

**REPRODUCTIVE AND PHYSIOLOGICAL
PERFORMANCE OF MALE DROMEDARY
CAMELS DURING BREEDING AND
NON-BREEDING SEASONS**

By

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B.Sc. Agric. Sc. (Animal Production), Ain Shams University, 2005

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of

the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

**Agricultural Science
(Animal Physiology)**

Department of Animal Production

Faculty of Agriculture

Ain Shams University

2011

Approval Sheet

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ABSTRACT

Maiada Wagdy Ahmed Allam: Reproductive and Physiological Performance of Male Dromedary Camels during Breeding and Non-breeding Seasons. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis, Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University, 2011.

Two experiments were carried out. The first experiment aimed to investigate the effects of breeding (December till April) and non-breeding (May till November) seasons either hot-humid (May till July) or hot-dry (August till November) months of the male dromedary camels on body thermoregulation, testicular measurements, epididymal semen characteristics, blood haematology and blood serum components. The histological changes in the right and left testes were also observed. The second experiment, aimed to define the effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on epididymal semen quality and enzymatic activities, during storage at 5 °C for up to 3 days.

The obtained results showed that, rectal temperature (RT), respiration rate (RR) and pulse rate (PR) were significantly ($P<0.05$) lower, while testis weight, testicular volume, scrotal circumference and testis tone firmer score of the dromedary camels were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher during breeding season as compared to non-breeding season either hot-dry or hot-humid months. Semen colour of the dromedary camels were creamish white, milky white and watery white during breeding season, hot-dry and hot-humid months, respectively. Semen consistency of the dromedary camels was viscous during breeding season and hot-dry months, semi-viscous during hot-humid months. The percentage of sperm motility and the sperm-cell concentration were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher during breeding season as compared to both hot-dry and hot-humid months.

Seminal pH was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher during hot-humid months as compared to breeding season and hot-dry months. The

percentages of dead spermatozoa, sperm abnormalities and acrosomal damage of spermatozoa increased significantly ($P<0.05$) in hot-humid months as compared to both hot-dry months and breeding season. Haemoglobin (Hb) and haematocrit (Ht) were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher during non-breeding season either hot-humid or hot-dry months than breeding season. Red blood cells (RBC's) count was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher, while white blood cells (WBC's) count was significantly ($P<0.05$) lower during non-breeding season at hot-humid months than hot-dry months and breeding season. Total proteins, sodium concentrations, alkaline phosphatase (ALP), alanine-aminotrasferase (ALT) and aspartate-aminotransferase (AST) enzymes were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher, while albumin and globulin concentrations were insignificantly increased in the non-breeding season at hot-humid months as compared with hot-dry months and breeding season. Cholesterol, urea-nitrogen, potassium, calcium, total phosphorus concentrations and testosterone hormone increased significantly ($P<0.05$), while creatinine concentration in blood serum decreased significantly ($P<0.05$) during breeding season as compared with non-breeding season in hot-dry and hot-humid months. The testes examination revealed that more active during breeding season especially in the left testes than the non-breeding season either hot-dry and hot-humid months (Experiment 1).

The percentage of sperm motility and storagability of spermatozoa were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher, while the percentages of dead spermatozoa, sperm abnormalities, acrosomal damage of spermatozoa and the amount of ALT and AST enzymes were significantly ($P<0.05$) lower during breeding season than non-breeding season either hot-dry or hot-humid months. The percentages of dead spermatozoa, sperm abnormalities and acrosomal damage of spermatozoa were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher during hot-humid months than hot-dry months and breeding season. The activities of ALT and AST enzymes of the dromedary camels semen were insignificantly higher during non-breeding season in hot-humid months than hot-dry season. The percentage of sperm

