



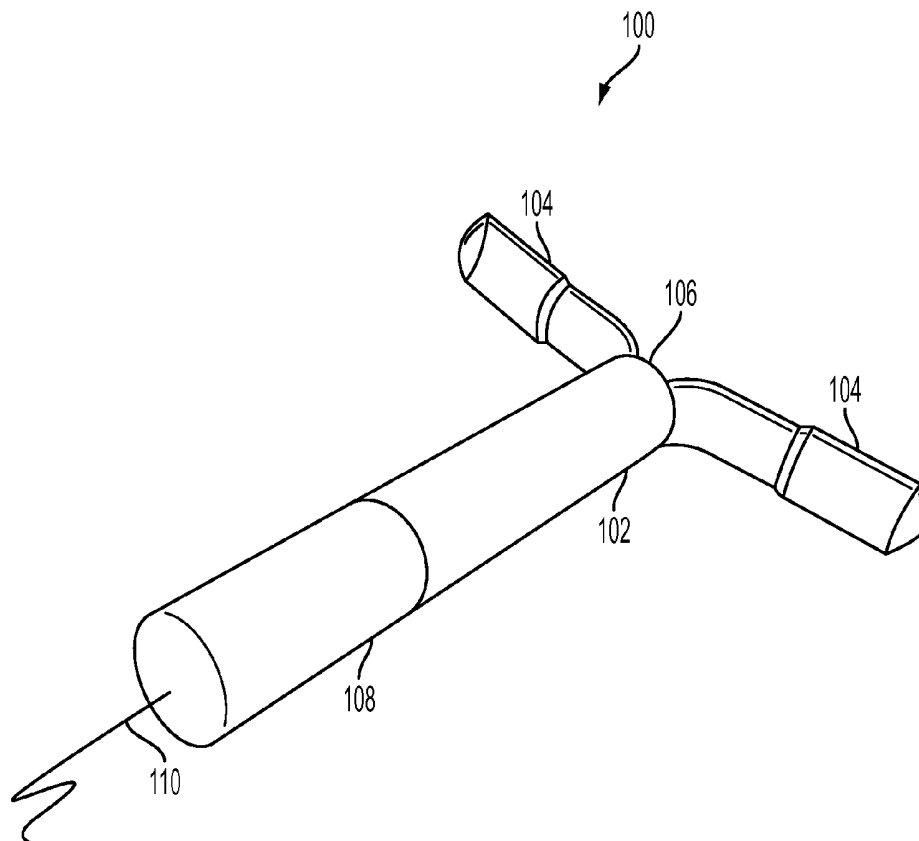
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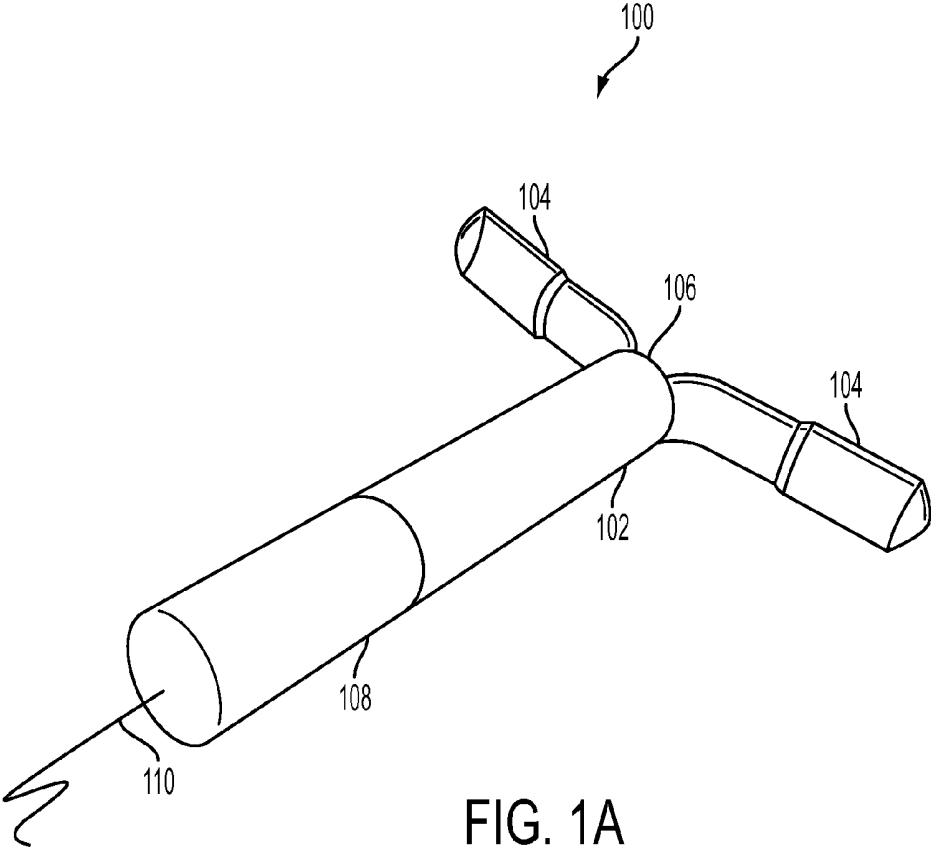
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Johnson et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2016/0030010 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 4, 2016**(54) **IMPLANTABLE ESTRUS DETECTION
DEVICES, SYSTEMS, AND METHODS**(71) Applicant: **PALO ALTO RESEARCH CENTER
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(57)

ABSTRACT

Devices, systems, and methods for detecting estrus in subjects are provided. Devices include a housing configured for intravaginal/intrauterine deployment and retention and a sensor disposed in or on the housing, and are configured to use condition information sensed by the sensor to determine an estrus condition of the subject. Methods include deploying a device in the subject, sensing the condition information, and determining an estrus condition using the condition information. Systems include a device configured to communicate with a base station and/or with other implanted devices, which are located within a reception radius thereof, regarding the determined estrus condition.





