

# AI technique – Part 2: Procedure

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In the previous *Ubisi Mail* (November 2005, page 19), we discussed the preparation for the insemination process. Now that we are prepared, we can inseminate the cow. The whole process must take place as quickly as possible.

## The semen straw

- Remove the semen straw from the flask and immediately place it into the warm water of between 35°C and 37°C for 20 seconds.
- Check to see that the end of the straw to be cut off is at the top. Double check the identification number on the straw.
- Remove the straw from the thermos flask and dry it with a clean paper towel.
- Insert the straw into the pistolet. For stability, hold the straw with a forefinger and thumb and allow the pistolet to rest against the palm of the hand.
- After the straw is positioned in the pistolet, cut off half of the protruding part of the straw.

## The sheath

- Carefully pull the sheath over the semen straw and pistolet very carefully. Ensure that the straw fits easily into the green adapter in the sheath.
- Handle the sheath only at the open end. Never touch the shaft or tip that enters the animal's reproductive tract. This is to avoid contamination that may lead to infections of the genital tract.
- Before the sheath reaches the enlarged area of the pistolet shaft, push up the plastic ring on to the shaft so that the sheath can be slipped through the ring.
- Push the sheath over the enlarged end of the shaft as far as possible. Secure with a small twist of the ring and push down towards the rim of the pistolet.
- Depress the plunger slowly to remove the air in the straw until a drop of semen becomes visible.
- Put a sanitary sheath over the pistolet to prevent contamination before it enters the reproductive tract of the cow.

## The insemination

- Put on a shoulder-length glove. Apply lubricant over the glove and position yourself behind the cow. Have a paper towel or cotton wool ready.
- If you have an assistant, he must lift up the cow's tail and be ready to clean the vulva. If you work alone, move the cow's tail towards the outside of your arm.
- Carefully enter the rectum with the gloved arm. Remove faeces by gentle scooping movements.
- With the hand that is in the rectum, put a slight backward and downward pressure on the pelvic floor to open the vulva lips. Now you can insert the pistolet into the vagina, without touching the vulva lips.
- The cervix must be located to complete the insemination process. The inseminator must identify and manipulate the cervix with the hand inside the rectum.
- Your fingernails should be short so that they do not tear the glove and injure the mucus membrane of the rectum.
- When inseminating, your body, your elbows, shoulders, hips and knees must be at ease. **UM**