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Molecular screening of piroplasm from ticks collected from Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujarat districts of Punjab, Pakistan

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Ticks (*Acari*, Ixodidae) are the bloodsucking parasites of domestic animals, have significant importance in transmission of diseases and causing huge economic losses. The aim of this study was to screen endophilic ticks for the piroplasms using polymerase chain reaction in three districts Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujarat of Punjab, Pakistan. Ticks were dissected under stereomicroscope and internal organs (midguts and salivary glands) were procured to generate pools of optimum weights. DNA extraction was done through standard protocol followed by primer specific PCR for piroplasm spp. A total of 22.95% tick pools were found positive for piroplasms spp. In districts Sialkot and Gujranwala piroplasms prevalence is higher in riverine animals while in Gujarat prevalence is higher in non-riverine animals. Female animals were found more prone to piroplasms as compared to males. This study provide useful data on the distribution of piroplasms in the vector population of the study area and devise future recommendations for better management of ruminants to avoid subclinical and clinical infections and vector transmitted diseases.

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