Galactose-α-1,3-galactose (alpha gal) allergy without anaphylaxis: a case report in Brazil
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Background: Several studies suggest that tick bites are a cause of IgE antibody responses to alpha-gal in the United States, Europe, Asia and Australia. Delayed-onset reactions, especially anaphylaxis, have been reported to happen 3 to 6 hours after ingestion of mammalian food products. Hereby we describe the first case of alpha gal allergy in Brazil in a male farmer, who presents with no other symptoms than urticaria.

Report: A 55 year-old cattle breeder from North of Brazil (Rondonia) with no previous allergies refer to presenting with a daily scattered and pruritic papules for five years. Symptoms used to show up mostly in the late afternoon and were closely related to the ingestion of meat (lamb, bovine, pork, chicken) during lunch time. When questioned about tick bites, he clearly described multiple lesions in his body secondary to his job with animals and farm. Specific serum IgE revealed: bovine meat: 38.80 kU/L; pork meat: 28.60 kU/L; cow’s milk: 9.7 kU/L; serum bovine albumin: 1.51 kU/L; alpha gal: 70.7 kU/L; total IgE 888UI/mL. After orientation to restrict all meats, his symptoms have disappeared.

Clinical Relevance: Although most of reports about alpha-gal allergy involve anaphylaxis, this patient presented only with urticaria. The only route of sensitization was through tick bites, since he never had contact to cetuximab. Chronic urticaria in farmers or environment with ticks, which can be very often in Brazil, should be investigated for alpha gal allergy.