

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to determine the causes of mortalities in broiler and layer chicken in Nairobi and its environs during a 20 years period (1990-2010) and the trends of identified important disease between 2006 and 2010 among birds of different age groups. Data used was obtained from post-mortem examination reports in the Department of Veterinary Pathology, Microbiology and Parasitology, University of Nairobi. Records for a total of 1479 (577 broilers and 902 layers) chicken were analysed. The investigation showed that mortalities were highest in the 0 to 14 day old broiler chicks category at 44% (245), followed by 15 to 28 days old (29%), 29 to 42 days old (20%) and the lowest was in mature broiler chicken that were older than 42 days at 8.8%. The main causes of mortality among the broilers were omphalitis 23% (133/577), bacterial septicaemia 15.9% (92), Gumboro disease 14.7% (85), coccidiosis 11.8% (68) and ascites 9.4% (54). However, in the recent 5 years (2006-2010), ascites had caused the highest mortality among the broiler chicks. In the layer chicken, the highest mortality recorded was in birds between 0- 2 months at 42.8%(386/902) and the conditions causing significant mortality included Gumboro disease (23%), coccidiosis (15%), egg peritonitis (11%), bacterial septicaemia (11%) and omphalities (10%). Egg peritonitis was found to have been the highest cause of deaths in layers over the recent 5 years (2006-2010), mostly for birds older than 6 months. From this study it can be concluded that Gumboro disease, coccidiosis, bacterial septicaemia and Omphalitis were common diseases affecting broiler and layer chicken causing substantial losses due to mortalities. Additionally, ascites among broiler chicken and egg peritonitis among the layers caused high deaths.