

Artificial insemination technique – Part 1: Preparation

by Joel Nkuna

To get your cows in calf needs a lot of preparation. You need good, fertile semen (you can buy this from Taurus). You also have to make sure that the cow is in heat. Then you also need good insemination techniques. This series of articles will teach you how to inseminate your cow the right way. In this edition we will focus on what you must do before you can inseminate your cow.

Before you can start to inseminate your cows, you must first make sure of the following things:

- The cows should be at least 60 days after calving before you can inseminate again. If you want to make extra sure that she gets pregnant, you must wait a bit longer
- The cow should be in good health. She should not have any infections or disease in her reproductive track – these are the parts that make sure that she can get pregnant. If there is infection, the cow will not get pregnant
- You must be sure that the cow is in heat (see the June issue of *Ubisi Mail*)
- The cow you want to inseminate should be properly held down so she does not hurt herself. A crush pen is recommended.

Make sure that the instruments you will use for the artificial insemination (AI) are not broken and will still work. Arrange the instruments in the following order:

- Sharp scissors/or straw cutter
- Paper towel/or cotton wool
- Arm-length gloves
- Lubricant
- Pistolet
- Sheaths
- Sanitary sheaths
- A wide mouthed Thermos flask containing water of between 35°C and 37°C.

Place a thermometer into the Thermos flask. This is so that you can check the temperature the whole time. The Thermos flask should be placed close to the nitrogen flask so that the semen can be placed into it easily. Warm thepistolet by rubbing it with a clean towel. The sperm can be damaged if the warm semen is loaded into a coldpistolet. Pull back the plunger so that the straw does not touch it while being loaded into thepistolet.

Now you are ready to start the insemination process. Next time we will look at the insemination procedure.

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