

AABP POSITION STATEMENT

Transrectal Palpation and Ultrasonography



Transrectal examination of the bovine reproductive tract by palpation or ultrasound constitutes the practice of veterinary medicine as governed by individual state/provincial veterinary boards and practice acts. As such, these techniques should be performed by, or under the supervision of, a licensed veterinarian. The licensed veterinarian with a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) is responsible for any reproductive diagnosis.

Examination and assessment of the bovine reproductive tract is a skilled diagnostic procedure. It requires integrative knowledge of anatomy, physiology and pathology to perform safely and proficiently. During the course of the examination, it is expected that the veterinarian will make an accurate diagnosis of pregnancy status, estimate stage of gestation if pregnant, and identify pathologic conditions present. The veterinarian is uniquely qualified through education and training to assess on-farm animal husbandry parameters related to reproductive health and make management recommendations after assessment of the diagnostic records. Following the diagnostic procedure, it may be necessary to prescribe a pharmacologic treatment in order to support individual animal and overall herd health, well-being and productivity. Pharmacological treatments should be under the oversight of the veterinarian of record identified in the VCPR, which necessitates veterinary involvement in reproductive assessment of the cow or cow herd.

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