

Detection of pregnancy in the red deer hind (*Cervus elaphus*) using a radioimmunoassay for a bovine pregnancy-specific protein. **255**

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Early pregnancy was monitored in red deer by measuring pregnancy-specific protein B (PSPB). Blood samples were collected from 22 oestrus-synchronized, adult red deer hinds at approximately weekly intervals from -12 to 97 days after stag introduction. PSPB concentrations were measured with a double antibody radioimmunoassay which utilized rabbit antiserum to bovine PSPB.

PSPB was first detected as early as 24 days but generally 30-32 days after mating in pregnant hinds. Mean ( $\pm$  S.D.) plasma concentrations gradually increased from  $0.49 \pm 0.19$  ng/ml at 29-32 days to  $1.00 \pm 0.17$  at 63-66 days and  $1.37 \pm 0.25$  at 92-95 days post-mating. PSPB was not detected in any hind prior to mating nor in any non-pregnant hind at any time.

These results indicate that a radioimmunoassay developed for the measurement of PSPB in the cow may be a useful method of pregnancy diagnosis in the red deer hind.