motility was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher, while the percentages of dead spermatozoa, sperm abnormalities, acrosomal damage of spermatozoa and the amount of ALT and AST enzymes were significantly ($P<0.05$) lower during storage at 5°C for 3 days. There was no significant difference on the percentage of acrosomal damage of spermatozoa, ALT and AST activities between hot-humid and hot-dry seasons at storage at 5°C for up to 1 day. The prolongation of storage at 5°C for up to 3 days significantly ($P<0.05$) decreased the percentage of sperm motility, while significantly ($P<0.05$) increased the percentages of dead spermatozoa, sperm abnormalities, acrosomal damage of spermatozoa and the amount of ALT and AST activities of the dromedary camels during breeding and non-breeding seasons. The penetrating ability of spermatozoa into she-camel cervical mucus was significantly ($P<0.05$) better during breeding season than non-breeding season in hot-humid months and insignificantly ($P<0.05$) better during hot-dry months. While, the penetrating score was significantly ($P<0.05$) decreased during breeding and non-breeding seasons either hot-humid or hot-dry months with the advancement time of incubation at 37°C for 4 hours (Experiment 2).

Key Words:

Male camel, breeding season, thermoregulation, testes, semen, blood, biochemistry, penetration, storage

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In actual fact the prayerful thanks are due to our **MERCIFUL ALLAH** who gave me the ability and patience to finish this work.

Special acknowledgement and sincere appreciation to **Dr. Essmat Bakry Abdalla**, Professor of Animal Physiology, Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University, for his sharing in suggesting the subject of this study, close supervision, constructive criticism, valuable advices and great help in preparation of the manuscript.

Hearty thanks and gratitude are due to **Dr. Alaa El-Sayed Bellasy Zeidan**, Head of Research of Physiology of Reproduction and Artificial Insemination, Animal Production Research Institute, Agricultural Research Center, for his direct and excellent supervision, appreciable help, great interest, sharing in suggesting the problem, revision the manuscript, valuable guidance and encouragement throughout the different phases of this work and help during the writing of this manuscript.

Deep thanks and special gratitude extended to **Dr. Abd El-Salaam El-Azab**, Professor of Theriogenology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Benha University and **Dr. Hossam Fouad**, Assistant Professor of Histology, Department of Animal Histology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Benha University, for their kind help in histological studies in this work.

Special thanks and deep gratitude extended to **Dr. Atef Mahrous Abd El-Salaam Hassan**, Researcher of Animal Physiology, Animal Production Research Institute, Agricultural Research Center, for his kind help in the experimental work.

Special thanks and deep gratitude extended to **Dr. Assam Abdo**, Lecturer of Animal Physiology, Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University, for his kind help in blood haematology.

Special thanks and deep gratitude extended to **Dr. Ahmed Hafez**, for his kind help in biochemical analysis.

Special thanks and deep gratitude extended to **Staff Members** in the Slaughterhouse in Belbies City for their kind help in the experimental work.

Special thanks and deep gratitude extended to **Staff Members** of the Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University, for their help during this work.

Last but not least, hearty thanks and gratitude for **my lovely Mother and my lovely Father, my dear Sister, and my dear Brothers**, for their encouragement throughout the different periods of this work.

CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF PLATES.....	xii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	xiii
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	4
Experiment 1. Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on:	4
1. Body thermoregulation.....	4
1.1. Rectal temperature	4
1.2. Respiration rate.....	5
1.3. Pulse rate.....	7
2. Testicular measurements	8
2.1. Testis weight	8
2.2. Testicular volume.....	10
2.3. Scrotal circumference	11
2.4. Testes tone firmer	12
3. Semen characteristics of the camel	13
3.1. Semen colour	13
3.2. Semen consistency	14
3.3. Hydrogen-ion concentration	15
3.4. Percentage of sperm motility	16
3.5. Percentage of dead spermatozoa	17
3.6. Percentage of sperm abnormalities	19
3.7. Percentage of acrosomal damage	20
3.8. Sperm-cell concentration	22
4. Blood haematology.....	26
4.1. Haemaglobin (Hb).....	26
4.2. Haematocrit (Ht)	27