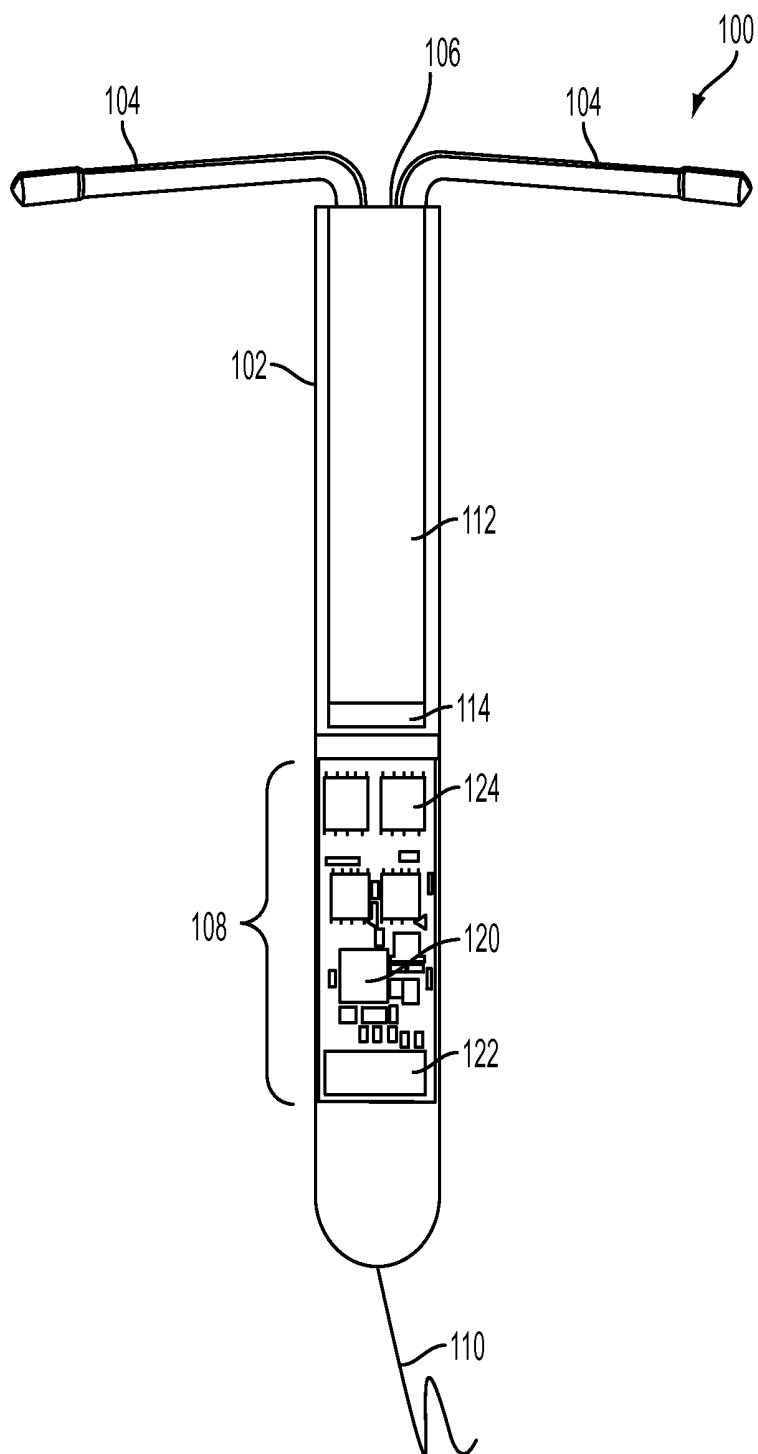


FIG. 1B

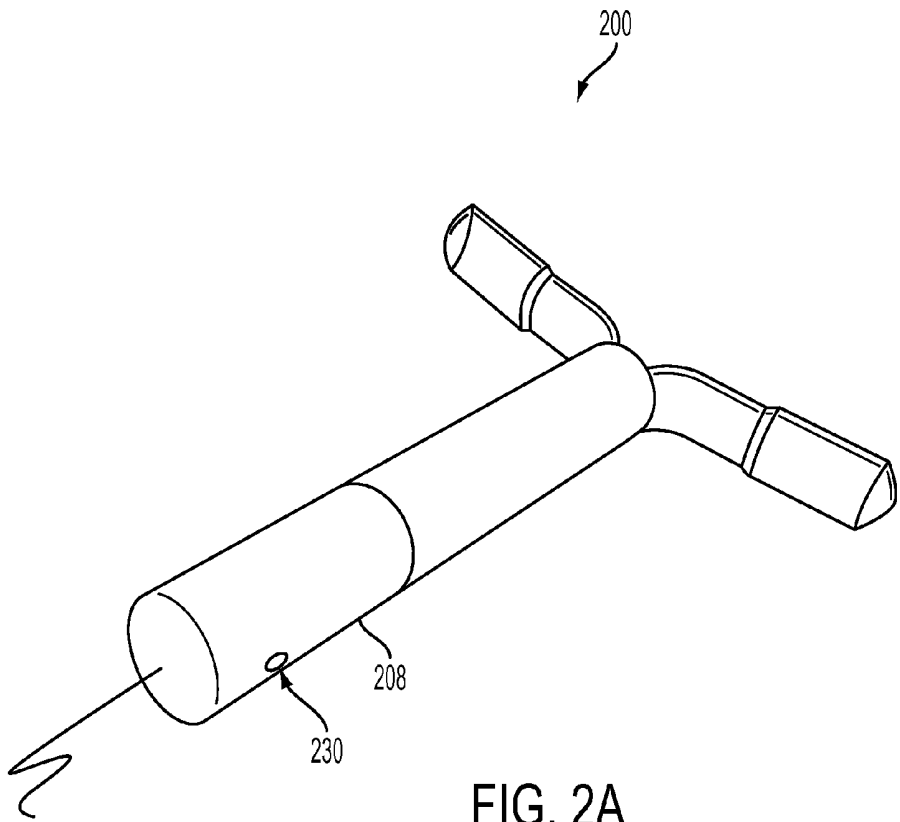


FIG. 2A

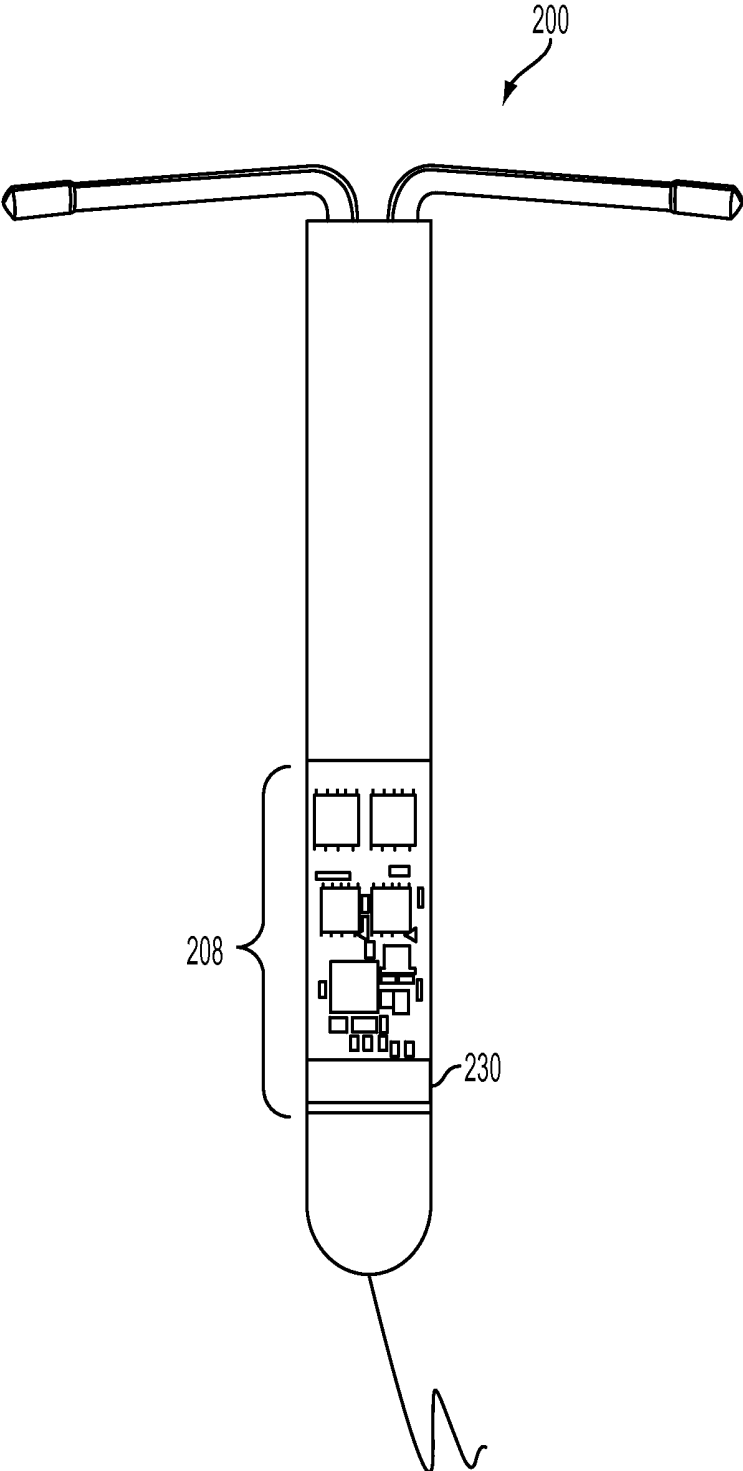


FIG. 2B

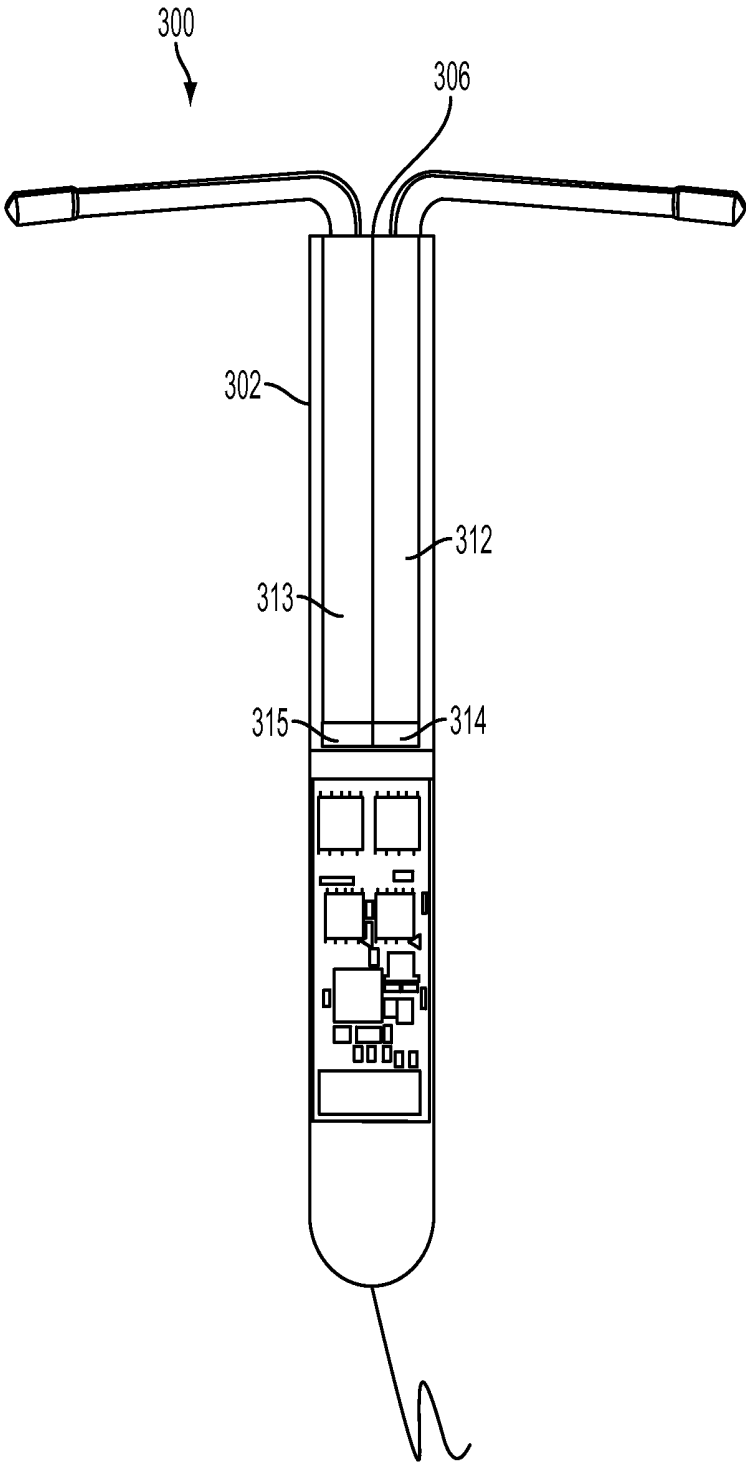


FIG. 3

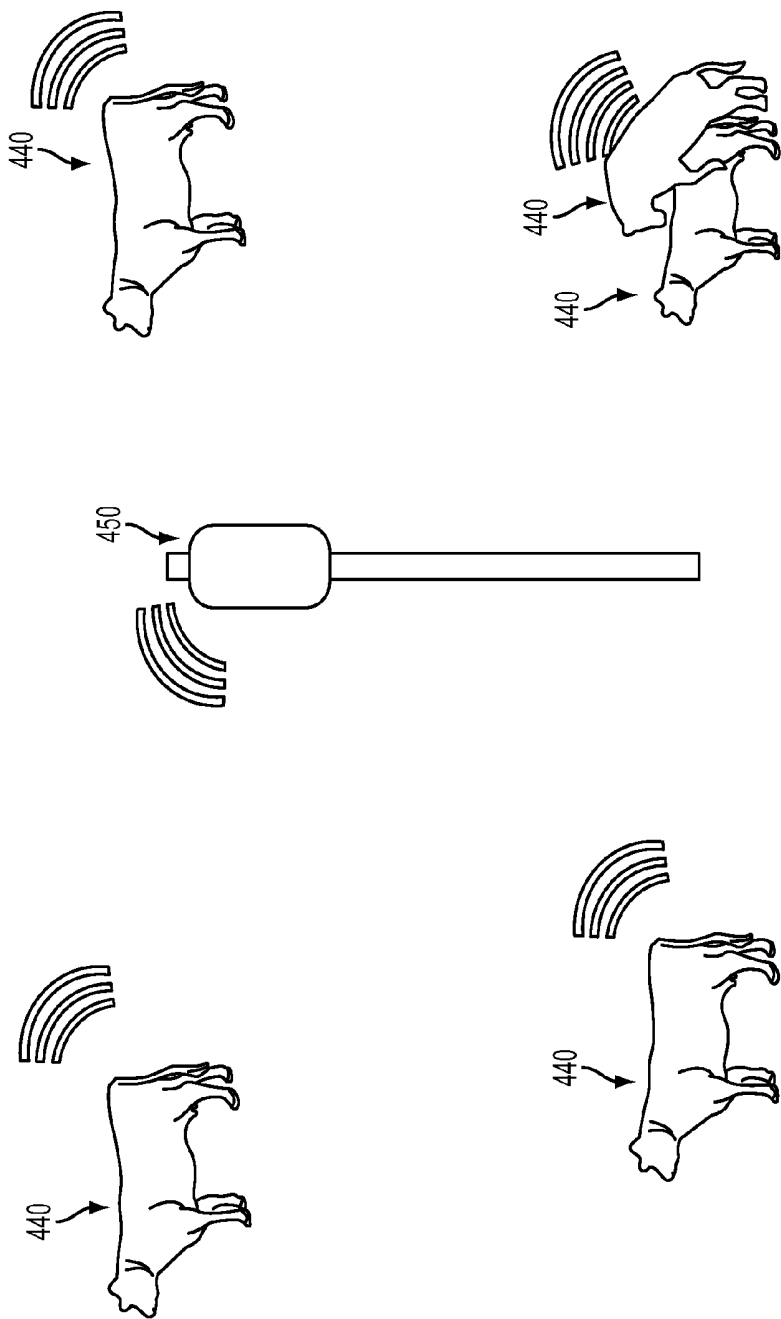


FIG. 4

IMPLANTABLE ESTRUS DETECTION DEVICES, SYSTEMS, AND METHODS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to implantable medical devices, and more particularly to devices, systems, and methods for detecting estrus.

BACKGROUND

[0002] In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) is a common procedure in animals and humans to increase the likelihood of pregnancy and/or to control certain aspects of a pregnancy. For example, in the case of animals such as cattle, IVF may be used to control the genetics of the offspring and thus the future makeup (e.g., gender ratio) of the herd. IVF may also be used to ensure that future offspring have the optimum characteristics for the production of either meat or milk. Thus, semen for use in IVF procedures may be selected based on desired offspring traits such as fast growth rate, high milk production, better overall health, and adaptations for the local climate.

