



Breeding from your Mare Fact Sheet

If you want to breed your mare in the coming season, there are some important things for you to consider.

Pre-Breeding Reproductive Examination

Whether you decide to opt for natural cover or for Artificial Insemination (AI), you should always get your vet to perform a pre-breeding reproductive examination. This generally involves:

- General health check and previous breeding history
- Examination of the external reproductive tract and evaluation of the perineal conformation (in case the mare needs to be stitched after insemination)
- Examination of the vagina with a speculum
- Ultrasound examination of uterus and ovaries to evaluate the stage of the cycle and highlight abnormalities such as fluid accumulation, uterine cysts and ovarian abnormalities.
- Additional exams may be advised by your vet (uterine swabs/biopsies).

Before going to stud, we highly recommend testing your mare for two diseases that cause major infertility problems:

- Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA), via a blood sample
- Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM), via a clitoral or cervical swab.

Many studs require additional tests such as blood samples for strangles exposure. You should check with the stud you are intending to use for their requirements.

Natural Cover or Artificial Insemination?

Once your mare has been evaluated for breeding soundness by your vet and once you have chosen the stallion you want to use, you may have to decide whether to opt for natural cover or for AI.

If you are involved in the thoroughbred breeding industry, there's no choice to make, as only natural breeding is allowed. If you want to use a stallion living overseas it is easier to use AI.

What are the advantages of Artificial Insemination (AI) compared to natural cover?

- The risk of introducing infection to either mare or stallion is reduced when using AI.
- Pregnancy rates in problem mares can be significantly be improved by using AI.
- With AI the stallion choice is much wider. Semen can be collected from stallions standing abroad and shipped almost anywhere. Semen is also collected and frozen from Stallions before they no longer happily produce or they die.
- AI is safer for the mare, stallion and handlers

AI has some down sides too:

- Multiple ultrasound examinations are required as the mares cycle needs to be closely monitored, the frequency of these examinations depends on the type of semen used-fresh/chilled or frozen.
- Costs – Semen, Shipping Costs, Vets fees.
- Pregnancy rates are slightly lower for frozen semen, especially if used for sub fertile mares.

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US WITH ANY
QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR BREEDING PLANS - IT CAN BE A
CONFUSING TOPIC AND OUR STUD VETS WILL BE MORE THAN
HAPPY TO DISCUSS YOUR INDIVIDUAL MARE WITH YOU.**

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