

CHAPTER 33

BOTANICAL CONTROL OF POULTRY COCCIDIOSIS

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INTRODUCTION

The poultry sector is vibrant, fast growing and potential sector playing an important role in food security and economy of developing countries (Abbas et al. 2020; Zhang et al. 2020). Each year, over 50 billion chickens are raised as a source of meat, accounting for over one-third of protein source in food of humans (Quiroz-Castañeda et al. 2015). However, the poultry sector is facing challenges due to outbreak of certain diseases of parasitic, viral and bacterial origin. Among parasitic diseases, Coccidiosis is major parasitic diseases affecting poultry industry all over the world (Blake et al. 2020). Coccidiosis is a parasitic disease caused by different species of genus *Eimeria*, which is obligate and intracellular protozoa. This is host-specific protozoa and also related to other protozoa like *Besnoitia*, *Babesia*, *Cystoisospora*, *Cryptosporidium*, *Plasmodium*, *Neospora*, *Theileria*, *Toxoplasma* and *Sarcocystis*. There are seven species which are causing coccidiosis in *Gallus gallus domesticus*. These species of *Eimeria* include *Eimeria brunetti*, *E. acervulina*, *E. maxima*, *E. necatrix*, *E. mitis*, *E. tenella* and *E. praecox* (Blake et al. 2021; El-Shall et al. 2022).

Coccidiosis is transmitted by ingestion of sporulated oocysts of *Eimeria* from feces and litter. All *Eimeria* species show noticeable tropism for definite areas of the gut (Lai et al. 2011). The lifecycle of *Eimeria* includes variety of asexual reproduction (Walker et al. 2013; Abbas et al. 2017a, 2017b), followed by a sexual phase known as gametogony as shown in Fig. 1. Following fertilization, oocysts are excreted and sporulated in the environment. Sporulated oocysts are infectious for avian hosts. The pathology related to every *Eimeria* species varies, taking place in exclusive sections of the gut and inflicting both malabsorptive or hemorrhagic lesions at intestine (Abbas et al. 2019a, 2019b; Burrell et al. 2020). By infecting the digestive tract, coccidiosis reduces poultry output by compromising the final body weight, intestinal health, and meat quality of broiler chickens. (Swelum et al. 2021; Yaqoob et al. 2021). Coccidiosis is controlled by use of synthetic anticoccidial drugs. Since 1939, a wide range of anticoccidial drugs have been used against poultry coccidiosis (Nogueira et al. 2009). However, due to development of

anticoccidial drug resistance (Abbas et al. 2019a, 2020), toxic effects on bird's health this method now be came ineffective. Heavy cost is spent on anticoccidial drugs annually. Fortunately, *Eimeria* infections create long-lasting and powerful immunity including vaccination as substitute to anticoccidial drugs (Abbas et al. 2011; Chapman, 2014). On the other hand, vaccination may trigger severe hemorrhagic reactions and lack of a "standard" protocol for assessing vaccine efficacy makes the development and validation of vaccine complicated against avian coccidiosis (Shirley et al. 2005).

Due to anticoccidial drug resistance and lower efficacy of *Eimeria* vaccines, alternative novel compounds are center of recent research now a days. Among alternative anticoccidial agents, use of phytogenic compounds has shown significant results in control of coccidiosis (Abbas et al. 2017a; Abou-Kassem et al. 2021). Recently, there has been a surge of interest around the world in adopting herbal remedies as safe alternatives to treat a variety of ailments with minimum chances of resistance (Abd El-Hack et al. 2020). Because of their growth-promoting and natural immunostimulating properties, different botanicals are extensively researched against poultry coccidiosis (Muthamilselvan et al. 2016; Abbas et al. 2017c, 2019a).

