

USING SEXED SEMEN WITH CONFIDENCE

777 CODE

SEMEXX™
Sexed**ULTRA®**

MATCHING COMPETITORS' SEXED SEMEN CONCEPTION RATES

Semex's Vice President International Sales, Drew Sloan sees the same strong performance when he assesses 2018 data large dairies across North America. "Conception rates across all the technologies, including Semex's 777 SexedULTRA showed no significant difference," he notes.

Many producers consider the total number of sperm available in a straw when evaluating sexed semen. But that's only one factor that can impact conception rates. When it comes to sexed semen conception rates, Blondin says quality is more important than quantity. "For a lot of companies,

Sexed semen usage on dairies everywhere has grown exponentially in recent years, as producers look to optimize genetic progress by ensuring that their best cows produce heifer calves.

When producers choose to breed cows with Semex's 777 sexed semen they're making a significant financial and management investment, notes Dr. Patrick Blondin, Semex's Vice President of Reproductive Research.

"We want producers to have confidence in our 777 lineup and the SexedULTRA® technology we utilize," says Blondin. He adds that conception rates are the first key performance indicator producers typically consider when assessing sexed semen performance. "When I look at our internal data on 2018 conception rates for Semex's 777 SexedULTRA products (55,000 inseminations) there's no difference when we compare it to competitor products," says Blondin. "Over 12 months the conception rate is a very strong 48%. There are fluctuations, but it evens out during the course of a year – that's normal."

quality control is simply a case of putting more semen in the straw. However, there are many other important quality processes to consider."

"Semen quality is much more than a number," says Blondin. "It's important to choose bulls very carefully and to test the ability of the bulls to make high-quality sexed semen before releasing it to the marketplace. It's also critical to check conception rates in real time to ensure results in the field match laboratory expectations."

INVESTING IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

Two years ago, Semex established a new Quality Assurance Team to implement and execute standard operating procedures that ensures semen quality. Strict auditing procedures now govern all aspects of semen production at its facilities in Canada and worldwide.

Blondin explains that all genetics companies practice quality control, but Semex's Quality Assurance Team takes the commitment to quality to another level. "We really have a three-pronged approach that includes our research, quality control and Quality Assurance Team. They all work together to ensure we're always producing the most fertile product possible."

The Quality Assurance Team is responsible for the big picture, explains Blondin. "They'll take a look at a bull's production over a period of weeks, and if semen quality is trending toward the threshold, they'll investigate all aspects of bull management including nutrition and health, or any environmental parameters that could be impacting his performance. If the bull does not respond to management changes, they shut down semen production."

Tapping into the power of Semex's research department provides the Quality Assurance Team access to all available bull fertility information, adds Blondin. "They have updated and live data to make immediate decisions to either stop collecting semen from bulls or work to improve the semen to make sure it's more fertile."

STRAW TECHNOLOGY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Blondin notes that insemination equipment plays an important role in quality assurance. Semex uses zero absorption straws for its Semex sexed semen to ensure all sperm cells in every dose are available for insemination. "It's more expensive, but we think it's an important investment," says Blondin. He explains zero absorption straws contain presoaked cotton that ensures that sperm cells are not absorbed by dry cotton, which is typically found in straws used by competitors.

"Up to 10-15% of semen can be absorbed by dry cotton. With zero absorption straws, we can make sure that semen is available and contributing to higher conception rates," says Blondin.



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