10	5R	3	3R	2	2R
<i>C. albicans</i> Robin & Berkhout	4	2R	7	3R	1	1R	-	-
<i>Candida</i> . sp.	2	2R	3	2R	2	2R	2	2R
<i>Chaetomium</i> spp.	3	3R	2	2R	1	1R	-	-
<i>C. bostrychodes</i> Zoph	1	1R	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>C.globosum</i> Kunze	2	2R	2	2R	1	1R	-	-
<i>Chrysosporium</i> spp.	173	29H	115	21M	87	27H	80	22M
<i>C. indicum</i> (Randhawa and Sandhau) Garg	10	4R	9	3R	8	5R	2	2R
<i>C.Keratinophilum</i> D.Frey ex. Carmichael	9	3R	5	2R	2	2R	7	4R
<i>C.tropicum</i> Carmichael	149	19M	98	14L	75	18M	68	13L
<i>Chrysosporium</i> . sp.	5	3R	3	2R	2	2R	3	3R

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Table (1): Continued

<i>Cladosporium herbarum</i> (Persoon) Link	5	2R	7	4R	1	1R	3	3R
<i>Emericella nidulans</i> (Eidam) Vuillemin	9	4R	4	3R	7	5R	3	2R
<i>Eurotium amstelodami</i> Mangin	4	4R	-	-	2	2R	-	-
<i>Fusarium spp.</i>	10	8L	5	3R	3	3R	5	4R
<i>F.oxysporium</i> Schlecht	6	5R	4	2R	2	2R	2	2R
<i>F.solani</i> (Mart.) Sacc.	4	3R	1	1R	1	1R	3	2R
<i>Goetrichum candidum</i> Link	2	2R	4	3R	4	4R	1	1R
<i>Microsporum spp.</i>	2	2R	-	-	-	-	1	1R
<i>M. canis</i> Bodin	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1R
<i>M.gypsum</i> (Bodin) Guiart & Grigorakis	2	2R	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Mucor hiemalis</i> Wehmer	3	3R	4	4R	-	-	5	4R
<i>Paecilomyces lilacinus</i> (Thom) Samson	2	2R	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Penicillium spp.</i>	4	3R	7	4R	2	2R	5	3R
<i>P.aurantiigriseum</i> Dierckx	-	-	1	1R	-	-	-	-
<i>P.chrysogenum</i> Thom	3	2R	6	3R	1	1R	5	3R
<i>P. funiculosum</i> Thom	-	-	-	-	1	1R	-	-
<i>Penicillium.sp.</i>	1	1R	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Rhizopus stolonifer</i> (Ehrenb. ex.Fries) Lind.	-	-	-	-	1	1R	-	-
<i>Scopulariopsis spp.</i>	32	9L	18	8L	21	13L	8	6R
<i>S.brevicaulis</i> (Sacc.) Bain.	31	8L	18	8L	17	10L	6	4R
<i>S.candida</i> (Gueguen) Vuillemin	1	1R	-	-	4	3R	2	2R
<i>Thermoascus aurantiacus</i> Miehe	3	3R	-	-	1	1R	-	-
<i>Thermomyces lanuginosus</i> Tsiklinsky	2	2R	2	1R	3	2R	2	2R
<i>Tritirachium oryzae</i> Van Beyma	3	2R	-	-	1	1R	-	-
<i>Trichophyton verrucosum</i> Bodin	3	3R	-	-	1	1R	-	-
Sterile mycelia	5	3R	8	6R	5	4R	3	3R
Gross total count	303		220		185		140	
No.of genera =21	20		14		18		14	
No.of species =38	30		26		29		22	

H= High occurrence, 26 – 40 (out of 40 cases) ;
L= Low occurrence, 7-14 cases;

M= Moderate occurrence, 15-25 cases;
R= Rare occurrence, 1-6 cases.

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الملخص العربي
انتشار بعض الفطريات الجلدية والفطريات المحبة للكراطين على شعر الماعز
وصوف الأغنام بمدينة تعز، اليمن

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يهدف هذا البحث حصر وتعريف الفلورا الفطرية الملوث بشمانين عينة من شعر الماعز وصوف الغنم (٤٠ عينة لكل) جمعت من أماكن مختلفة في مدينة تعز باليمن. باستخدام طريقتين للعزل، العزل المباشر من التربة وطريقة العزل والزراعة على الوسط الغذائي سبارود أجار والتحصين عند درجة ٢٨°م، وقد أظهرت النتائج أن شعر الماعز كان أكثر تلوثاً بالفطريات من صوف الأغنام، وقد تم عزل وتعريف ٢١ جنساً و٣٨ نوعاً من العينات المختبرة، وكانت أكثر الأجناس شيوعاً هي *Aspergillus* ، و *Chrysosporium* ، و *Trichophyton* ، و *Scopulariopsis* ، وقد تم أيضاً عزل بعض أجناس الديرماتوفيتس مثل *Microsporum* ، ولوحظ أن العينات المختبرة يمكن أن تكون ممرضة للإنسان.

**DISTRIBUTION PATTERN OF DERMATOPHYTES AND
OTHER KERATINOPHILIC FUNGI ON GOATS HAIR
AND SHEEP WOOL, TAIZ CITY, YEMEN**

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