

Tips for Running a Successful Artificial Breeding Program

Many Angus breeders have already conducted an artificial breeding program. Whether you are new to artificial breeding or are well experienced, here are some tips that may assist you along the way.

Consult a professional and stick to the program

Most veterinarians or technicians will supply a protocol for you to follow on the timing and dosage of treatments for synchronisation. These protocols are well researched and tested. The timing and correct dosage is very important to reach an optimal result.

There are a variety of protocols to satisfy the needs of each individual breeder. Have the conversation with your reproduction provider about what *your* objectives are. A program that is well designed to be completed within your budget and available resources should ensure a smooth outcome.

Rising plane of nutrition

Whether it be for Fixed Time AI or ET activities, the best success is often achieved when females are on a rising plane of nutrition. Cows or heifers that are fat or well-conditioned surprisingly do not always deliver a good result. The ideal state is for heifers and cows to be in a forward store condition and in a rising plane of nutrition leading into their reproduction program. Avoid pastures with legume content such as clovers and lucerne; this can be associated with disruption to the hormonal cycle. If supplementary feeding is required, a cereal hay diet is ideal.

Prior preparation prevents poor performance

Place your artificial reproduction activities in your calendar and take some time to be a quality assurance officer. Although artificial reproduction programs are easy to implement if the program is followed, if any one of the steps of the program fails, it will often result in poor performance.

Ensure that steps to avoid disasters are implemented. For example, ensure that semen to be used in the protocol is of acceptable quality. Make sure all staff are well informed of activities. Read the instruction labels!

Be realistic

Although some very good conception rates are quoted, and some of these rates are achievable, do your maths with the conservative average given your environment and cattle. If you are expecting too high a result, you may be disappointed.

One good method for calculating what is possible in your herd with artificial reproduction is to critically assess your current reproduction rates. While a 90% pregnancy rate seems high, if a breeder joins for 6 months, their conception rate per cycle may not be that good compared to a breeder that has an 80% pregnancy rate and joins for 12 weeks.

If your herd has high innate fertility, it is expected that your artificial reproduction rates will be good given all other factors are under best practice management. Angus breeders are fortunate to have a generally high fertility in their breed.



An even group of Cohort 5 Angus Sire Benchmarking Project calves: all dams were synchronised using Cue-Mate® devices for fixed time artificial insemination.

Adapted from article by Dr Sophia Edwards, Technical Specialist Reproduction, Vetoquinol Australia

For further information, please contact staff at:

Angus Australia
 Phone: 02 6773 4600
 Email: office@angusaustralia.com.au
 Website: www.angusaustralia.com.au