

Fetotomy of the Emphysematous Fetus:

Dr. John Simmons, Torrington, Wyoming

In 1975 Dr. C.J. Bierschwal of the University of Missouri and Prof. Dr. C.H.W. DeBois of The University of Utrecht published a manual entitled *The Technique of Fetotomy in Large Animal*. This Manual has proven to be highly beneficial to all who have studied and used it.

Fetotomy is a procedure worthy of consideration in cases of dystocia where there is a dead fetus.

Equipment recommended in the manual includes:

The Utrecht Model Fetotome

One O.B. Chain, 60 in.

A Krey Hook

A Wire Saw Threader

One, J.21 Jorgenson Fetotome Handle

An Embryotomy Knife

A fetotome modeled after the trecht instrument is available from Jorgenson laboratories, 2198 Est 15th Loveland, Colorado 80537.

Users of this instrument have experienced considerable frustration because the wire saw wears and breaks quickly when making backward cuts. The problem is caused by a ridge on the fetotome head. This ridge can be ground off and the result is an usable instrument.

This discussion is limited to a method of handling an emphysematous fetus with anterior presentation. The posture may be normal or the head may be turned back. A modification of the technique recommended by Bierschwal and DeBois has been developed at the Animal Reproduction Laboratory at C.S.U. I have had some experience with this technique and I like it.

In the interest of avoiding excess trauma to the cow a warm lubricant should be used generously at the beginning and throughout the procedure.

The first cut is to remove the head. The modified technique makes the backward cut to include the stub of the neck and one foreleg. The cut is diagonal and bisects the thoracic cavity.

The advantage of the modification is that the heart and lungs can be removed including some of the entrapped gases. There will be some collapse of the remaining portion of the fetus. More efficient lubrication of the fetus is now possible and the fetus can generally be moved backward with a calf puller.

The diaphragm can now be opened and the abdominal organs can be removed. Again there will be some collapse and more lubricant can be used.

Preparation for the third cut is made by passing the wire saw between the hind legs using a wire saw director. The cut includes the tail and the hind leg from the same side as the foreleg removed by the second cut. The cut off hind leg can now be removed with the krey hook and the remaining half of the fetus can be removed with the calfpuller.

Miscellaneous Tips:

Dr. Keith E. Sterner, Ionia, Michigan

Sleeve Holder

To help preserve the cleanliness of clothes, it is helpful to make a disposable sleeve holder from a piece of elastic sewing material and two garter straps. These may be attached to the end of the sleeve, which in turn prevents the sleeve from falling down on the arm and causing "ring around the armpit". When used in conjunction with a shoulder protector available from Jorgensen Labs., the combination will usually prevent most stains and odors one tends to pick up during reproductive examinations.

Carpenters Apron

The use of a carpenter's apron when vaccinating cattle enables one to carry almost all of the materials necessary to vaccinate calves and remove extra teats without the necessity of moving back and forth to a fixed point to obtain the equipment to do the job. i.e. tags, pliers, vaccine, tattoo ink etc.

Aerosol Silicone

The use of a can of aerosol silicone on your rubber boots (inside) greatly facilitates the removal of shoes from the boots. It also make a reuseable needle 3 times as easy to pierce the skin, particularly in a dehydrated patient. Simply spray along the length of the needle. This product is available from almost any hardware or automotive store.

Rompun and procaine

When called upon to dehorn calves or goats, an excellent means of restraint and analgesia is afforded by the use of Rompun (xylazine) I.M. at a dose of between .075-.1 mg. per lb and then employing a cornual block utilizing a solution of 4% procaine. This procedure allows for very easy restraint of the animal and virtually no movement during the procedure. The calves do not bleed nearly as much and do not seem to "remember" any of the procedure. I feel there is far less stress involved as a result. I am aware of only 1 death involving a calf using this method and I would estimate that in our practice at least 5000 head have been dehorned utilizing this procedure.

Hard hat with headlight

A relatively cheap but durable hard hat is available from Sears-Roebuck. It can be outfitted with a headlamp available from almost any sporting goods store and utilized as an excellent light when doing almost any procedure that may require a third hand to hold a light. I have used this device for suturing lacerated teats, dehorning, c-sections and other procedures where adequate help is either unwilling or unable to assist in holding a light. Much more expensive, and rechargeable lights are available from coon hunting suppliers, but I have found this device to be very satisfactory.