

# SEMEN HANDLING GUIDE

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

1. Determine which cow(s) you need to breed and make sure she is locked or properly restrained  
*Use visual heat detection, an accurate timed AI list, or an alert from an activity system like Alta COW WATCH*
2. Know which straw of semen you will need to use
3. Wash your hands and ensure a sanitary workspace
4. Make sure you maintain proper inventory of all supplies, and keep everything together in one spot

## PREPARING THE STRAW

1. Prepare the thaw unit. Ensure water is clean and at a temp of 95°-98°F or 35°-37°C
2. In the semen tank, locate the canister that holds the unit of semen you need
3. Lift that canister, but do not lift it higher than the frost line
4. Use a tweezers or forceps to grab the straw
5. Place it immediately in the thaw bath, and close the thaw unit cover
6. Start a timer for 45 seconds
7. While the straw thaws, pre-warm your AI gun and sheath by placing them close to your torso inside your coveralls
8. After the 45-second timer is done, remove the straw and dry it completely using a clean, warm paper towel
9. Cut the sealed end of the straw with a scissors or straw cutter
10. Insert the plug end of the straw into the warm AI gun
11. Place a disposable plastic sheath over the AI gun and secure it in place
12. Advance the AI gun plunger to remove any extra air space
13. Use this straw of semen to inseminate the right cow within 10 minutes



## DON'T RUIN YOUR CHANCES

1. **Do NOT** thaw more than 3 straws of semen in a thaw bath at once
2. **Do NOT** use bare hands to grab a frozen unit from a canister
3. **Do NOT** return a thawed or partially thawed unit back to the tank
4. **Do NOT** hold the canister up for too long  
*If it takes more than 10 seconds to remove the straw you need, put the canister fully back down into the tank and wait 15 seconds before trying again.*
5. **Do NOT** expose straws of semen to sunlight, cold shock, or harsh environmental conditions
6. **Do NOT** split straws to breed more than one cow

## EQUIPMENT YOU'LL NEED

- List of cows to breed
- Semen storage tank
- Semen thawing unit with thermometer
- Tweezers
- Straw cutter or scissors
- Timer
- Paper towels
- AI gun
- Disposable plastic sheaths
- Disposable plastic gloves
- Lubricant