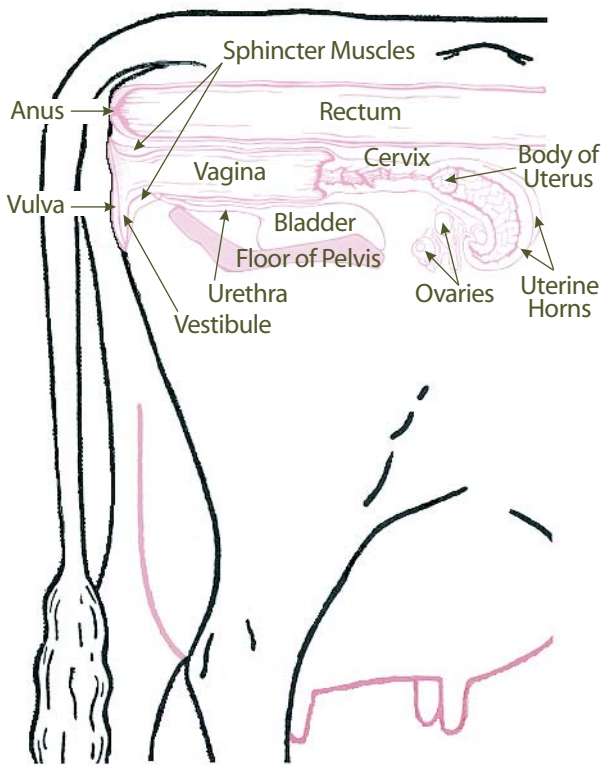


Anatomy of the Cow's Reproductive System

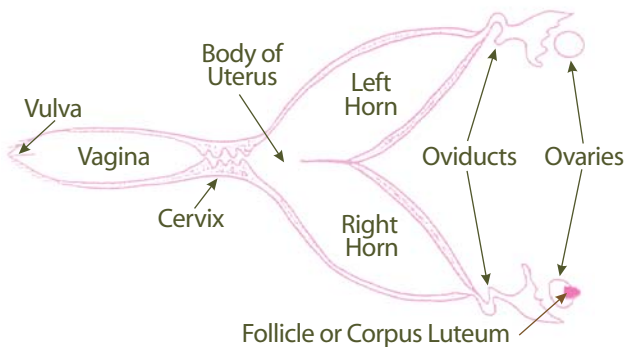
The figures below illustrate the main features of the reproductive tract in the non-pregnant cow. The bottom diagram represents the tract viewed from above the cow. In the top diagram, the tract is shown from the right side, in relation to other parts of the cow's anatomy.



The vulva is the only part of the tract seen from the outside. Its lips become swollen and red when the cow is in heat. The vestibule lies between the lips of the vulva and the sphincter muscles of the vagina.

Ranging in length from 8 to over 12 inches, the vagina is normally a collapsed tube lined by a tough membrane folded lengthwise. During heat, the membrane is covered in mucous which may also be visible on the lips of the vulva. Urine is carried from the bladder into the rear end vagina by the urethra.

The cervix is a thick-walled tube with a convoluted inner surface which restricts passage from the vagina into the uterus.



About 27 hours after the beginning of standing heat, a mature egg passes down the oviduct from one of the ovaries, entering one of the horns of the uterus. If it has been fertilized in its journey down the oviduct, the developing embryo attaches to the inside wall of the uterus where it develops into a fetal calf.