This chapter contains valuable information on potential of different botanicals against *Eimeria* and positive effects on performance of poultry. Furthermore, herbal medicines, their extracts, bioactive substances, particular anticoccidial characteristics are also summarized for future perspectives of research against coccidiosis. Different herbal blends along with their associated bioactive ingredients having anticoccidial potential with different species are also discussed.

Mechanism of Action of Botanicals Against Coccidiosis

Antioxidants

The antiprotozoal activity of botanicals has also been attributed due to ability to reduce oxidative stress by scavenging oxygen free radicals which induce oxidative stress

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Table 1: Major *Eimeria* species infecting Poultry

Species Name	Infection Site	Pathogenicity Level	Reference
Chicken			
<i>E. acervulina</i>	Upper small intestine	Medium	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. brunetti</i>	Distal small intestine and colon	High	Levine 1942
<i>E. hagani</i>	Upper small intestine	Low	Edgar and Siebold 1964
<i>E. maxima</i>	Middle small intestine	Medium	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. mivati</i>	Upper small intestine	Low	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. mitis</i>	Upper small intestine	Low	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. necatrix</i>	Middle small intestine	High	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. praecox</i>	Upper small intestine	Medium	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. tenella</i>	Ceca	High	Raillet and Lucet 1891
Turkey			
<i>E. adenoides</i>	Small intestine, caeca, colon	High	Moore and Brown 1951
<i>E. gallopavonis</i>	Large intestine, caeca	Moderate	Hawkins 1952
<i>E. meleagrimitis</i>	Small intestine	Moderate	Tyzzar 1929
<i>E. dispersa</i>	Small, large intestine	Low	Tyzzar 1929
Pigeons			
<i>E. columbarum</i>	Intestine	Low to Mild	Mitra and Das Gupta 1937
<i>E. labbeana</i>	Intestine	Low to Mild	Pinto 1928
Ducks			
<i>E. anatis</i>	Small intestine	Mild	Schlotysek 1955
<i>E. danilovi</i>	Small intestine	High	Gräfer et al. 1965
<i>E. saitamae</i>	Small intestine	High	Inoue 1967
Geese			
<i>E. anseris</i>	Small intestine	Moderate	Kotlan 1932
<i>E. nocens</i>	Small intestine	Moderate	Kotlan 1932
<i>E. truncate</i>	Kidney	High	Raillet and Lucet 1891

