

Project. Molecular diagnosis of *Sarcocystis* species from sheep and goat

Some of *Sarcocystis* spp. found in sheep and goats are pathogenic. Due to the intense *Sarcocystis* infection wool and meat production is reduced and industry lose millions annually. The *Sarcocystis* species diversity in these animals has not been fully elucidated. Isolation of *Sarcocystis* is not effective in epidemiological studies.

In this work, diaphragm, oesophageal, and heart samples from sheep and goats will be examined. The objective of the study is to develop a rapid and efficient molecular methodology for the identification of *Sarcocystis* species in sheep meat and goat meat by muscle digestion, PCR and sequencing. The distribution, genetic variability and morphological characteristics of the detected species will also be assessed. Due to the lack of studies on *Sarcocystis* in goats, new *Sarcocystis* species are expected to be described in these hosts. The molecular diagnostic methodology, developed and optimized during this study, after modification will be applicable in other economically important animals.

Project leader: dr. Dalius Butkauskas

Postdoc researcher: dr. Alina Marandykina-Prakienė

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