



Guide to Artificial Insemination (AI)

In order to successfully get your mare in foal using chilled transported semen, attention to the following details is necessary. If you have any questions or queries please don't hesitate to contact the stud.

- **COMMUNICATION** – this is the most important factor of a successful breeding program. Communication between the mare owner, their veterinarian, and the studmaster is critical. The stud will need to know **A WEEK IN ADVANCE** of when you expect your mare to be coming into season. This is so we can ensure we have a mare in season at the stud to aid in the collection of semen. Timing of insemination is crucial so once again the vet will need to be in regular contact with the stud.
- Mares generally come into season (heat) for 5-6 days, and ovulate close to the end of the season. They then go out of season for 16 or so days. The mare will need to be inseminated close to her time of ovulation in order to have the best possible chance of getting in foal.
- Most mares are keen to “show” when they are in season. If you get into the habit of “teasing” your mare every day or two by showing her to a colt or interested gelding, you can get a picture of where she is in her cycle. Some mares however do not show well and if your mare is one of these then you will need to see your vet more often to establish when she is coming into season. Basically when a mare is in season she will appear receptive towards a gelding, holding her tail up and peeing and/or “winking” (everting her vulva). When a mare is not in season she will lay her ears back and squeal when approached by a gelding and may even try to kick him.
- If you know the day your mare last showed signs of being in season, wait two weeks and then contact the stud to let them know the mare will soon be coming back into season. (Alternatively your vet could inject the mare with hormones to make her come into season one week after she has ovulated). As soon as your mare shows signs of being in season the vet will need to take a cervical swab from the mare. This is especially important if the mare did not conceive the previous year or has had a difficult foaling. If the mare is carrying any sort of low-lying uterine infection she will have no chance of conceiving so this is in your best interest. It usually takes 24 hours to get the results of the swab.

- You will then need to call the stud and let us know that you wish to breed your mare on this heat cycle and you will be requiring semen within a few days.
- Your vet will then re-examine your mare to see how quickly she is coming up with a follicle. If she has a follicle sized 3.5cm or larger the vet will then inject her with a hormone (either chorulon or ovuplant) to ensure that she ovulates within the next 48 hours. If her follicle(s) is still small your vet will advise you to bring her back in a day or two's time.
- Once the mare has been given the hormone to make her ovulate it is time to ring the stud and order semen for the next day. Try to ring the stud as early as possible so we can organise the courier. Phoning the stud on the morning that you require semen does not allow us enough time to collect the semen and get it to the courier/airport by 9am!
- We can send the semen to your address or directly to your vet. The semen is transported inside an equitainer which is specially designed to keep semen at the right temperature. DO NOT open the equitainer before the vet is ready to inseminate. The envelope inside the container gives you and your vet any additional advice that may be needed pertaining to the actual insemination process. Also included will be collection and insemination forms for the NZ Warmblood Association that your vet must fill out. These are necessary to ensure the correct mare is inseminated with the correct semen and that the foal when born can be registered.
- We will send you only one insemination dose in the equitainer. This is because semen lasts longer inside your mare than in any container. If the mare doesn't ovulate as expected a new shipment of semen will need to be ordered. This will cost extra in courier fees but the stud fee is not altered.
- Take care to return the container immediately as there will be another mare owner waiting!
- Check your mare goes out of season, this is vital because she may put up another follicle that shouldn't be missed!

If you have any questions at all pertaining to the use of chilled transported semen please call me:

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