

The BUCK BANK'S TIPS FOR FOOLPROOF A-I

The fastest way to improve your breeding program is through the use of artificial insemination. Many of the top herds in the country have developed genetically prepotent lines -- lines that continue to produce good type generation after generation -- by selection of proven bucks.

This wide selection permits you to fine-tune your breeding program, breeding each individual specifically with strengths and weaknesses in mind. ADGA milk test and linear appraisal data help you define what bucks will most fit your needs.

To become successful at AI, watch the AI video "AI MADE EASY," available from The Buck Bank, or take an AI clinic in the fall. The information will be fresh in your mind and you'll be ready to go out and try it.

PRACTICE what you've learned as soon as possible after your training. It's a common mistake to wait a year before trying. If you make this mistake, you'll find that a year later your confidence has dwindled and you'll feel the need for a refresher session before trying A-I.

The more goats you A-I, the better. Begin with less expensive semen so your mistakes won't be so costly. You'll be a lot more relaxed knowing that you're not using irreplaceable or expensive semen. Practice getting into the cervix with as many does as possible. Each one is a little different and the more you try, the more at ease you'll be once you have the semen thawed.

It often helps the beginner to write down the procedure in steps 1, 2, and 3 [see Basic A-I Technique], take it out to the barn and refer to it as you A-I. DON'T BE RUSHED. You have plenty of time; more mistakes are made by those trying to hurry through it than by those taking their time and going step by step.

Know what to expect BEFORE you thaw the semen. Check the doe out ... locate her cervix. Can you get into the cervix? How far? After you've answered these questions and know you can get into the cervix (even if it's just a fraction of an inch), THEN thaw the semen. This way you'll be confident in knowing what to expect and won't have to worry about having thawed semen for a doe whose cervix can't be penetrated.

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(Tips For Foolproof A-I, page 2 - cont'd.)

Has the semen been properly handled and processed to assure the best conception rates? The best technique in the world won't get conception if the semen is not good. But the vast majority of the semen available now is of the quality necessary for good conception rates. Beginners are quick to blame the semen when the doe doesn't settle. Nine out of ten times, it is not the semen but the technique that is to blame.

KEEP GOOD RECORDS during and AFTER you have inseminated the doe. Probably the most valuable piece of information you'll gather is how many hours it took the doe to go out of heat after the A-I. She should be just going out of heat after the A-I. She should be just going out when you A-I her. If she's still in heat 8 or 10 hours later, chances are she won't settle. Checking her with a buck afterwards is very important. You'll start to see a pattern where the does who go out right away are the ones who'll settle. If you don't write down how long it took the doe to go out of heat and she comes back into heat, you won't know what to correct the next time you inseminate her. The success of your A-I program is most dependent upon these three factors:

1. TIMING

By far the **MOST COMMON MISTAKE** made by the beginner is to A-I the doe too early. Wait until the doe is just going out of standing heat. This may mean waiting until late at night, but if you want her to settle, timing is critical. Highest conception rates are achieved by breeding does at the very end (or does that have just gone out) of their heat. Having inseminated for many years, I rarely A-I a doe in heat; rather, I wait until they are out (by just an hour or so). My conception rate with this method runs 90%.

2. PENETRATION OF THE CERVIX

Make sure you are able to penetrate the cervix before you thaw the semen. Measure to see how far you can get into the cervix. It doesn't need to be very far; 1/4-inch is enough. If you can't get into the cervix after trying, don't waste your semen by splashing it in front of the cervix; conception rates are very, very low using this method. Locating the cervix is not always easy and may take some patience, but practice pays off.

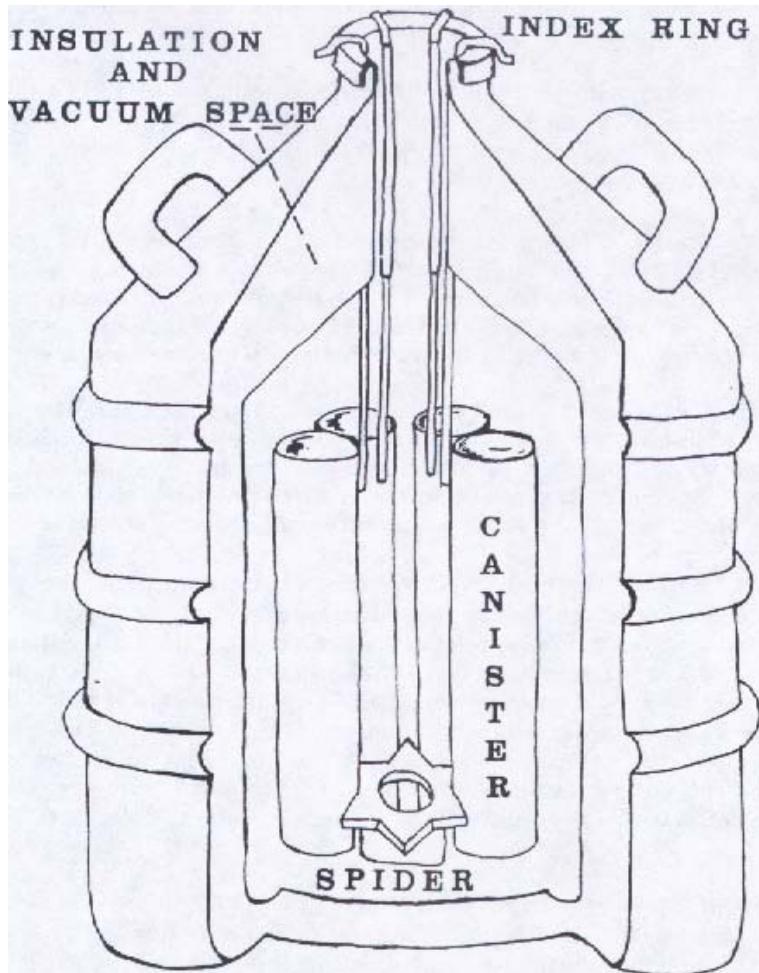
3. QUALITY OF SEMEN

Most semen available now is of the quality needed to get good conception rates. Make sure it has been properly handled in transit. Don't be too quick to blame the semen for no conceptions -- it's probably your technique or the doe may not be a good A-I candidate.

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SEmen STORAge TANK

Do you know where the semen you want to use is in the storage tank?

Which canister?

*Which cane? Top or bottom?
Labeled how?*

Does it share a goblet with different semen?

Can you identify the semen of the buck you want to use, from the name as it is written on the straw?

TIMING OVERVIEW:

Hours: 0 ----- 6 ----- 12 ----- 18 ----- 24 ----- 28 ----- 32 ----- 36 ----- 40

Stage:	Entering heat	true heat	going out	out of heat
Duration:	6 - 10 hrs	12 - 22 hrs	20 - 30 hrs	28 - 40 hrs
Mucous color:	clear	cloudier	milky	creamy
M. consistency:	runny	stringy	holds shape	custard
Best time to A-I:	too early	good	*excellent	**good
				too late

* Life of deposited sperm: approx. 15-20 hours.

** Life of egg: 6-12 hours.

EACH DOE'S CYCLE IS DIFFERENT. THE HOURS ABOVE ARE TO BE USED ONLY AS GUIDELINES. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO MUCOUS AND HER BEHAVIOR WITH THE BUCK TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT STAGE OF HEAT SHE IS IN.



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