Control of mastitis and Somatic Cell Count in *Mediterranean buffaloes* using STARTVAC® vaccine: comparison of two clinical trials

Guccione J. a, A. Pesce b, D. Piantedosi a, C. Salzano b, A. De Rosa a, G. Tedeschi c, S. Fabbri a, P. Ciamarilla a

* a Department of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Production, University of Napoli “Federico II”, Via Deucalion 1, 80137 Napoli, Italy; *Email: guccione.josephina@unina.it

**b** Institute Español de Desarrollo del Ganado Lechero S.A, Via A. Jervolino 19, 81100 Tuoro, Caserta District, Italy

**c** Hipra Italia s.r.l., Via Franciacorta 74, 25018, Rovato, Italy

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

- Two different I.M. vaccine administration protocols (STARTVAC®, HIPRA, Spain), were evaluated on 60 buffalo heifers: 30 Protocol A (Vaccinated group 1-VG1) and 30 Protocol B (Vaccinated group 2-VG2) (Figure 1);
- Each protocol was characterized by a control groups (CG1-CG2) and lasted one year (December 2011- November 2013);
- A composite milk sample (4-quarter pool) was collected for each animal to perform SCC, BC and CMT at 10, 30, 60 and 90 DIM. Dairy milk yields were monthly recorded after milking until drying-off;
- Buffaloes producing milk with SCC>200*10³ Cells/mL and positive BC to *S. aureus* were considered as affected by mastitis and in end-point phase.

**RESULTS:**

- No significant differences were found considering mastitis prevalence between VG2 and CG2 at 30 (VG2 2.2/30 vs. CG2 2.2/30; P< 0.05), 60 (VG2 1.28 vs. CG2 2.23; P= 0.008) and 90 (VG2 2.27 vs. CG2 2.5/20; P=0.006) DIM
- No significant differences were found considering *S. aureus* IMI and *E. coli* mastitis, between the two protocols.
- No significant differences were detected on means SCC values between VG1 and CG1
- Higher means milk yields were recorded in both the vaccinated groups (G1 - VG2) than in the control ones (CG1 and CG2)

**CONCLUSIONS:**

- Two different clinical trials base on STARTVAC® vaccine use were evaluated for the first time in dairy Mediterranean Buffaloes;
- Protocol B (based on 3 administrations) showed better prophylactic properties against mastitis due to *S. aureus* than Protocol A (2 administrations);
- A better trend of SCC was also detected using Protocol B than Protocol A;
- The vaccine employment in buffalo represents an interesting challenge, even though its practice use should be suggested in association with a good herd health management.

**BACKGROUND AND AIMS:**

- *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus*) is considered one of the most important udder pathogens in dairy buffaloes;
- it can cause mastitis and intramammary infection (IMI), with a prevalence of positive samples up to 55% in infected herds;
- it causes considerable economic loss for farmers and dairy industry;
- The aim of the current study: to evaluate the prophylactic effectiveness of inactivated vaccine, on *Mediterranean buffaloes* (*Bubalus Bubalis*) mastitis due to *Staphylococcus aureus* infection.