Management of Mummified Foetus in a Cow

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Abstract

A case of mummified foetus was successfully managed with Prostaglandin F2α and supportive therapy in a crossbred cow. Care and management of such case have been discussed.

Key words: Cross bred cow, Foetal mummification, Prostaglandin F2α

Introduction

Foetal mummification is associated with a series of morphological alterations that occurs to a foetus which dies and retained in the uterus. However, the occurrence of the disease in cattle is very low (0.43 to 1.8%) and is usually reported between 3-8 months of gestation4. A rare case of foetal mummification in a crossbred cow is placed on record.

Case History and Observations

Six years old HF X Kankrej cow was presented with the history of 320 days of gestation. At the relevant time, the animal was bred by artificial insemination and the pregnancy was confirmed by rectal examination on 60th day. Clinically, there was absence of visual signs of pregnancy. Per-rectal examination revealed the closed cervix in addition to palpation of a hard bony mass adhering to the uterine wall, while there was absence of cotyledons, fremitis and foetal fluid. The animal was apparently healthy and taking food and water normally. Accordingly, the case was diagnosed to be a foetal mummification and decided treated medically.

Treatment and Discussion

The animal was given Prostaglandin F2α (PGF2α) @ 25mg, intramuscularly and kept under observation. Subsequently, a long thick shred of brownish mucoid discharge from vulva was reported after 72 hour of the therapy. On vaginal examination; the cervix was fully relaxed and a huge bony mass draped within the foetal membranes was palpated. Eventually, almost a fully grown dead foetus covered with dark brown foetal membranes was delivered following mild traction. The placental fluids were completely absorbed and the afterbirths were firmly adhered to the dehydrated foetus (Fig.1). Eight boluses of Oriprim-U were put inside the uterus and tablets Uterovet @ 10 bid, p/o were fed for 10 days. The animal recovered uneventfully and exhibited oestrous on 38th day post-partum.
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Further, just after the death of the foetus; the foetal fluids are absorbed and the foetal membranes start adhering to the dehydrated foetus allowing the formation of viscous dark brown material over to them. Consequently, a hard bony mass with closed cervix but without cotyledons, fremitis and foetal fluid remains in the uterus as it was also experienced per rectally in the present case. Similar finding on rectal examination were reported by Azizunnesa et al. prior to remove the mummified foetus following caesarean section in a heifer.

Arthur et al. reported that the treatment of mummified foetus with PGF2α created some complexity in cattle viz. maceration of mummified foetus and packed in the birth canal instead of expelled out. However, no such complication was experienced in the present study and the
mummified foetus was easily delivered by mild traction after 72 hour of the therapy. Later, due to luteolysis of the corpus luteum the animal showed oestrus on 38th day post partum.

References