



The 'right' time to inseminate



The 'right' time to inseminate varies between farms and individual sows, so it is important to adapt the insemination routine to the specific farm.

Insemination must occur some hours before ovulation, which normally happens two thirds of the way through oestrus, eg 36-44 hours after onset of oestrus. Acceptable fertilisation results are normally achieved by inseminating 24 hours before ovulation.

Accurately identifying the start of first standing heat is the most important thing to get right as inseminating too early or late will result in poorer litter sizes and lower farrowing rates. Producers should carry out 'oestrus mapping' for their unit, especially at the start of autumn and spring. This involves testing for standing heat in the morning and afternoon, to help ensure that timing of boar contact, testing for standing heat and insemination are all being carried out at the optimum times.

To download the factsheet, *Action for Productivity 31: Optimising timing of service* and for more information on the Breed +3 initiative, go to: www.bpex.org.uk/2TS/breeding/

Good semen storage

Semen needs to be delivered directly into a temperature-controlled or insulated box, already at the required temperature of 17°C.

This should be located at the edge of the unit, out of direct sunlight. Doses should be stored horizontally and in plastic trays to allow air to circulate. Only take out the amount of the semen needed for one hour's worth of insemination and use a temperature-controlled, portable, semen storage box to store doses in the service area.

For more information download *Action for Productivity 30: Semen storage and handling*
www.bpex.org.uk/2TS/resources.aspx

RESEARCH

Salmonella tool on trial

The Zoonoses National Control Programme (ZNCP) Farm Tool is designed to assess the control of Salmonella risk factors on pig farms. PhD student Georgina Crayford, from the University of Liverpool, has done a pilot trial to see if the Farm Tool questionnaire alone can determine whether a herd is high or low risk for Salmonella; the conclusion is that it can, to some extent. The Farm Tool is a good starting point for producers to identify the current risks specific to their unit and help make sure biosecurity practices are as effective as possible.



For more about the Farm Tool, go to: www.bpex-zncp.org.uk