

Ovarian function and pregnancy rates in reindeer calves (*Rangifer tarandus*) in southern Norway

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Abstract: Reindeer calves (n=632) were slaughtered in November/December (n=476) or in January (n=156). Dressed weights and amount of perirenal fat were recorded and the reproductive organs were collected. A separate group of 130 reindeer calves were weighed at 7 months of age and followed with repeated weighings and pregnancy examinations up to 21 months.

The pregnancy rate and the onset of puberty were significantly influenced by body weight and amount of perirenal fat. About 60 g perire-

nal fat and about 22 kg dressed weight were found to be the lower limits for pregnancy. A total of 222 (35 %) animals had reached puberty and 126 (20 %) were pregnant when examined after slaughter. Animals which conceived during their first autumn showed only a moderate weight gain the following year and the calf mortality rate in these animals was 47.4 %. It was concluded that calf pregnancies were common in Southern Norway and that measures should be taken to avoid such pregnancies.