Table 2: Botanicals reported for Anticoccidial effects against *Eimeria* Species

Botanical Name	Active Compounds	Anticoccidial Activity	Other Beneficial Effects	<i>Eimeria</i> Species	Reference
<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Flavonoids, Vernoside and Berberine	Reduced lesion and oocyst score	Improves weight gain, FCR, chicken	Mixed species	Hussain et al. 2021
<i>Allium sativum</i>	Alliin, diallylsulphide, Allicin, Sulphur derivatives	Lowers fecal oocyst count, lower pathology	Increase in performance, organ weight, FCR	Mixed species	Sidiropoulou et al. 2020
<i>Aloe vera</i>	Trepanoidscarbhydrates	Lesser fecal oocyst counts.	Reduces mortality	<i>E. tenella</i>	Akhtar et al. 2012
<i>Artemisia brevifolia</i>	Flavonoids		Immunomodulation		
<i>Artemisia sieberi</i>	Artemisinin	Diminishes oocyst and lesion scores	Improves weight gain, FCR	<i>E. tenella</i>	Hussain et al. 2021
<i>Artemisia sieberi</i>	Artemisinin	Diminishes oocyst scores in infested chickens.	Improves FCR and promotes weight gain.	Mixed species	Kheirabadiet al. 2014
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Azadirachtin, nimbolin, nimbin, sodium nimbin, salannin and quercetin.	Lesser fecal oocyst counts and reduction in lesion score	Improves weight gain, FCR, reduces mortality	<i>E. tenella</i>	Abbas et al. 2006
<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	Betaine	Reduced Oocysts shedding and lesion scores	Enhances FCR, improves organ weight, serum chemistry	Mixed species	Abbas et al. 2017b
<i>Bidens pilosa</i>	Favonoids, porphyrins, quercetin, porphyrins, phenylpropanoids	Lesser fecal oocyst counts and reduction in lesion score	Enhanced Immunity, Survival rate, weight gain	<i>E. tenella</i>	Yang et al. 2019
<i>Camellia sinensis</i>	Polyphenolic compounds	are blocked.	Antioxidant properties are demonstrated.	Mixed species	Zhang et al. 2020; Abbas et al. 2017c
<i>Carica papaya</i>	Papain, Vitamin A	Reduced oocysts shedding	Enhanced immunity and improves growth performance	<i>E. tenella</i>	Nghonjuyiet al. 2015
<i>Cinnamomum cassia</i>	Cinnamaldehyde	Reduced oocysts shedding	Immunity is boosted. Survival rate, Weight gain	Mixed species	Orengo et al. 2012
<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Curcumins	Inhibits life cycle stages	Increases body weight gain. Shows antioxidative, anti-inflammatory	Mixed species	Abbas et al. 2011
<i>Cyamopsistetragonoloba</i>	Saponins	Reduces the shedding of oocysts	Increases daily body weight while lowering feed conversion ratio. increase	Mixed species	Sánchez-Hernández et al. 2019
<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Polyphenolics, carbohydrates, amino acids, Tannins, alkaloids (gallic acid, ellagic acid), Emblicanin	Oocysticidal properties and prevents sporulation. Inhibits parasite's life cycle from progressing.	Body weight gain improvement improved cellular and humoral immunity	Mixed species	Sharma et al. 2021
<i>Fomitella fraxinea</i>	Fungal lectin.	Improves the cellular and humoral immunity	It has immunostimulatory properties.	Mixed species	Dalloul et al. 2006