[0003] In animals, the IVF process has to be performed by a skilled professional and is a time-consuming and intensive procedure for each animal. Accordingly, it would be beneficial to increase the success rate of these procedures, such that the valuable sperm and the time commitment from these professionals are most effectively used.

[0004] One of the factors influencing the success of any IVF procedure is the timing of insemination relative to the estrous cycle of the animal. Various biological changes take place within the animal that can influence the success of the IVF procedure. In order to ensure that these IVF procedures are carried out at a correct time, two main methods of estrous cycle monitoring/manipulation have emerged.

[0005] The first method aims to manipulate the natural estrous cycle of the animal such that the ideal insemination time can be predicted. A series of drugs are delivered to the animal(s) over the course of 10-14 days that force the reproductive cycle into a predictable pattern. This method allows the entire herd to be put onto the same cycle and therefore gives the ranch the ability to consolidate IVF procedures.

[0006] Another method involves attempting to monitor an animal's behavior and/or physiological symptoms in order to predict the cycle of an animal, such that insemination can be performed at an ideal time. For example, products are available that can be attached to an animal's back to detect "mounting events" (i.e., when cattle mount each other before becoming fully in heat), temperature, or activity. Vaginal tissue temperature or conductivity measurements may also be taken manually by ranch personnel.

[0007] These known products and procedures typically have a very high false positive rate. For example, temperature sensors are often triggered by changes in the environment, health, or activity of the animal, mounting detectors can be triggered by rubbing against trees and do not have very good resolution, and internal conductivity measurements have to be conducted manually and therefore can only be performed intermittently. While these products and procedures have shown some success in increasing pregnancy rates, data varies considerably depending on the way in which the product is implemented. Accordingly, there is a need for improved

estrus sensing devices, methods, and systems that can be used to improve pregnancy rates in animals and groups of animals, such as cattle.

