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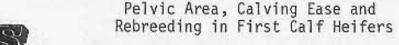
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Pelvic area, calving ease and rebreeding in first calf heifers (1979)						
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Summary

Pelvic area had little influence on the number or severity of calving problems after size and condition of two-year-old first-calf heifers, sex and weight of their calf, and genetic background of the heifer and her calf were accounted for. Little difference in rebreeding was attributed to calving difficulty, although heifers that had Caesarean deliveries rebred about two weeks later than those giving natural birth.

Introduction

The recent selection for larger, faster growing cattle has increased birth weights and dystocia. We looked at the relationship between pelvic area, dystocia, and rebreeding after heifers calved.

Procedures

Data were collected on Polled Hereford heifers for three years. All sound heifers were bred as yearlings and rebred as two-year-olds in a 60-day breeding season. Horizontal and vertical pelvic measurements, taken intrarectally with a Rice pelvimeter before the start of calving season, were multiplied to estimate pelvic area. Heifers were observed at least every two hours during calving and assistance was given as the herdsman determined. Caesarean deliveries were by the KSU Veterinary Medicine staff.

Results and Discussion

Pelvic area had little influence on calving difficulty (Table 5.1) when corrections were made for heifer weight and condition, sex and weight of her calf, and sires of the heifer and her calf. Heifers with medium size pelvic areas required more Caesarean deliveries than those with either large or small pelvic areas. Requiring assistance at calving had little relationship to rebreeding (Table 5.2), although heifers that had Caesarean deliveries conceived about two weeks later than heifers giving natural birth.

Table 5.1. Effect of pelvic area on calving ease.a

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Precalving pelvic area	Small (< 230 sq cm)	Medium (230 - 265 sq cm)	Large (> 265 sq cm)
Number of heifers	20	43	18
No assistance, %	20	16	22
Difficult assistance, %	65	49	56
Caesarian deliveries, %		35	22
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^aSire of heifer, sire of calf, sex of calf, precalving weight, calf birth weight, and precalving weight-height ratio were included in model to obtain least squares means.

Table 5.2. Effect of calving difficulty on rebreeding performance.a

No assistance	Difficult assistance	Caesarian delivery	
46	49	30	
33	55	43	
67	84	73	
June 10	June 10	June 14	
79	75	92	
	46 33 67 June 10	46 49 33 55 67 84 June 10 June 10	

^aMeans are adjusted for differences in pre-breeding gains.

 $b_{<}$ = less than; > = more than.

bFinal conception for a 60 day breeding season.