Table 3. Comparison of Transrectal Palpation, Transrectal Ultrasonography, and Blood Tests for Beef Cattle Pregnancy Diagnosis

	Transrectal Palpation	Transrectal Ultrasonography	Blood Tests
Accuracy of open diagnosis	++	++	++
Accuracy of pregnant diagnosis	++	++	++
Assessment of fetal viability	+	++	•
Detection of twins	+	++	•
Determination of fetal age	++	++	•
Determination of fetal sex	•	++	•
Results available immediately	++	++	•
Provides the opportunity to discuss with your veterinarian other animal health issues on your farm	++	+	•
Fosters veterinarian-client relationship	++	+	•

+ = good
++ = better
• = test cannot perform this function

When Is the Best Time to Perform Pregnancy Examinations?

The most common time for pregnancy examinations in the majority of cow-calf herds is at or around calf weaning time when most cows are somewhere in the second trimester of pregnancy. Waiting at least 45 to 6 days after the breeding season to conduct pregnancy examinations is recommended, but there are t s whe earlier pregnancy diagnosis is beneficial in hei s. The most practical time to conduct pregnancy e ations will vary from herd to herd, but keep in mind th her routine procedures such as vaccin and dew ing can also be performed at the s time ddition, performing pregnancy exami ions provid reat opportunity to evaluate ot lling criteria su s feet and legs, eyes, age, health, sition, udder, h, and mouth.

Conclu on

Reprodu e efficiency is o of the most important factors that will co ute additiona rofitability to your cow-calf d is e ore cr l when input costs are high. Take ntage o ined breeding season followed by an ar beef cow pregnancy exam to improve the reproducti fficiency of your cows. Find the open cows in your her nd prepare to sell them when their body condition market prices are optimal. Contact Dr. Soren 34-844-7502), your veterinarian, the Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association, or your regional Animal Science and Forages Extension agent to discuss the best time and method for annual pregnancy diagnosis in your herd.

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