[0008] In humans, IVF is primarily used in cases where normal reproduction has not been successful. Human IVF procedures are extremely expensive and a failure can be emotionally devastating for those involved. While humans are more capable of measuring various biological factors (e.g., temperature) manually, it would also be desirable for women to have improved fertile window detection capabilities in order to increase the chance of pregnancy.

[0009] Accordingly, there is a need for improved estrus detection devices, systems, and methods that provide accurate estrous cycle monitoring and reduce the occurrence of false positives.

SUMMARY

[0010] In one aspect, methods of detecting an estrus condition of a subject are provided, including deploying in the subject an estrus detection device configured for intravaginal or intrauterine retention; sensing, via at least one sensor of the device, condition information of the subject; and determining an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information.

[0011] In another aspect, systems for detecting an estrus condition of a subject are provided, including at least one implantable estrus detection device configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject. The device includes at least one sensor configured to detect condition information of a subject in whom or which it is implanted, and to determine an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information, wherein the at least one implantable estrus detection device is configured to communicate with a base station, other implanted estrus detection devices, or both, which are located within a reception radius thereof, regarding the determined estrus condition.

[0012] In yet another aspect, implantable estrus detection devices are provided, including a housing configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject, and at least one sensor disposed in or on the housing, wherein the device is configured to use condition information sensed by the at least one sensor to determine an estrus condition of the subject.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1A is a perspective view of an implantable estrus detection device.

[0014] FIG. 1B is a cross-sectional view of the implantable estrus detection device of FIG. 1A.

[0015] FIG. 2A perspective view of an implantable estrus detection device having a sensor port.

[0016] FIG. 2B is a cross-sectional view of the implantable estrus detection device of FIG. 2A.

[0017] FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of an implantable estrus detection device having two fluid reservoirs.

[0018] FIG. 4 is an illustration of a system for detecting estrus in a subject.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] The devices, systems, and methods described herein meet one or more of the above-stated needs by providing improved estrus detection for IVF procedures or insemination timing. In certain embodiments, internal implantable

devices measure or sense certain condition information of the subject that may be used to determine as estrus condition of the subject. As used herein, the term “estrus condition” refers to the phase of the estrous cycle when a female is physiologically sexually receptive. As used herein, the term “condition information” refers to any physiological or behavioral information relating to the subject, such as temperature, tissue conductivity, movement, activity, tissue color, pulse, and intravaginal pressure, among others, that may be used to determine whether the subject is experiencing estrus. That is, the implantable devices described herein use condition information from the subject (e.g., temperature, conductivity, movement, activity, color, pulse, pressure) to detect estrus of the subject in whom or which the device is implanted, so that insemination procedures may be performed at or near ideal conditions. In certain embodiments, the devices may be configured to receive biometric information about the subject in whom or which it is implanted, and/or to communicate with one another or with a base station, such that the estrus determination can be further tailored to the individual subject, environment, or herd behaviors.

[0020] In addition to detecting an estrus condition of the subject, the devices may also be capable of delivering a fluid, such as semen, drugs, and/or an egg, to the subject upon determination of the desired estrus condition. That is, the device may be designed to deliver semen to the subject upon detection of ideal estrus conditions, such that a subsequent and separate procedure is not necessary.

[0021] These devices advantageously are capable of collecting continuous, real time condition information without requiring multiple manual procedures to determine an estrus condition. Because the devices are implanted, and not externally affixed or attached to the subject, these devices are able to provide more accurate estrous cycle monitoring and reduce the occurrence of false positives.

[0022] Implantable estrus detection devices, and methods and systems for detecting estrus in subjects are described in more detail below.

[0023] Implantable Estrus Detection Devices

[0024] In one aspect, implantable estrus detection devices are provided. In one embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, a device **100** includes a housing **102** configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject. For example, the housing may be sized and shaped for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in the subject. In one embodiment, the device **100** includes one or more retention features **104**, for retaining the device upon deployment in a subject.

[0025] In certain embodiments, device **100** includes at least one sensor **120**, **122**, **124** disposed in or on the housing **102** and is configured to use condition information sensed by the at least one sensor **120**, **122**, **124** to determine an estrus condition of the subject. For example, the at least one sensor **120**, **122**, **124**, may be provided at a sensor package **108** of the device opposite a fluid delivery mechanism **106**. Alternatively, the at least one sensor may be located at any suitable device site that allows for collection of the condition information of interest.

[0026] In certain embodiments, the at least one sensor is selected from temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors. Other sensor types that may also provide condition information useful in the detection of an estrus condition are also envisioned. That is, a single device

may include one, two, three, or more sensors configured to collect one or more types of condition information from the subject. In one embodiment, the device includes at least two sensors and is configured to use condition information sensed by the at least two sensors to determine an estrus condition of the subject, wherein the sensors are selected from the temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

[0027] In certain embodiments, as shown in FIGS. 2A and 2B, the device **200** also includes at least one port **230** in the housing via which at least one of the sensors or the sensor package **208** is in communication with surrounding vaginal or uterine tissue or fluid. For example, a temperature, conductivity, pressure, pulse, or color sensor may be provided such that at least a portion of the sensor is in communication with surrounding vaginal or uterine tissue or fluid.

[0028] In certain embodiments, as shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the device **100** includes a fluid delivery mechanism configured to dispense a fluid selected from drugs, semen, ova, and combinations thereof, when the estrus condition is determined to meet a predetermined threshold. For example, the fluid delivery mechanism may include a fluid reservoir **112** configured to house one or more fluids therein, as well as a fluid actuation mechanism **114**, such as a piston or other mechanism to advance the fluid through the reservoir, and one or more outlets **106** via which the fluid(s) are delivered to the subject. In another embodiment, as shown in FIG. 3, the device **300** includes two fluid reservoirs **312**, **314** and two respective fluid actuation mechanisms **314**, **315**, disposed within the housing **302**, to dispense two fluids via outlet(s) **306**. Fluid delivery mechanisms are described in more detail in co-pending application No. _____, filed on _____, entitled “Implantable Fluid Delivery Devices, Systems, and Methods,” which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

[0029] In certain embodiments, the device is configured to calculate the predetermined threshold based on information selected from biometric subject data, real time crowd data, historic data, modeling algorithms, and combinations thereof. For example, an implanted device may be configured to collect condition information on the subject, via the one or more sensors, and determine, based on biometric information about the subject, real time crowd and environment data, historic information, and modeling algorithms, among others, whether the subject is experiencing an estrus condition.

