

First Boviteq-West Recipient Heifers Arrive

On May 2nd the first 40 recipient heifers arrived and with it the Westgen barns re-opened for business. Those same barns which for so many years housed bulls are back in use to promote genetic excellence in the west. Via the new venture Boviteq-West, the barns will house recipient heifers and some of western Canada's most important donor females. They will participate in the burgeoning field called IVF (InVitro Fertilization).



IVF is a form of embryo transplant (ET) activity that harvests follicles from ovaries for fertilization externally instead of the conventional method of harvesting fertilized eggs from the uterus. There are a number of

key advantages via IVF that allow greater numbers of offspring to be produced in a shorter time frame. Most importantly the IVF process can be repeated every 14 days which allows for 2 to 3 times more harvest than with conventional ET work. Another key advantage is the use of "reverse sorted" semen – meaning conventionally frozen straws that are thawed and processed through a sorting machine to produce the desired sex. Many of the most sought after sires do not have sexed semen available so the reverse sorting option also increases sire choice when a specific sex (usually female) is desired. Pregnancy rates with IVF embryos are now essentially the same as those conventionally produced.



The first heifers arriving were greeted with excitement as the barns adjust to their new important purpose. These recipients will primarily serve the new IVF service however; producers wanting to implant conventional embryos can do so as well.

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