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Using Simmental Bulls on Hereford Cows

Miles McKee, Robert R. Schalles and Keith O. Zoellner

Fourteen registered Hereford cows in the Kansas State University purebred teaching herd were mated artificially to the Simmental bull Capitaine #1236 in November and December, 1968. The 23 ampules of semen available were used on the first 23 Hereford cows to show estrus following November 20, 1968. Of cows inseminated, six calved as two-year olds, two as three-year olds, one at four years, two at five years, one at eight, and two at ten years of age. The two that calved at five years of age were sold prior to calving. Both calved unassisted but one calf was dead at birth. Only three of the remaining 12 cows calved unassisted. Some of those assisted might have calved unassisted. Early results indicated assistance was good management, as soon as it appeared to be needed.

Nine of the fourteen calves dropped would be considered representative of a normal range in Hereford color patterns and shade of red except for considerable white on the legs. Two would be considered red necks. Five had extra patches of white on their bodies.

Five of the fourteen calves were born dead or died shortly after birth. Three had fetal heart beats at birth and one breathed for about 15 minutes. One cow became partially paralyzed during calving. Another cow developed peritonitis and died 36 hours after delivering a dead calf.

Eight of the Simmental calves, five heifers and three bulls, have been grown at the University. Their mothers were wintered on dry bluestem pasture with supplemental protein cubes and alfalfa hay. The calves have not received creep feed. They were weighed March 7, 1970, after being held all day off feed and water.

The calves will be weaned about May 15. The heifers will be grown and developed with the purebred heifers at the University. Performance data, yearling weights, and 18-month weights will be collected. The heifers will be bred and kept in the University herd for further studies. The bulls will go on a 140-day post-weaning gain test for performance data. We plan to use the bulls in a breeding experiment to study use of crossbred bulls.

Information on the twelve cows that calved at the University is summarized in table 19.

All calves were sired by one bull. The two year old heifers inseminated were small, not well grown. Reports from other Simmental x Hereford crossbreeding programs indicate that sire and size of dam influence ease of calving.

Table 19. Data for twelve Simmental-Hereford cross calves dropped at
Kansas State University, fall, 1969

Cow age (years)	Length of gestation (days)	Calving date	Sex of calf	Birth weight (lbs.)	Weight 3-7-70 (lbs.)	Wt./day of age	Color pattern	Remarks
2	286	9/3	F	72	---	----	Normal Hereford	Pulled, dead at birth
2	284	9/8	F	70	180	1.083	Normal Hereford	Pulled, difficult
2	288	9/9	M	86	---	----	White stripe down left heart girth	Pulled, heart beat, never breathed
2	292	9/10	M	88	---	----	Normal Hereford	Pulled, lived 15 minutes
10	290	9/11	F	78	335	1.893	Normal Hereford	Born unassisted
4	286	9/12	M	70	380	2.159	Body spotted with white	Pulled, easy
29 3	291	9/12	M	90	315	1.790	White stripe down body	Pulled, difficult
3	287	9/13	M	84	295	1.686	White stripe down body	Pulled
2	295	9/15	M	83	---	----	Normal Hereford	Pulled, difficult heart beat, no breath
8	282	9/15	F	73	300	1.734	Normal Hereford	Born unassisted
2	290	9/16	F	85	250	1.453	Normal Hereford	Born unassisted
10	284	9/21	F	87	390	2.335	Normal Hereford	Pulled
Average (all)	287.9			80.5	305.625	1.767		
Average (females)	286.0			77.5	291.0	1.700		
Average (males)	289.8			83.5	330.0	1.878		