

## **ABSTRACT**

Rectal palpations for the purpose of pregnancy diagnosis were performed on 200 dairy cows and heifers at 35, 70 and 150 days of gestation. The cardinal signs used were: membrane slip and amniotic vesicle at 35 days; membrane slip and presence of fetus at 70 days; and fetal parts, placentomes and fremitus at 150 days. Of the 200 animals that were diagnosed pregnant at 35 days, 187 (93.5%) carried their pregnancy to term. The highest fetal losses of 4% were observed between 35 and 70 days of gestation. It is concluded that pregnancy diagnosis can be performed safely by rectal examination as early as 5 weeks (35 days) in most common dairy cattle breeds of Kenya.