

Use of Prostaglandin F_{2α} as a Postpartum Reproductive Management Tool for Lactating Dairy Cows

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This study compared three programs for reproductive management of the postpartum period for reproductive performance and net economic benefit within three dairy herds (n = 1624 cows). Cows on one program received PGF_α injection at 25 to 32 d postpartum for reproductive therapy, and cows on a second program received additional PGF_{2α} at 39 to 46 d postpartum for synchronization of estrus. These programs were compared with a postpartum program of rectal palpation based on veterinary intervention. Survival analysis indicated that cows receiving PGF_{2α} for reproductive therapy and synchronization of estrus had an 11% higher rate of first AI and 10% higher rate of pregnancy than did cows receiving the rectal palpation. No differences existed between the cows receiving rectal palpation and those receiving the PGF_{2α}. Because overall conception rates and conception rates at first AI did not differ among programs, the improved reproductive performance of cows receiving PGF_{2α} for both therapy and synchronization may be attributed to greater synchronization of estrus, which resulted in improved estrus detection. A partial budget indicated that the PGF_{2α} programs were less expensive than the rectal palpation program. When PGF_{2α} was used for postpartum reproductive therapy and synchronization of estrus, reproductive performance and net economic benefit were increased compared with those of the other programs.

Key Words: prostaglandin F_{2α} • reproductive efficiency • reproductive programs

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