

# Correct semen handling is critical to good conception rate



Careful semen handling techniques, such as raising the canister only into the neck of the tank, insures a good conception rate.

**UNIVERSITY PARK** — How much do you pay for a straw of semen? How many services are required to produce a pregnancy in your herd? What is the cost for each day open over 90 days for your dairy operation?

According to Michael O'Connor, Penn State Dairy Specialist, the average cost for days open is approximately \$2.

"Of course this cost will vary for each farm situation depending on

production losses, cost of additional service, fewer calves born, more replacements purchased and added veterinary costs," he explains.

O'Connor cautions poor semen handling can adversely affect conception rate and can contribute to increased days open. He recommends farmers who do their own breeding pay attention to detail and consider the following points:

✓ Use a reliable thermometer to prepare a water bath to the recommended temperature. Most AI organizations suggest warm water, 90-95 degrees Fahrenheit.

✓ Raise the canister into the neck region of the tank only as high as necessary to locate the correct cane. Thus the canister should be kept in the lower half of the neck region, this insures that the temperature of the remaining

(Turn to Page D13)

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