

Beef-Synch: Using Artificial Insemination in Commercial Beef Breeding Herds

Important to establish:



1 what are the farmer's breeding goals?

2 what is the farm trying to achieve?

3 how does improved access to top genetics (via AI) help?

Beef +Lamb New Zealand Progeny Test demonstrated

- **Better genetics** - using Artificial Insemination (AI) in beef breeding cows gives farmers access to the same genetics that stud breeders are using
 - Speeds up genetic gain in the breeding herd
 - Gets these superior genetics on farm 3 years sooner than if bulls were used
- **Better growth rates** - EBV's (estimated breeding values) for growth rates have been proven
- **Better carcass characteristics** - sire choice influences Beef EQ (eating quality) grading outcomes

Synchronising beef cows

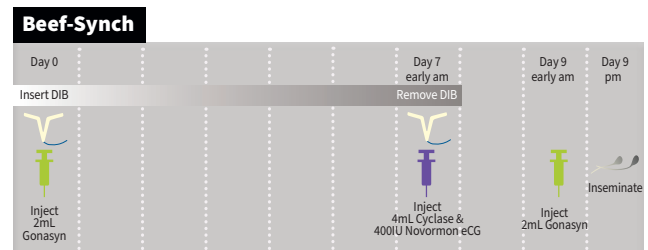
In order to use AI, synchrony of cows and heifers is required. Beef-Synch is the best program for beef cow synchrony to enable fixed time AI on one occasion.

Bulls are still required for cows that don't get pregnant to AI.

Note: non-pregnant cows will return to heat over a condensed period, so it is essential to have sufficient bulls running with the cow herd 18 – 24 days after AI. To calculate bull numbers required, assume 50% pregnancy rate to the Beef-Synch AI.

What is essential for optimal AI outcomes?

- Minimum body condition score (BCS) of cows at mating ≥ 6 ([reference](#))
- Timing of program interventions and AI is crucial
- Organised, well-run program, whilst minimising stress on heifers and cows



An alternative program where AI occurs at the same time as final Gonasyn injection is also acceptable for beef heifers. A ten day program is also suitable for beef cows where cows are inseminated to detected heat from Day 7 onwards, the Gonasyn injection is given in the afternoon of Day 9, and cows are inseminated on the morning of Day 10 (within 16 hours of Gonasyn injection).

Farmers involved in the Beef + Lamb NZ Progeny Test reported

- They were able to align farm goals by choosing desired genetic traits
- AI was simple to do and worthwhile to bring top genetics into the farming system
- AI was easy to implement – requires careful planning and a well-run program
- Cows need to be set up for success of the program – BCS is especially important
- Decisions made about bulls today influence the herd for the next 8 – 10 years (so also influence farm profitability for this period). Decisions about genetics are BIG decisions
- Genetics is one thing that farmers have 100% control over



Hear from the farmers involved in the B+LNZ Progeny Test



Read the case studies



For more information

[Beef Cow Body Condition Scoring](#)



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