4.3. Red blood cells (RBC's).....	28
4.4. White blood cells (WBC's).....	29
5. Blood serum components.....	30
5.1. Total protein concentration	30
5.2. Albumin and globulin concentrations.....	32
5.3. Cholestrol concentration.....	34
5.4. Creatinine concentration.....	35
5.5. Urea-N concentration.....	36
5.6. Testosterone level.....	36
5.7. Sodium concentration.....	39
5.8. Potassium concentration.....	40
5.9. Calcium concentration.....	41
5.10. Total phosphorus concentration.....	43
5.11. Alkaline phosphatase enzyme activity.....	44
5.12. Alanine-aminotransferase enzyme activity.....	46
5.13. Aspartate-aminotransferase enzyme activity.....	47
6. Histological changes in the camel testes:.....	49
Experiment 2. Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on camel semen quality and enzymatic activities during storage at 5°C:.....	54
1. Semen quality.....	54
1.1. Percentage of sperm motility (%).....	54
1.2. Percentage of dead spermatozoa (%).....	55
1.3. Percentage of sperm abnormalities (%).....	55
1.4. Percentage of acrosomal damage (%).....	55
2. Enzymatic activities.....	56
2.1. Alanine-aminotransferase (ALT).....	56
2.2. Aspartate-aminotransferase (AST).....	57
3. Sperm penetration into cervical mucus as affected by breeding and non-breeding seasons during incubation at 37°C for up to 4 hours.....	58

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	59
1. Materials.....	59
1.1. Experimental animals.....	59
1.2. Feeding and management.....	60
2. Methods.....	60
3. Procedures.....	61
Experiment 1.	61
1. Thermoregulation parameters:.....	61
1.1. Rectal temperature (°C).....	65
1.2. Respiration rate (breaths/min).....	65
1.3. Pulse rate (pulses/min)	65
2. Testicular measurements:	65
2.1. Testes weight (gm).....	65
2.2. Testicular volume (cm ³)	67
2.3. Scrotal circumference (cm)	67
2.4. Testes tone firmer (score)	67
3. Camels semen collection:.....	67
3.1. Transportation of the samples	68
3.2. Sperm recovery	68
3.2.1. Recovery by cuts (swimming up) method	68
4. Epididymal semen characteristics:	68
4.1. Semen colour	69
4.2. Semen consistency	69
4.3. Hydrogen-ion concentration (pH)	69
4.4. Percentage of sperm motility (%).....	69
4.5. Percentage of dead spermatozoa (%).....	70
4.6. Percentage of sperm abnormalities (%).....	71
4.7. Percentage of acrosomal damage (%).....	71
4.8. Sperm-cell concentration (×10 ⁶ /ml).....	71
5. Blood sampling:.....	72
5.1. Haematological parameters:.....	72

5.1.1. Haemoglobin (g/dl).....	72
5.1.2. Haematocrit (%).....	72
5.1.3. Red blood cells (RBC's) and White blood cells (WBC's).....	72
5.2. Blood serum components:.....	73
5.2.1. Total protein.....	73
5.2.2. Albumin and globulin.....	73
5.2.3. Cholesterol.....	73
5.2.4. Creatinine.....	73
5.2.5. Urea-nitrogen.....	73
5.2.6. Testosterone hormone (T).....	74
5.2.7. Blood serum minerals.....	74
5.2.7.1. Sodium concentration (Na).....	74
5.2.7.2. Potassium concentration (K).....	74
5.2.7.3. Calcium concentration (Ca).....	74
5.2.7.4. Total phosphorus concentration (P).....	74
5.2.8. Blood serum enzymes.....	75
5.2.8.1. Alkaline phosphatase (ALP).....	75
5.2.8.2. Alanine and Aspartate-aminotransferase (ALT , AST).....	75
6. Histological changes in the camel testes:.....	75
Experiment 2.	76
7. Semen extension:.....	76
8. Chillig of semen at 5°C:.....	76
9. Sperm penetration (Score):.....	77
10. Statistical analysis:.....	77
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	79
Temperature–humidity index (THI):.....	79
Experiment 1. Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons:....	79
1. Thermoregulation parameters:.....	79
1.1. Rectal temperature (°C):.....	79

