

## Frequency of Pregnancy Checks

At last month's IVSPAH sponsored Vet to Vet meeting, Dr. Jeff Stevenson, KSU explained the correlation between herd palpation pregnancy rate and the frequency of pregnancy check appointments. It turns out that another cost benefit of superior heat detection can be to reduce the expense of extra pregnancy check sessions.

At the end of each herd pregnancy check, calculate the day's herd palpation pregnancy rate by dividing the number of new pregnancies by the number of cows presented for exam. In the absence of computer generated records, the palpation pregnancy rate can serve as a good indicator of the ability to detect repeat breeders. Repeat breeders are picked up for service and not presented for examination which reduces the number of cows presented for examination, which raises the herd palpation pregnancy rate. Excellent herds constantly run over 85%, while some are challenged to get over 50%. Herds in the 85% rate can consider extending some time between veterinary palpation visits; herds in the 50% range need weekly or biweekly visits to pick up the excessive missed heats.

## Frequency of Pregnancy Checks

	Rectal Palpation		Ultrasound	
Frequency	Range(days)	Missed AI	Range(days)	Missed AI
Monthly	40 to 65	1 to 3	30 to 58	1 or 2
<b>Biweekly</b>	40 to 48	1 or 2	<b>30 to 41</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	<b>40 to 41</b>	<b>1</b>	30 to 34	1

For a herd with 50% palpation pregnancy rate that is checked by rectal palpation, weekly herd checks are recommended to reduce time of missed AI by one or two estrus cycles. If the herd is checked with Ultrasound 10 days sooner, herd checks could be biweekly appointments to reduce time of missed AI by one estrus cycle.

For herds that emphasize heat detection and attain the 85% pregnancy palpation rate on a consistent basis, biweekly rectal exams or monthly Ultrasound exams may be sufficient to keep missed heats at a reasonable level. When summer heat and heavy field work seasons can be anticipated to reduce heat detection ability, it may be necessary to schedule more appointments in these normally high fertility herds.

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