

Texas researcher introduces 'one-step' embryo freezing

SAN ANTONIO, Tx. — A major breakthrough development in the freezing of cattle embryos was announced recently by Rio Vista International, Inc. at the 8th Annual International Embryo Transfer Conference held at Denver's Regency Inn.

Albert West, III, chairman of Rio Vista, said that the new process is to be called the "Rio Vista One-Step".

West explained that the "One-Step" is a method by which bovine embryos, collected from valuable donor cows, are frozen individually in 1/4 cubic centimeter breeding straw, stored in liquid nitrogen and then at a later date thawed and transferred into recipient cows in a manner similar to that process currently used to breed cows by artificial insemination.

This means, West said, that embryos can now be used to breed cows with the same type of personnel and equipment involved in breeding by artificial insemination.

The potential of this process, developed by Dr. Stanley Leibo, head of research and development for Rio Vista, has major economic, as well as technological significance, West said. As with all successful freezing processes, the "Rio Vista One-Step" allows for indefinite storage of frozen embryos and for inexpensive transport of these embryos.

According to West, the "One-Step" is the first improvement in embryo transfer technology which has the potential to reduce the cost of the embryo transfer process.

"The process is designed to be 'goof-proof' because the embryo does not have to be handled or examined during the thawing stages, thereby eliminating the need for a trained embryologist with sophisticated equipment to be present at the time of transfer," West said. "Furthermore, the new process requires less than 25 percent of the time currently

needed to prepare frozen-thawed embryos for transfer."

A skilled artificial insemination technician, with some additional training and practice, will be able to perform successful embryo transfers. This should be essentially important, West noted, in importing and exporting of embryos to areas of the world where trained embryo transfer personnel are at a minimum.

Another benefit of the "One-Step" process is that it allows for embryos to be thawed individually as recipient cows become available, drastically reducing the size, cost, and management of recipient herds for embryo transfer.

West said that the service will be available from Rio Vista as soon as necessary production equipment is in place at the firm's San Antonio facility. He estimates that that will be March 15. The cost, he said, is expected to be similar to present charges for producing pregnancies from frozen embryos.

Rio Vista International of San Antonio is one of only 40 North American companies specializing in cattle embryo transfer and is generally acknowledged to be the leading commercial firm in this new area of animal husbandry. The firm is involved in all phases of cattle production.



A major breakthrough in freezing cattle embryos has been tagged the "Rio Vista One-Step". Embryos are frozen in 1/4 cubic centimeter breeding straw, stored in liquid nitrogen, later thawed and transferred to recipients.

N.Y. is added to list of states to import mares from CEM countries

WASHINGTON, D.C. — New York has been added to the list of states U.S. Department of Agriculture officials have approved to handle breeding age mares imported from countries affected by contagious equine metritis, a venereal disease of horses.

John K. Atwell, deputy administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said New York regulations meet federal requirements for quarantining, testing and treating mares from countries affected with the disease.

Other states currently approved to receive mares from countries affected with the disease are Kentucky and Virginia.

Under the USDA procedures, a mare over 731 days old can be imported from a country affected with the disease only after she

undergoes prescribed treatments there. If all tests are negative, she can be shipped to the United States for the normal port-of-entry quarantine and then consigned to a state designated by USDA to administer post-entry quarantine and additional precautionary treatment and tests."

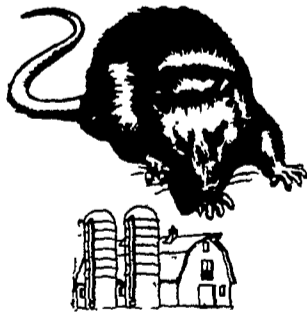
"As a designated state," Atwell said, "New York will hold imported mares in quarantine, provide precautionary treatment against the disease for five days and will then administer a series of three tests for the disease at least

seven days apart. If all tests are negative, mares will then be released from quarantine."

Pregnant mares must remain under quarantine until they foal, then both mare and foal must pass negative tests for the disease.



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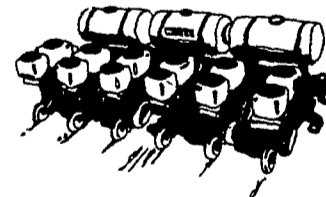
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