

Reservoirs of *Neospora caninum* in domestic and wild animals

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Neospora caninum is thought to have wide host range. Dogs and coyotes are its only known definitive hosts that can shed oocysts. Antibodies to *N. caninum* have been found in many species of domestic animals including cattle, sheep, goats, horses, camels, water buffaloes, cats, and dogs. However, viable *Neospora* parasites have been isolated only from cattle, sheep, horses, and dogs. The water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalus*) appears to be an important domestic reservoir of *N. caninum*. Among wild animals, antibodies to *N. caninum* have been

found in many species including foxes, coyotes, raccoons, wild felids, deer, rats, hare, several species of deer, caribou, bison, opossums, and marine mammals. In the United States, the white-tailed deer appears to be an important reservoir of *N. caninum*; approximately 40% of white-tailed deer in the U.S. have antibodies to *N. caninum*, viable *N. caninum* has been isolated from brains of deer, and oocysts have been found in feces of coyotes fed deer tissues. The role of wildlife in the biology of *N. caninum* will be discussed.