




In addition to two live sessions this spring, EastGen continues to work on releasing educational modules that 4-H leaders will be able to access and use for their local meetings in 2020. Please visit [www.eastgen.ca](http://www.eastgen.ca) and click on *Events/Youth* for the most recent modules on “Effective Dairy Cattle Judging Reasons” with Brian Carscadden and Beef on Dairy Trends with Brad Gilchrist. The following educational modules will be available in the weeks to come:

- Intro to artificial insemination
- Beef judging strategies and resources
- How to read a dairy proof sheet
- Proper semen handling guidelines



**Watch for your August  
proof sheet in the mail  
following the August 11,  
Genetic Evaluation Release**



### Avoid Common Semen Handling Mistakes

*Bruce Poulin, AI Training Specialist, EastGen*

It is important to follow recommended protocols to maximize the viability of sperm. Failure to follow recommended procedures for removal, thawing and gun loading results in damaged sperm membranes, cold or heat shocked sperm or impaired sperm motility. Additional effects can lead to compromised semen quality and poor fertility.

#### **IMPROPER FROZEN SEMEN THAWING:**

Ensure the water temperature in the thermos is 94°-98°F; Check the water temperature before pulling the straw of semen from the storage tank.

#### **IMPROPER REMOVAL OF SEMEN STRAWS FROM STORAGE TANK:**

Always keep the canister below the frost line when retrieving a semen straw. It is recommended to remove the semen from the tank within five seconds.

#### **FAILURE TO BRING INSEMINATION GUN TO PROPER TEMPERATURE:**

Cold or heat shock to semen results in damage to morphology and motility of sperm. Place the gun inside clothing, paper towel or gun warmer before inserting the thawed semen straw.

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### **STRAW NOT PROPERLY DRIED AFTER REMOVAL FROM WARM WATER BATH:**

Water kills semen. Use a clean paper towel to wipe the straw completely dry before loading into the gun.

### **PROTECT SEMEN FROM DIRECT SUNLIGHT**

Avoid sperm damage from ultraviolet light by protecting it with a clean paper towel.

### **USING CLEAN SCISSORS:**

It is important to use clean, stainless steel scissors to cut the straw. Wipe the scissors after every cut to remove moisture.

### **STRAW NOT FITTED CORRECTLY INTO SHEATH ADAPTOR:**

When fitting the straw into the adaptor of the sheath, give it a quarter turn to snap it into place. This prevents back flushing into the breeding gun during insemination.

- a) Kombi color guns and spiral gun use the non-split sheath with the blue insert
- b) O-Ring gun, use the split sheath with the green insert

### **USING INCORRECT LUBRICANT:**

Only use approved non-spermicidal artificial insemination lubricant; Soaps and detergents are lethal to semen.

### **TAKING TOO LONG TO INSEMINATE:**

Semen that has been thawed should be used within 15 minutes; Semen fertility starts to decline beyond this time.

### **FAST DEPOSITING OF SEMEN IN THE COW:**

Use a low, gentle motion to depress the plunger on the inseminating gun to avoid sperm damage.

### **IMPROPER SEMEN PLACEMENT:**

The uterine body is the best site of semen deposition; Take the time to ensure that the tip of the AI gun is in the uterine body.

# TAKE CONTROL



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**For a consultation on ai24 monitoring systems contact  
Cody Schinkel 519-837-5957  
or email: [cody.schinkel@eastgen.ca](mailto:cody.schinkel@eastgen.ca)**





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**+11** Conformation  
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