1.2. Respiration rate (breaths/min):.....	80
1.3. Pulse rate (pulses/min):.....	81
2. Testicular measurements	84
2.1. Testis weight (gm).....	84
2.2. Testicular volume (cm ³)	85
2.3. Scrotal circumference (cm).....	85
2.4. Testes tone firmer (score).....	86
3. Epididymal semen characteristics:.....	89
3.1. Semen colour	89
3.2. Semen consistency	89
3.3. Hydrogen-ion concentration (pH)	90
3.4. Percentage of sperm motility (%).....	90
3.5. Percentage of dead spermatozoa (%).....	91
3.6. Percentage of sperm abnormalities (%)	92
3.7. Percentage of acrosomal damage (%).....	92
3.8. Sperm-cell concentration ($\times 10^6/\text{ml}$).....	93
4. Blood haematology:.....	98
4.1. Haemoglobin concentration (gm/dl).....	98
4.2. Haematocrit value (%).....	98
4.3. Red blood cells counts ($\times 10^6/\text{mm}^3$).....	99
4.4. White blood cells counts ($\times 10^3/\text{mm}^3$).....	99
5. Blood serum components:.....	102
5.1. Total protein concentration (gm/dl).....	102
5. 2. Albumin concentration (gm/dl).....	102
5. 3. Globulin concentration (gm/dl).....	103
5.4. Cholesterol concentration (mg/dl).....	103
5.5. Creatinine concentration (mg/dl).....	104
5.6. Urea-N concentration (mg/dl).....	105
5.7. Testosterone concentration (ng/ml).....	106
5.8. Serum electrodes (Minerals).....	111
5.8.1. Sodium concentration (mg/dl).....	111

5.8.2. Potassium concentration (mg/dl).....	112
5.8.3. Calcium concentration (mg/dl).....	113
5.8.4. Total phosphorus concentration (mg/dl).....	113
5.9. Serum enzymes activities.....	117
5.9.1. Alkaline phosphatase (U/L).....	117
5.9.2. Alanine-aminotransferase (U/L).....	117
5.9.3. Aspartate-aminotransferase (U/L).....	118
6. Histological changes of the testes:.....	121
Experiment 2. Epididymal semen quality and enzymatic activities of the dromedary camels as affected by breeding and non-breeding seasons during storage at 5°C for 3 days:.....	126
1. Percentage of sperm motility (%).....	126
2. Percentage of dead spermatozoa (%).....	129
3. Percentage of sperm abnormalities (%).....	131
4. Percentage of acrosomal damage (%).....	133
5. Alanine-aminotransferase activity (U/10 ⁶ spermatozoa).....	136
6. Aspartate-aminotransferase activity (U/10 ⁶ spermatozoa).....	139
3. Sperm penetration into cervical mucus as affected by breeding and non-breeding seasons during incubation at 37°C for up to 4 hours:.....	141
V. SUMMARY	142
VI. CONCLUSION.....	149
VII. REFERENCES.....	151
ARABIC SUMMARY.....	

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.		Page
1	Experimental design and numbers and seasons of the year of the male dromedary camels (Experiment 1).....	62
2	Experimental design of the effects of different seasons of the year on the semen quality and enzymatic activities for the male dromedary camels (Experiment 2).....	64
3	Mean of air temperature, relative humidity, temperature-humidity (THI) index and length of day light, during breeding and non-breeding (hot-humid and hot-dry months) seasons according to Egyptian Meterological Authority.....	66
4	Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on thermoregulation parameters in the male dromedary camel (Means \pm SE).....	8٢
5	Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on testicular measurements in the dromedary camels (Means \pm SE).....	8٧
6	Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on the epididymal semen characteristics in the dromedary camels (Means \pm SE).....	9٤
7	Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on blood hematology in the male dromedary camels (Means \pm SE).....	١٠٠
8	Effects of breeding and non-breeding seasons on some blood serum components of the male dromedary camels (Means \pm SE).....	10٧