[0030] For example, the predetermined threshold of ideal estrus conditions for insemination may be determined using various existing estrous cycle models, such as those available in *Heat Detection and Timing of Insemination for Cattle*, Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences (1993). Such models may represent the various biological changes, such as in ovarian structures or hormone concentrations, that are associated with estrus, and provide guidance as to measurable physiological phenomenon that may be detected and equated with an estrus condition. For example, weightings of factors for individual animals, breeds, and/or herds can be recorded and customized. As part of the device setup, these factors and/or the predetermined threshold can be programmed directly into the device. Alternatively, the device can be configured to predict the predetermined threshold and thereby the date for estrus, based on more complex modeling, such as the modeling disclosed in Jun Ma, *A Method for Multiple Periodic Factor Prediction Problems Using Complex Fuzzy Sets*,

IEEE Transactions on Fuzzy Systems, Vol. 20, No. 1, 32-45 (Feb 2012) and R. M. de Mol et al., *Applications of Fuzzy Logic in Automated Cow Status Monitoring*, J. Dairy Sci. 84:400-410 (2001).

[0031] Determination of the predetermined threshold may also include correlations or modeling from literature, depending on the sensor type to be used, as described below.

[0032] For example, temperature in cattle has been correlated to the estrous cycle; however, the vaginal temperature needs to be adjusted for variations in the overall body temperature of the animal and the environment. Literature models or correlations may be used to determine the predetermined threshold as it relates to temperature, including those disclosed in Brit H. Hoehmer, *Ruminal Temperature for Identification and Predication of Estrus in Beef Cows*, Master of Science Thesis, Oklahoma State University (July 2012), A. D. Fisher, et al. *Evaluation of a New Approach for the Estimation of the Time of the LH Surge in Dairy Cows Using Vaginal Temperature and Electrodeless Conductivity Measurements*, Theriogenology, Vol. 70, Issue 7, 1065-1074 (October 2008), Giuseppe Piccione, et al., *Daily and Estrous Rhythmicity of Body Temperature in Domestic Cattle*, BMC Physiology 3:7 (2003), and M. J. Cooper-Prado, *Relationship of Ruminal Temperature with Parturition and Estrus of Beef Cows*, J Anim. Sci., 89: 1020-1027 (2010). In determining an estrus condition, such temperature condition information may be adjusted for environmental temperature changes and/or for herd temperature changes. That is, data from the surrounding herd may be collected and a baseline normal mean temperature may be determined. For example, this can be done by the device itself as it gathers larger data sets or by a central computer, or base station, that will upload the data to the device. The predetermined threshold for each device therefore may be adjusted based on the environmental, herd data, modeling, and historic information, among others.

[0033] For example, intravaginal mucosal tissue conductivity has been correlated to the hormonal changes that indicate the onset of estrus. Electrical conductivity measurements may be taken on a variable frequency based on other factors. For example, since temperature may be a leading indicator given the steep curve of the electrical resistance measurement, the device may be configured to measure the electrical resistance only after some indication from other sensors indicate that estrus may be about to occur. For example, an electrical conductivity sensor may include two electrodes protruding from the device (e.g., via a port) that make contact with the mucosal tissue and pass a small voltage thereacross to measure conductivity. Literature models or correlations may be used to determine the predetermined threshold as it relates to temperature, including those disclosed in G. S. Heckman, et al., *Estrous Cycle Patterns in Cattle Monitored by Electrical Resistance and Milk Progesterone*, J. Dairy Sci., 62:64-68 (1979), and A. D. Fisher, et al. *Evaluation of a New Approach for the Estimation of the Time of the LH Surge in Dairy Cows Using Vaginal Temperature and Electrodeless Conductivity Measurements*, Theriogenology, Vol. 70, Issue 7, 1065-1074 (Oct 2008).

[0034] For example, activity and mounting events may be correlated with an estrus condition. Existing activity/mounting sensors are externally adhered and are highly susceptible to false positives, for example by cattle rubbing against a tree. Mounting events are expected to have a specific signature of movement. This is both an unusual position for an animal to be in and fairly high movement. When an event matches this

signature, the mounting sensor may detect a mounting condition. For example, in the case of activity, it may be useful to adjust activity levels for the surrounding herd similar to the methods of adjusting temperature.

[0035] In the current devices, a three-axis accelerometer within the device may measure both activity and mounting events. For example, an ADXL345 (manufactured by Analog Devices, Norwood, Mass.) or KXTIA-1006 (manufactured by Kionix, Ithaca, N.Y.) accelerometer may be used. For example, the accelerometer may be set to record only data above a certain threshold, so that only significant events are recorded. For example, the accelerometer may be configured to sample and buffer acceleration data based on activity thresholds without microprocessor intervention, thus saving power overhead until motion thresholds have been detected. Such a configuration may advantageously allow the sensor to continuously monitor activity, yet keep the power levels and processing to a minimum, thereby extending the battery life of the device. For example, once the accelerometer detects motion, it can initiate the microprocessor to process the data, run the sensing algorithms, and then go back to an inactive status until needed again.

[0036] For example, intravaginal pressure may be correlated with estrus because as the animal reaches heat, the surrounding tissue swells and tightens. Though an exact value for expected pressures may not be known, the outside swelling of the vulva is noticeable, so the increase in pressure is expected to be fairly extreme (i.e., on the order of several psi), per Jane A. Parish, et al., *Estrus (Heat) Detection in Cattle*, Mississippi State University Extension Service (2010). For example, intravaginal pressure may be measured by a strain gauge applied to the inside of the device housing or to a more flexible membrane disposed on the housing. Alternatively, a balloon filled with air may also be disposed on the housing of the device, such that the air pressure may be recorded periodically.

