

## Information Embryo Transfer Programmes

On farm embryo transfer requires a simple programme of injections, heat detection, and insemination on the cows. Briefly this involves an initial synchronisation of donors and recipients using a single injection of estroplan or a similar prostaglandin. This gives us an initial starting Heat date for the donor cows.

The FSH injections, which produce superovulation, begin between 9 and 14 days from the donor cows starting heat date and continue morning and night for 4 and 1/2 days. Another estroplan injection is given to the donors on the 4th day and to the recipients on the 3rd day of FSH injections. This results in donors and recipients showing heats on the 6th day. Donors are inseminated or put to the bull at this heat and all recipient heats are recorded.

Seven days after the donor heat we will arrive to flush the donor cows' uterus, find and assess the embryos and transfer them to the recipients. We can also freeze any excess embryos.

Before commencing a programme donor cows should be at least 2 months after calving and cycling regularly. Where heifers are to be programmed these should be cycling regularly and preferably shown 3 good heats. Donors should be in good condition and preferably not fat. We can discuss a nutrition programme with you to maximize results. For recipients we recommend either heifers or cows with a good reproductive history. Recipients should be cycling regularly and at least 2 months should have elapsed since last calving. It is useful to have donors and recipients examined prior to the programme to ensure they are not pregnant, are cycling normally, and have no abnormalities.

Embryo collection results vary between donors but the average is 6 good embryos per flush. You can usually expect about 3 to 4 pregnancies per flush. Not all donors will produce a good number of embryos, which is why we suggest that it is more efficient to do more than one donor at a time. You should have at least 8 recipients per donor ready for the programme. Donors can be collected repeatedly, with a recommended 8 weeks between collections.

EmbryoCo also provide in-centre embryo programmes where the donor cows are simply sent to our collection centre and we take care of the programming and collection process. In-centre collections tend to produce better numbers of good embryos per collection. Embryos are either frozen or transferred to our own recipients. The breeder then buys whatever recipients are pregnant at 3 months.

At the recipient facility the cattle are managed solely to produce the best pregnancy rate. Embryos are transferred surgically in specialised facilities. The total package provides significantly higher pregnancy results with rates of 75% to 80% being the norm from both fresh and frozen embryos. This compares to a wide variation on-farm of between 50% and 70%.

Please ring us if you require any further information or have decided to go ahead with a programme.

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