<i>Gallarhois</i>	Methyl gallate and phenolic compounds	Oocyte shedding is stopped, and lesion scores are reduced.	Reduces feed consumption while improving body weight increase. Antibacterial and antiviral properties.	<i>E. tenella</i>	Lee et al. 2012
<i>Ganodermalucidum</i>	Glycoproteins, organic acids, Glycosides	Oocyst sporulation is inhibited.	Increases the weight of the carcass. Improves bloody diarrhea.	<i>E. tenella</i>	Ahad et al. 2016
<i>Botanical Name</i>	Active Compounds	Anticoccidial Activity	Other Beneficial Effects	<i>Eimeria</i> Species	Reference
<i>Khayasenegalensis</i>	Phenolics and alkaloids	Reduces fecal, lesion scores,	Antioxidant effects	<i>E. tenella</i>	Dakpogan et al. 2019
<i>Moringaoleifera</i>	Flavonoids, phenolics, Ascorbic acid, caffeoylquinic acid and kaempferol.	Osmoprotectant Reduces the amount of lipid peroxidation in the intestine.	Enhances body weight gain, reduces mortality, faecal score, Inhibits the production of oocysts.	Mixed species	Ola-Fadunsin and Ademola 2013
<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	Pectinand flavonoids compounds	Prevents the development of coccidial infections and decreases their reproduction.	Enhances body weight gain, improved FCR	<i>E. tenella</i>	Anosa and Okoro 2011
<i>Oleaeuropaea</i>	Maslinic acid, polyphenolic compounds	Damaging impact on oocysts	Improves the anticoccidial, the oocyst, lesion	Mixed species	Debbou-louknane et al. 2021
<i>Origanumvulgare</i>	Carvacol and thymol	Damaged life cycle stages of <i>Eimeria</i>	Reduces FCR while increasing body weight gain.	Mixed species	Tsinas et al. 2011
<i>Pimpinellaanisum</i>	Methylchavicol, Anethole, anisaldehyde, estragole and eugenol.	Only when combined with A. annua it reduces the extent of oocytes in broiler chickens.	Improves performance by increasing FCR	<i>E. tenella</i>	Drăgan et al. 2010
<i>Pinusradiata</i>	Tannins	Reduced oocysts excretion and lesion score	Improves performance by increasing body weight gain	Mixed Species	Abbas et al. 2017a
<i>Punicagranatum</i>	Corilagin, Ellagic acid and punicalagin	Lessens oocyst output.	More Reduces feed conversion ratio while improving intestinal lesions and increasing body weight.	Mixed Species	Ahad et al. 2018
<i>Saccharumofficinatum</i>	Flavones (tricin, luteolin, derivatives)	In vitro inhibitory activity against coccidian oocyst sporulation.	Immunomodulatory antioxidant, Anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antibacterial	Mixed species	Abbas et al. 2015
<i>Salvadorapersica</i>	Alkaloids, Cyanogenic glycosides Vitamin C, salvadoarea, tannins, saponins	Inhibits or impairs the incursion, reproduction, and progression of <i>Eimeria</i> parasite species	Anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activities have been reported.	Mixed species	Thagfan et al. 2017
<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i>	Carvacrol and Thymol.	Affecting <i>Eimeria</i> oocyst sporulation (percent) in a dose-dependent manner. Oocyst morphology is affected	Increased body weight and FCR	Mixed species	Abbas et al. 2019a
<i>Tulbaghia violacea</i>	marasmine), bis (methylthiomethyl) methyl disulfide, S - (methylthiomethyl), cysteine sulfoxide	Reduces oocyst formation, host cell death caused by lipid oxidatives	Acts as antioxidant, Improves weight gain and intestinal pathology	Mixed Species	Naidoo et al. 2008
<i>VitisVinifera</i>	Proanthocyanidins, epicatechin and catechin, dimeric, polymeric, trimeric, phenolic acids	Oocyst morphology is defined in some factors such as shape, size, and the amount of sporocysts.	Improves intestinal pathology and weight gain in the chicken's body. Presents antioxidant activity	Mixed Species	Wang et al. 2008; Abbas et al. 2020
<i>Yucca schidigera</i>	Saponins	Oocyst morphology, Excretion is reduced	Enhances productive efficiency (FCR and body weight).	Mixed Species	Hassan et al. 2008
<i>Zingiberofficinale</i>	Oleoresin and Gingerol	Reduced oocysts shedding	Increases the rate of weight gain in the body.	Mixed Species	Ali et al. 2019

due to *Eimeria* (Abbas et al. 2019b). Botanicals are enriched with antioxidant compounds and are likely to play role in the control of the coccidiosis disease. The beneficial effects against *Eimeria* are derived from phenolic and flavonoid compounds which attribute to antioxidant activity (Abbas et al. 2020). Many studies have shown that flavonoids have the capacity to act as powerful antioxidants by scavenging free radicals and thus reducing oxidative stress in host caused by *Eimeria* parasite. Flavonoids having multiple hydroxyl groups act as pro-oxidants. The mechanism of action of flavonoids is

conversion of hydroxyl group into pro-oxidant when oxidized by Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) present in inner cell membrane which leads to late necrosis or apoptosis of damaged cells by eliminating potential mutants (Masood et al. 2013).

Osmoprotectant

Many botanicals including *Beta vulgaris* and *Camellia sinensis* reduce coccidiosis infection by their osmoprotectant activity