[0037] For example, color or pulse may be correlated with estrus because swelling in the surrounding tissue occurs in which blood rushes the vagina and causes a change in chemical composition and color. For example, color or pulse may be detected using a low resolution camera and a small LED light. For example, an LED light in the proximity of the tissue may be activated and the color of the light reflected may be recorded by the camera. Changes in color may then be used to infer the heart rate of the animal or the oxygen content of the blood through colorimetric data.

[0038] A single device may have one or more sensors disposed in or on the housing, to collect one or more types of condition information about the subject. Depending on the condition information collected, the device, or an external computer system or base station, may determine whether an estrus condition is present in the subject, based on any combination of individual, herd, environment, modeling, historic, or other factors. For example, a predetermined threshold may be calculated based on the real time crowd data, wherein calculating the predetermined threshold based on the real time crowd data comprises adjusting an expected threshold for an estrus condition based on the real time crowd data for that estrus condition to determine the predetermined threshold for an estrus condition.

[0039] In certain embodiments, as shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, the device 100 includes an antenna 110 configured to transmit information to and/or receive information from other implantable estrus detection devices, a base station, or both.

For example, the antenna may be internal or external to the device housing. In certain embodiments, the antenna 110 includes, or is formed as, an external device retrieval member. Alternatively, a retrieval member that is not an antenna may be provided. That is, the retrieval member may allow a professional to remove the device from the implantation site in the subject. For example, the retrieval member may include a loop or other retrieval feature.

[0040] Suitable device features, including housing designs, retention features, antennae, retrieval members, and fluid dispensing mechanisms, are disclosed in U.S. application Ser. No. 13/629,124, filed on Sep. 27, 2012, entitled “Single Channel, Multiple Drug Delivery Device and Methods” (Attorney No. 29833-0024), Application No. 13/629,159, filed on Sep. 27, 2012, entitled “Multiple Reservoir Drug Delivery Device and Methods” (Attorney No. 29833-0025), U.S. application Ser. No. 13/629,184, filed on Sep. 27, 2012, entitled “Drug Reconstitution and Delivery Device and Methods” (Attorney No. 29833-0026), U.S. application Ser. No. 13/742,203, filed on Jan. 15, 2013, entitled “Devices and Methods for Intraluminal Retention and Drug Delivery” (29833-0033), U.S. application Ser. No. 14/071,929, filed on Nov. 5, 2013, entitled “Fluid Delivery Devices and Methods” (Attorney No. 29833-0040), and U.S. application Ser. No. 14/107,367, filed on Dec. 16, 2013, entitled “Electrolytic Gas Generating Devices, Actuators, and Methods” (Attorney No. 29833-0041), each of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

[0041] Methods of Detecting Estrus

[0042] In another aspect, methods of detecting an estrus condition of a subject are provided. In one embodiment, a method includes deploying in the subject an estrus detection device configured for intravaginal or intrauterine retention, sensing, via at least one sensor of the device, condition information of the subject, and determining an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information. The device may include any combination of device features discussed above.

[0043] In one embodiment, the method also includes programming the device with biometric information, identification information, or both, about the subject. For example, in the case of livestock, the subject’s age, weight, or other relevant biometric information may be programmed into the device. For example, the device may be programmed with identification information to allow for the collection of individualized data and/or for tracking purposes.

[0044] In certain embodiments, the sensing includes sensing, via at least two sensors, condition information of the subject, and the at least two sensors are selected from temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

[0045] In certain embodiments, the method also includes dispensing a fluid when the estrus condition of the subject meets a predetermined threshold. For example, the fluid may be selected from drugs, semen, ova, and combinations thereof. In certain embodiments, the method also includes calculating the predetermined threshold based on information selected from biometric subject data, real time crowd data, historic data, modeling algorithms, and combinations thereof.

[0046] In one embodiment, the method includes receiving real time crowd data from one or more other implanted estrus detection devices, a base station, or both, which is located within a reception radius of the device, and calculating the predetermined threshold based on the real time crowd data,

wherein calculating the predetermined threshold based on the real time crowd data comprises adjusting an expected threshold for an estrus condition based on the real time crowd data for that estrus condition to determine the predetermined threshold for an estrus condition.

[0047] In one embodiment, the method includes receiving the predetermined threshold from a base station, which is located within a reception radius of the device, wherein the predetermined threshold has been calculated based on real time crowd data received by the base station from one or more implanted estrus detection devices.

[0048] In one embodiment, the method includes transmitting the determined estrus condition of the subject to another implanted estrus detection device, a base station, or both.

[0049] Systems for Detecting Estrus

[0050] In another aspect, a system for detecting an estrus condition of a subject is provided. In certain embodiments, as shown in FIG. 4, the system includes at least one implantable estrus detection device 440 (shown implanted in subjects) configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject, the device comprising at least one sensor configured to detect condition information of a subject in whom or which it is implanted, and determine an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information, wherein the at least one implantable estrus detection device 440 is configured to communicate with a base station 450, other implanted estrus detection devices 440, or both, which are located within a reception radius thereof, regarding the determined estrus condition.

[0051] In one embodiment, the system includes at least two of the implantable estrus detection devices, and the base station, the implantable estrus detection devices, or both, are configured to calculate an expected estrus condition threshold value based on condition information from the implantable estrus detection devices. That is, the system may use the real time information collected to calculate or adjust a baseline estrus condition threshold, against which the condition information about an individual subject may be compared, to determine whether the subject is in estrus.

[0052] In one embodiment, each implantable estrus detection device is configured to collect condition information from the implantable estrus detection devices within a reception radius thereof, and to transmit the collected condition information to the base station when it comes within a reception radius thereof.

[0053] In one embodiment, before being inserted, the device may communicate wirelessly with a base station and may be programmed with some basic information about the animal (e.g., weight, breed, herd/pen, serial number). This information may be useful in matching the individual’s condition information to expected values or communicating amongst other animals that might be undergoing the same conditions. In certain embodiments, devices are implanted in animals at various phases in the estrous cycle, including animals that are not currently in estrus. The “off cycle” animals may be used as a control to calibrate activity and temperature readings.

[0054] In one embodiment, each device communicates with a central antenna, or base station, located near the animals or near a central location. A central server may analyze condition information from all the animals and compute adjustments that might be needed for various sensors. The central server may also keep track of any systematic adjustments that might be needed for a specific animal, breed, or

herd for future work. This communication need not be continual. For example, the check-in frequency of the devices may be balanced with battery life to ensure that the devices can survive. For example, the device may record events every 15 seconds and have a lifetime of 29 days.

