

Oesophagostomum radiatum

nodular worm

Description: Internal parasite. Adult worms are stout bodied and 14 – 22 mm long.

Life Cycle: Adults in the intestine lay eggs which are passed in feces. Larvae pass through a series of molts and reach the infective third stage in approximately 7 days. When ingested with herbage, the larvae penetrate the wall of the host animal's intestine, forming nodules anywhere between the stomach and the rectum. After 5 – 7 days they return to the intestinal lumen and travel to the colon, where they undergo a final molt and mature into adults. Eggs appear in the feces about 41 days after the larvae are ingested.

Geographic Distribution: Worldwide, particularly in wet, temperate climates.

Significance: Infective larvae burrow into the intestinal wall, causing the formation of pea-sized nodules called granulomas. Granulomas impair intestinal function, particularly fluid absorption. The result is black, foul diarrhea which is very debilitating. The disease oesophagostomiasis is characterized by anemia and edema in addition to the explosive diarrhea. When worms are present in large numbers *Oesophagostomum* is one of the most damaging parasites of cattle. Young stock in particular are affected seriously and can die.