

Embryo transfers

(Continued from Page 23)

order to offer embryo transplanting at a cost of less than \$1000 per pregnancy. There are many variables, however, such as traveling distances. One sure-fire way to cut costs is for the farmer to provide his own recipient animal. "The biggest problem with embryo transfers is the non-availability of open heifers," says Dr. Alan McCauley, technical director for Via

Pax, U.S.A. If the dairyman does not have a cow or heifer available, Via Pax will buy one and charge the farmer for the additional costs.

While price reductions are already being considered, more are sure to come as the technique advances. For example, Young predicts that non-surgical transfer of embryos will be possible by next year. When that happens, the costs of surgery will be eliminated.

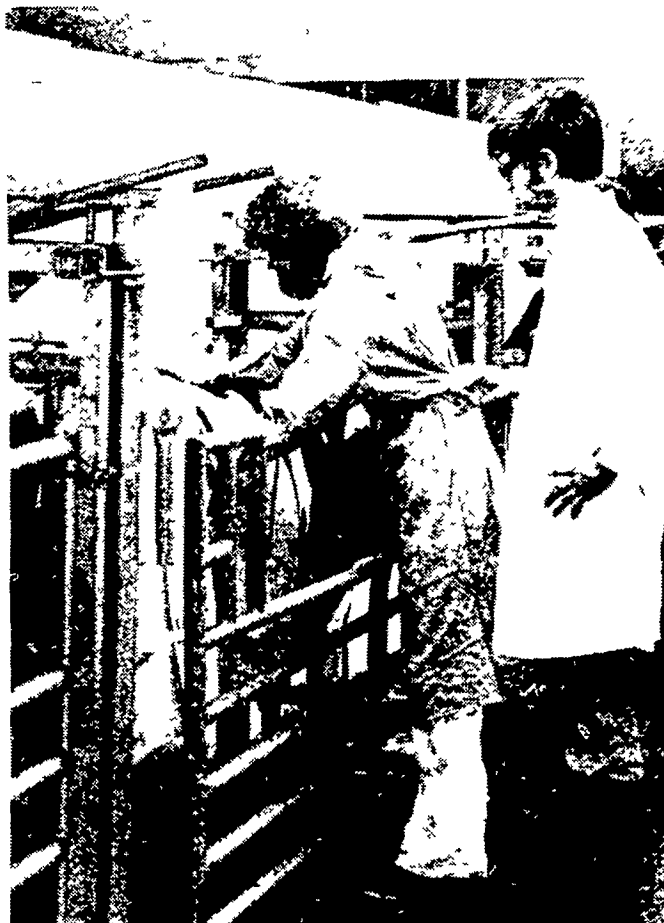
Embryo are presently being inserted into recipient animals by way of an incision in the area just below and forward of the hip or hook bone. Via Pax specialists envision future implantations similar to techniques presently being used in artificial insemination.

Flushing a cow of her fertilized eggs is a comparatively easy procedure, but again, a delicate operation.

Via Pax begins its procedures with super ovulation. With this technique, the cow releases several eggs, instead of just one. The animal is bred and

after about a week to 11 days, the fertilized eggs are flushed out of the cow. Technicians then examine the fluid with a microscope and isolate the developing embryo. Once that's done, the recipient cow or heifer is brought into a stall for surgery. A local anesthetic is administered, the surgeon makes a 4-inch incision, and the embryo is transplanted. Via Pax can perform eight such operations in less than 90 minutes.

In business since Jan. 1 of this year, Via Pax, U.S.A. averages a success rate of around 55 per cent. During one month 73 per cent of the transplanted embryos resulted in successful pregnancies. Dr. John Hasler, a University of Illinois graduate with four years of experience in



A recipient heifer shows no signs of discomfort or malcontent as Dr. Stephan Sheridan reaches into her side to find the uterus. Dr. John Hasler, with pipette in hand, waits to deliver the tiny embryo into the recipient animal. Via Pax has eight such stalls for embryo transplant operations.

embryo transfer work, admits that a 73 per cent success rate is unusually high. Since some operations will not result in calves, the operation is priced in two stages: 1. a fee for the services involved, and 2. a full price if pregnancy occurs.

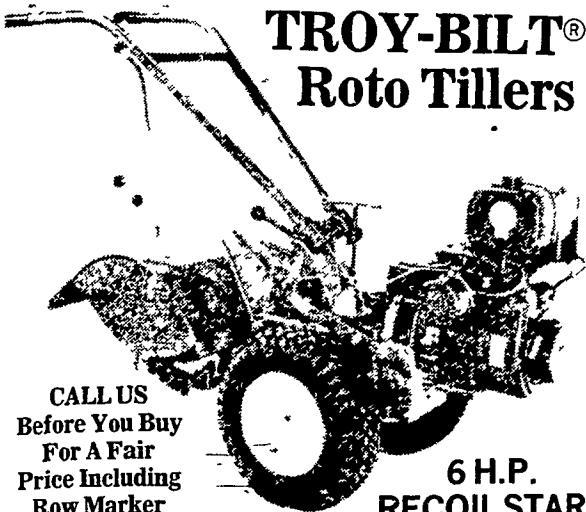
Via Pax performed 69 embryo transfer operations in April and 67 last month. "Interest now is far greater

than it was in the beginning," Young commented. Young, who grew up on a dairy farm in the Elizabethtown area, and until eight years ago spent most of his occupational time with a business in Lancaster, has been very interested in embryo transfer work for two years. Superior Holstein cattle have been one of his primary

(Turn to Page 32)

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