[0055] In one embodiment, since animals may be out to pasture and not within communication range of a central server or base station, the animals with the implanted devices could also form an ad-hoc network with any surrounding animals. Though the smaller network may not be as accurate, a small population of animals will allow for some adjustment of temperature readings and other data. For example, protocols such as ZIGBEE may support this type of networking.

[0056] In another embodiment, the ad-hoc network allows animals within close proximity of each other to communicate and share all their information with each other. When one of the animals wanders within the range of a master antenna, or base station, it will upload this data and the master network can also download additional matching data to the animal. The animal can then communicate this additional data to other animals it might come into contact with.

[0057] In certain embodiments, the implantable devices can also communicate with larger devices strapped to the animal's neck. Because of the increased size of the external device, these external devices can carry larger batteries and have significantly larger range of communication. For example, for free range cattle, the animals could be up to a mile from the base station, but occasionally send data collected to the base station.

[0058] The disclosed devices, methods, and systems advantageously provide improved estrus detection in subjects. Using internal, implantable devices having at least one, and in certain cases many, sensors, the occurrence of false positive can be reduced and the ideal insemination timing can be predicted. Moreover, the devices may have the ability to dispense a fluid, such as semen, to a subject upon determining of estrus. The ability of the devices to communicate with one another, or with a base station that is communicating with other devices, improves the accuracy of the estrus detection by allowing for adjustment of the predetermined condition threshold for particular condition information, based on environmental or herd factors, among others. Accordingly, the success rate of IVF procedures may be improved and the amount of semen and the time required of professionals may be reduced.

[0059] It will be appreciated that variants of the above-disclosed and other features and functions, or alternatives thereof, may be combined into many other different devices, systems, methods, or applications. Various presently unforeseen or unanticipated alternatives, modifications, variations, or improvements therein may be subsequently made by those skilled in the art which are also intended to be encompassed by the following claims.

We claim:

1. A method of detecting an estrus condition of a subject, comprising:

- deploying in the subject an estrus detection device configured for intravaginal or intrauterine retention;
- sensing, via at least one sensor of the device, condition information of the subject; and
- determining an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising: programming the device with biometric information, identification information, or both, about the subject.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one sensor is selected from the group consisting of temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein:

- the sensing comprises sensing, via at least two sensors, condition information of the subject, and
- the at least two sensors are selected from the group consisting of temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

- dispensing a fluid when the estrus condition of the subject meets a predetermined threshold,
- wherein the fluid is selected from the group consisting of drugs, semen, ova, and combinations thereof.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

- calculating the predetermined threshold based on information selected from the group consisting of biometric subject data, real time crowd data, historic data, modeling algorithms, and combinations thereof.

7. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

- receiving real time crowd data from one or more other implanted estrus detection devices, a base station, or both, which is located within a reception radius of the device; and

- calculating the predetermined threshold based on the real time crowd data,

- wherein calculating the predetermined threshold based on the real time crowd data comprises adjusting an expected threshold for an estrus condition based on the real time crowd data for that estrus condition to determine the predetermined threshold for an estrus condition.

8. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

- receiving the predetermined threshold from a base station, which is located within a reception radius of the device, wherein the predetermined threshold has been calculated based on real time crowd data received by the base station from one or more implanted estrus detection devices.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting the determined estrus condition of the subject to another implanted estrus detection device, a base station, or both.

10. A system for detecting an estrus condition of a subject, comprising:

- at least one implantable estrus detection device configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject, the device comprising at least one sensor configured to detect condition information of a subject in whom or which it is implanted, and determine an estrus condition of the subject using the condition information,

- wherein the at least one implantable estrus detection device is configured to communicate with a base station, other implanted estrus detection devices, or both, which are located within a reception radius thereof, regarding the determined estrus condition.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein:

- the system comprises at least two of the implantable estrus detection devices, and

the base station, the implantable estrus detection devices, or both, are configured to calculate an expected estrus condition threshold value based on condition information from the implantable estrus detection devices.

12. The system of claim **11**, wherein each implantable estrus detection device is configured to collect condition information from the implantable estrus detection devices within a reception radius thereof, and to transmit the collected condition information to the base station when it comes within a reception radius thereof.

13. An implantable estrus detection device, comprising:
a housing configured for intravaginal or intrauterine deployment and retention in a subject; and
at least one sensor disposed in or on the housing,
wherein the device is configured to use condition information sensed by the at least one sensor to determine an estrus condition of the subject.

14. The device of claim **13**, wherein the at least one sensor is selected from the group consisting of temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

15. The device of claim **13**, wherein the device comprises at least two sensors and is configured to use condition information sensed by the at least two sensors to determine an

estrus condition of the subject, the sensors being selected from the group consisting of temperature sensors, conductivity sensors, color sensors, pulse sensors, activity sensors, mounting sensors, and pressure sensors.

16. The device of claim **13**, further comprising at least one port via which the at least one sensor is in communication with surrounding vaginal or uterine tissue or fluid.

17. The device of claim **13**, further comprising a fluid delivery mechanism configured to dispense a fluid selected from the group consisting of drugs, semen, ova, and combinations thereof, when the estrus condition is determined to meet a predetermined threshold.

18. The device of claim **17**, wherein the device is configured to calculate the predetermined threshold based on information selected from the group consisting of biometric subject data, real time crowd data, historic data, modeling algorithms, and combinations thereof.

19. The device of claim **13**, further comprising an antenna configured to transmit information to and/or receive information from other implantable estrus detection devices, a base station, or both.

20. The device of claim **19**, wherein the antenna comprises an external device retrieval member.

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专利名称(译)	可植入的发情检测装置，系统和方法		
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摘要(译)

提供了用于检测受试者中的发情的装置，系统和方法。装置包括配置用于阴道内/子宫内部署和保持的外壳以及设置在外壳内或外壳上的传感器，并且配置成使用由传感器感测的状况信息来确定受试者的发情状况。方法包括在受试者中部署装置，感测条件信息，以及使用条件信息确定发情条件。系统包括被配置为关于所确定的发情情况与基站和/或与其接收半径内的其他植入设备通信的设备。