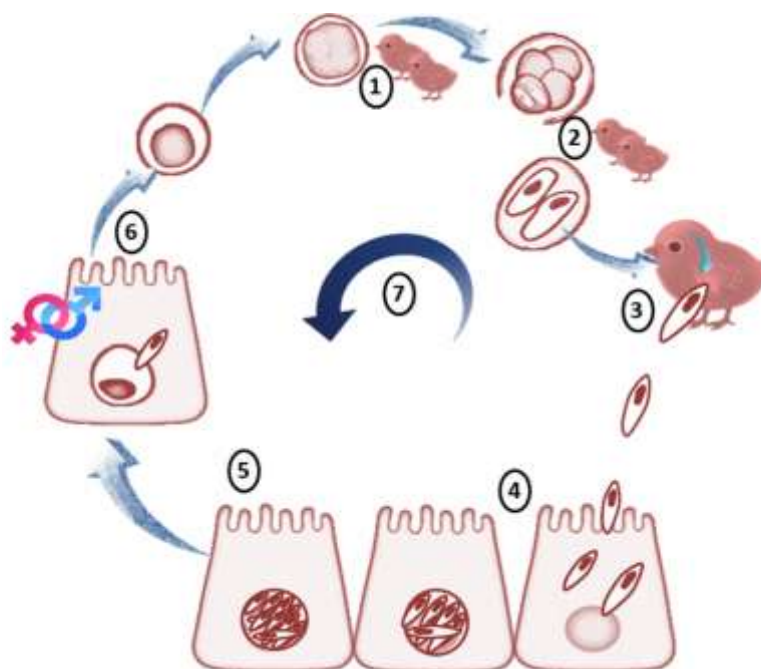


Figure 1: Life Cycle of *Eimeria*. Birds get infected by sporulated oocysts from fecal matter and reproduction occurs in the intestinal cells which leads to damage to the intestinal wall (El-Shall et al. 2022).

by stabilization intestinal cell membranes and immune stimulation thus acting as osmoprotectant against *Eimeria* parasite (Abbas et al. 2015, 2017a). Plants protect different cell types against chemical and environmental stress (Allen 2003).

Destruction of Life Cycle Stages

The protective effect of botanicals is not only restricted to the intestinal cells, but they also affect and damage life cycle stages of the coccidia including the asexual stages (sporozoites) and sexual life cycle stages (Zhang et al. 2020; El-Shall et al. 2022).

Immunomodulatory and Stimulation of Mucosal immunity

The essential oils of different botanicals such as *Trachyspermum ammi*, *Origanum vulgare* and many others are known for their immunomodulatory effects against parasites by stimulation of mucosal immunity and also known to enhance cellular and humoral immunity against coccidiosis. They are involved in immune stimulation, enhancement by macrophage activity and enhancing antibodies level in infected birds (Abbas et al. 2012a, 2012b, 2017).

Target the Exogenous Phase of *Eimeria*

Many botanicals such as *Artemisia*, thyme, clove, and tea tree oils target the exogenous phase as tested in in vitro trials leading to oocyst disruption (Remmal et al. 2011). A pure product extracted from *Artemisia annua* i.e., artemisinin showed a dose-dependent increase of dead oocysts shed in feces, an alteration in the sporulation rate, and a significant reduction of calcium ATPase in macrogamete endoplasmic reticulum, which most likely leads to abnormal oocyst formation (Cacho et al. 2010).

Target the Endogenous Phase of *Eimeria*

Botanicals also effect the endogenous phases of *Eimeria* parasite as considerable alterations were observed in sporozoite morphology effecting *Eimeria* viability and infectivity in an in vitro invasion assay using cumin derived from turmeric plant (Khalafalla et al. 2011). The effect of curcumin was also tested with other phytochemicals including carvacrol (major constituent of *Oregano*) and *Echinacea purpurea* extract which also showed immunomodulatory activity (Burt et al. 2013). A similar study was performed using essential oils of oregano and garlic showed strong anticoccidial activity, exhibited a positive effect on intestinal microorganisms in in vitro trial and improved growth performance in in vivo trial. Garlic is also known to have anticoccidial compounds like allicin, propyl thiosulfinate, propyl thiosulfinate oxide, and allicin have been shown to affect the endogenous phase of *Eimeria* and have anticoccidial efficacy against *E. tenella* (Sidiropoulou et al. 2020).

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