

Abstract

Kenya has about one million dromedary camels. These are kept in the arid and semi-arid areas of the eastern and north-eastern provinces of the country. The dromedary camel plays an important role in the livelihood of the nomadic pastoral tribes of Kenya, where they are mainly used for milk, meat and as draft animals. Of the diseases affecting camels in Kenya, trypanosomiasis due to *Trypanosoma evansi* is the most important. The disease causes mortality of up to 70%, abortions and weight losses in affected herds. Measures aimed at controlling the disease have always been hampered by the lack of sensitive diagnostic tests. In recent years, the application of enzyme immunoassays has greatly improved the diagnosis of trypanosomiasis. In an antigen-ELISA test which employs a monoclonal antibody, we were able to detect more than 90% of patent infection in affected camels. The test is sensitive, specific and easy to perform. The test is very promising in the diagnosis of patent and cryptic trypanosome infection. The significance of the results is discussed.