Abstract

Background: Anisakiasis is a parasitic zoonosis caused by live larvae of the Anisakidae Family found located in the body cavities and in the muscular systems of osseous fish and cephalopod mollusks. Humans inadvertently ingest these larvae when eating raw or undercooked infested fish. Symptoms are characterized by gastrointestinal disorders. The purpose of this study is that of ascertaining the frequency of anisakid larvae parasite infestation in fresh fish marketed in northern section of the province of Cordoba.

Methods: Over a nine-month period, samples were taken of the species of sea fish sold to the greatest degree at all of the establishments in this sector. The parasite analysis was conducted at the Peñarroya Public Health Laboratory by the dissection method. A total of 1,261 samples of 18 different species were analyzed.

Results: The total frequency of parasite infestation was 15.8%. The species in which the most parasites were found was the blue whiting (Micromesistius poutassou) showing a 42% parasite infestation rate, and Anisakidos larvae were also found in: hake (Merlucius merlucius) (27.5%), whiting (Merlucius sp.) (26%), mackerel (Scomber scombrus), greater forkbeard (Phycis blennoides) (6.2%), anchovy (Engraulis encrasicolus) (5.6%) and pouting (Trisopterus luscus) (5.5%) of the samples in which parasites were found. The monthly spread of the results reveals an increase in parasite infestation during the spring months, declining progressively up to the last months of the year.

Conclusions: There is a significant degree of Anisakidos infestation in the species marketed in the northern section of the province of Cordoba. Nevertheless, the difficulty of detecting this parasite, the vague assessment of the degree of parasite infestation tolerable or unacceptable as set forth under regulations, the fact that some traditional dishes made from raw fish require fresh or refrigerated products and, lastly, the lack or complete lack of health education on the part of the population make it advisable for this emerging problem to be approached with greater rigor.

Keywords

Parasitosis; Anisakiasis; Zoonosis; Fresh fish.