

Short Communications

DYSTOCIA DUE TO FOETAL ASCITES IN A COW

Ascites, dropsy of the peritoneum, is a common accompaniment of infectious disease of the foetus and of developmental defects. Occasionally it occurs as the only defect. Dystocia is due to increased diameter of the foetus (Arthur *et al.*, 1989).

A crossbred (Brown Swiss) cow aged 10 years and in the fifth gestation was straining for delivery. On enquiry, it was found that the cow was attended by a local livestock assistant and was able to bring out only the forelimbs and head of the foetus. In spite of vigorous traction, delivery of the foetus could not be effected.

On examination, the cow was found to be weak and exhausted. Manual exploration per vaginam revealed that the chest region of the foetus was fully engaged in the birth canal due to oedema of vaginal wall and vulval lips. The birth canal was found to be dry. With the help of a rubber tube, bland oil was introduced into the birth canal to effect lubrication. While applying traction on both the forelimbs and head, lubricated hand was introduced deep into the birth canal. Examination of the foetal parts beyond the chest region revealed the presence of extreme degree of foetal abdominal distension. Palpation revealed the presence of fluid in the distended abdomen. The condition was diagnosed as foetal ascites. The hand was withdrawn and reintroduced with a scalpel concealed under the palm. The ventral aspect of the distended abdomen of the

foetus was incised in utero with the scalpel. Immediately following this, large quantity of clear thin watery fluid rushed out of the uterus through the vulva and the foetus was expelled. On examination of the foetus, no abnormality could be detected except for the extreme degree of abdominal distension.

Summary

Dystocia in a crossbred cow due to foetal ascites and its successful correction is described.

Acknowledgement

The authors are thankful to the Director of Animal Husbandry, Kerala state for according permission to publish this paper.

G. Ajitkumar

Veterinary Surgeon
Veterinary Dispensary,
Kurichithanam, Kottayam

George P. Abraham

Veterinary Surgeon
Veterinary Poly Clinic, Pala, Kottayam

Reference

Arthur, G.H., Noakes, D.E. and Pearson, H. (1989). *Veterinary Reproduction and Obstetrics*. 6th Ed. Bailliere and Tindall, London. pp. 118-121