

## AI on the beef farm

Already common practice on dairy farms, we are seeing more beef suckler farmers including the use of AI as part of their breeding programme, either across the whole herd, or more commonly, on heifers to generate replacements where easier calving bulls with maternal genetics can be used. Still need convincing? Here are some of the potential benefits:

1. Access to higher quality genetics than would be economically sensible if purchasing a bull of equal quality. Cost per calf produced is very similar in AI and natural service situations, when costed per calf over a bull's lifetime.
2. Flexibility in the genetics chosen; heifers can be served to easier calving sires/ breed than larger framed mature cows.
3. Replacements can be bred from females that are AI'd; therefore, prolonging the lifespan of the current stock bull on the farm. As sexed semen becomes more consistent this should be even more effective.
4. Reduced infectious disease risk and health and safety risk of using AI versus buying a stock bull and keeping him on the farm.
5. Where synchronisation is used it means that the calving block can be 'front loaded' to maximise the percentage of cows calving in the first 3 weeks, targeting more than 65%.



Interested in doing AI on your farm? Why not attend one of our DIY AI courses? The course is a practical 3 day course plus a refresher day. Learning outcomes:

- Understand the legislation and the license rules and regulations.
- Identify the key parts of the reproductive anatomy of the cow.
- Understand the oestrous cycle and heat detection.
- Understand the principles of good flask and straw storage and management.
- Explain how to cleanly and safely carry out AI.
- Show how to thaw and handle semen correctly.
- Carry out the practical task of insemination.

For more information or to book a space on a course, contact 01765 602396.

### Case Study:

One particular farm has used AI in this way on large numbers of heifers for 7 years now and achieved fantastic results with conception rates ranging from 73% to 89.5%. More recently we have trialled a more simple single AI protocol (3 handlings) with this farm with results matching that of double AI.

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