



PLANNING INSEMINATION

Weaning sets on a hormonal change in the sow, which initiates ovulation. The planning for the major days of insemination is therefore a consequence of the weaning day and time.

Most sows ovulate on the 5th day after weaning. But there is great variation. In some herds, there will be a number of sows with such early ovulation, that it is too late to start insemination on the 5th day.

The basic rule is to inseminate if the sow shows very clear heat (standing reflex). This increases the chance that fresh sperm will be present at ovulation.

In herds with good heat conditions, and weaning in the morning, insemination will typically start after lunch on the 4th day. Only sows with a clear heat are inseminated and the rest wait until the next day.

The sows are inseminated again the next day as long they continue to show clear heat. Most sows will be inseminated 2 times and some 3 times over 3 days.

Background:

Fertilization will be possible from about 24 hours before to 4 hours after ovulation. The best result is of course achieved by insemination close to ovulation. We know that ovulation takes place about two thirds of the way through estrus (heat period). However, we cannot predict how long a sow's estrus will last.

Experiments have shown that sows roughly follow same pattern in each herd, but the picture is a little different from herd to herd. And within the same herd, there is of course a difference between the sows. This is illustrated in the figure. Here we are only referring to "normal" sows. Sows used for nursing in particular may deviate from normal, because they may have been in heat in the farrowing barn.

Therefore, knowledge of the estrus conditions in the herd is the base for the most efficient planning of the insemination work. You must know the number of days and hours from weaning to the first heat and the length of the heat itself. This is done by checking heat twice daily over a period and register in a chart. Once the figures have been analysed, it is possible to organize the insemination work most efficiently. The heat chart can be obtained from Hatting.

