ABORTED CALF NECROPSIES

Equipment and Materials Needed

Knife, scissors, scalpel, forceps, garden secateurs
Three plastic pottles
Two 3 mL syringes and 19 or 20 gauge needles
Two red top blood tubes
Larger jar half filled with formalin

1. Inspect the outside of the fetus and the placenta if present. Note any gross changes. If desired, weigh the fetus and measure the crown rump length (enables estimation of gestational age).

2. If placenta is present, put one button in formalin jar and place one in a pottle for microbiology.

3. Lay the fetus on its left side so the head is pointing to the right and reflect the right side of the ribs and abdomen.

4. Use one of the syringes to collect 3 mL of blood from the atria of the heart, or the dorsal vena cava. If blood cannot be collected from this site, you can collect pleural or peritoneal fluid if it is present. Label the tube.

5. Use the other syringe to collect 3 mL of stomach fluid from the stomach/rumen. Do this by lifting the stomach to allow fluid to collect at the bottom and then inserting your needle at the bottom. Label the tube.

6. Collect a sample of lung (one lobe) in to one of the sterile pottles; label.

7. In to the jar of formalin place a section of heart, lung, liver, kidney.

8. Collect a small wedge of skin from the ear. Place in pottle; label.

9. Remove the head from the fetus. Skin the top of the skull using a knife or scalpel and then use the secateurs to remove the calvarium from the skull. Place the entire brain in formalin, even if it is mushy!

10. Take a serum sample from the cow if desired for Neospora and BVD serology.

Bundle up all the samples with a history and send them to us! Typically histology is the most informative and cost effective test to do first. However depending on the history of the herd, you may want to request BVD antigen testing on the ear notch, or serology testing on the dam's blood. Please indicate what tests you would like done. If no tests are indicated, we will do histology in the first instance.

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