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Swine Newsletter

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Breeding Management Reminders

Because reproductive failures have a ripple effect throughout farrowing operations, the stakes for solving problems are high. Constantly fine tuning management techniques and paying close attention to details in the breeding barn will enhance reproductive performance and make it more consistent. Experimenting with new technologies can help to move a herd forward and should be incorporated into a breeding herds management. Some new techniques will be adopted and some abandoned, often to be revisited later when errors or improvements have been made. Artificial insemination was one such innovation that didn't work out too well initially but has been almost universally adopted once better extenders, rods, etc. were developed.

ABSTRACT

- With post-cervical artificial insemination (PCAI), semen is deposited just inside the uterus, requiring fewer sperm cells, and less time for breeding, than traditional intracervical AI.
- Regardless of whether PCAI or intracervical AI is employed, the ability to accurately detect estrus and timing of inseminations is critical for maximizing reproductive performance.
- Careful observation by an experienced breeding technician of gilts during an intense period of direct physical contact with a mature boar is the most ideal method for detecting estrus.
- Detection of estrus is facilitated by keeping gilts in groups of 8 to 12 gilts each, a group size that allows efficient movement to estrus detection pens. With larger groups it becomes more difficult both to assure every female within a pen receives adequate boar contact, and to carefully observe all gilts for the lordosis response.
- Boars used for estrus detection should be at least 11 months of age and the effectiveness of detection is enhanced by exposing gilts to several different boars in a boar exposure area.
- A new product released for commercial use in weaned sows (OvuGel; Elanco) induces ovulation. The compound is administered 96 hours post-weaning, and a single Fixed Time Artificial Insemination (FTAI) is performed approximately 22 hours later. Thus, the number of semen doses used for AI is decreased and labor associated with detection of estrus can be eliminated. Acceptable fertility outcomes with FTAI have been demonstrated in large scale studies under commercial conditions. Effectiveness of OvulGel is dependent on sows having an available crop of mature ovarian follicles.
- P.G. 600, a commercially available gonadotropin product (Merck Animal Health, De Sota, KS) has been demonstrated to accelerate the onset of follicular growth, estrus and ovulation in sows weaned during the summer and could perhaps be used in combination with OvulGel.

To Induce Heat in Gilts

- Gilts should be 210 days old
- Provide 7 to 9 ml of Regumate on the feed, once a day for 14 days in a row.
- The day after (day 15) give 5 ml of PG 600 under the skin.
- Three days later they should be in heat.

To Synchronize Breeding of Sows

- Wean at the same time (Thursday morning)
- Administer PG 600 within 24 hours
- Breed 5 and 6 days after the weaning event.

Method for Fixed Time Breeding

- Wean at the same time (Thursday morning)
- 96 hours later administer Ovugel intravaginally
- Inseminate 22 to 24 hours later, without regards to whether they seem to be in heat or not (only one service, cost of hormones is offset by reduced semen cost).
- * If you achieve fixed time breeding, then you can better employ planate for fixed time induction of farrowing.
- *Some suggest giving PG 600 within 24 hours of weaning as well as the Ovugel (either, or)

Note: These are prescription products that can only be used under the advisement/supervision of a veterinarian. So talk with us about initiating a program.