

Tips offered on using boar semen

ST. LOUIS, MO. — What do a styrofoam cooler and a 400-pound boar have in common? They both contain genetics that can be used by hog producers to improve the efficiency of their breeding stock.

Contained in the cooler is the latest genetic package offered by Kleen Leen, Inc., the swine breeding stock subsidiary of the Ralston Purina Co. David Cardin,

Kleen Leen president says, "For several years, we have advocated selective use of artificial insemination in the independently owned breeding herds that produce our crossbred gilts and boars. AI reduces the risk of disease when these herds are introducing new blood lines and genetics into their operations, and has proven so effective we decided to make the

semen available to the entire industry," he explains.

Kleen Leen semen is available in four lines. Hampshire, Yorkshire, Duroc and Landrace. Although the company offers crossbred gilts and boars, it maintains purebred herds to guarantee and improve the quality of lines in these crosses. Commercial semen is taken from the top 5 percent of the purebred boars at the Kleen Leen AI facility in Williamsburg, Ind.

The selection criteria for choosing boars to produce semen is the same used to select boars produced by the breeder herds. "Boar quality is rated by an index created by Kleen Leen, called the Genetic Potential Rating Index. This measure evaluates breeding stock on characteristics with high heritability which affect the value of producing a hog, including backfat, rate of gain, and feed efficiency," says Cardin. Semen marketed by Kleen Leen is from 130 or higher GPR boars.

Performance tests on this semen show that for a group of 109 matings sows had an average conception rate of 83.2 percent with AI and average litter size of 9.37 pigs born

alive. A larger group of 563 matings had a conception rate 6.4 percent below natural service rates and an average litter size of 9.32 pigs born alive.

According to Cardin, the slightly lower conception rates with AI are more than justified by the gain in disease prevention. "The use of AI to decrease the chance of introduction of disease is very important to the breeder herds. Should a hog producer producing stock for us fail to meet Kleen Leen's health standards, the producer is not allowed to sell animals through the company," he explains.

"The semen we ship is guaranteed to arrive within two days after collection to virtually any location within the hog belt," says Cardin. "Semen will be shipped in plastic containers packed in a styrofoam cooler to protect it against temperature extremes during transit. Delivery will be through either commercial courier or the post express mail services, and producers receiving semen that is more than two days old will not have to pay for the semen," Cardin states.

Until now problems with

freshness have combined with producer inexperience in the actual administration of boar semen have retarded the acceptance of artificial insemination. AI is used in less than 5 percent of all hog operations in this country. For producers lacking experience with AI, Dr. Cardin recommends the following:

- Use semen as soon as possible, within one to three days after receiving a shipment.
- Know when sows and gilts come into standing heat.
- Know how long they stay in heat — sows usually remain in heat longer than gilts.
- Inseminate gilts immediately after the onset of heat and again after 12 hours.
- Breed sows based on the number of hours they have been in heat and the planned number of inseminations. Kleen Leen provides a chart to cover six different combinations of heat schedules and breeding frequencies
- Inseminate sows in small pens that make control of the animals easier.
- Keep a boar nearby to help bring out the sow's gilt's breeding instincts.

Cooperative meeting

(Continued from Page D7)

part of the business meeting, but results will not be known until all meetings in each of the 16 districts are completed next week. Several districts, including District Four, hold more than one meeting.

Atlantic Director Clyde Martin, East Earl, discussed the financial challenges the cooperative faced in 1983, brought about in part because of the instability of the world economy and the strength of the U.S. dollar in comparison with other currencies.

Martin noted that more breeding units were sold in the member area in 1983 than in 1982. He added that breeding efficiency is up, and at an all time high, which is good for all dairymen. Martin said that with the Cooperative growing more of its own forages in the past year, feed costs for the bulls at the stud are more reasonable.

N. Alan Bair, director of

member services for the Cooperative, gave a slide presentation of the 1984 sire program, stressing the new genetic base change which is in effect for the first time this year. Bair pointed out the importance of comparing bulls using only data with the PD 82 information for accurate comparisons.

He also discussed the Cooperative's Linear Mate program, through which 100,000 cows have now been evaluated and had sire recommendations made. In addition to one full time evaluator, there are 10 Linear Mate specialists who serve on a part time basis.

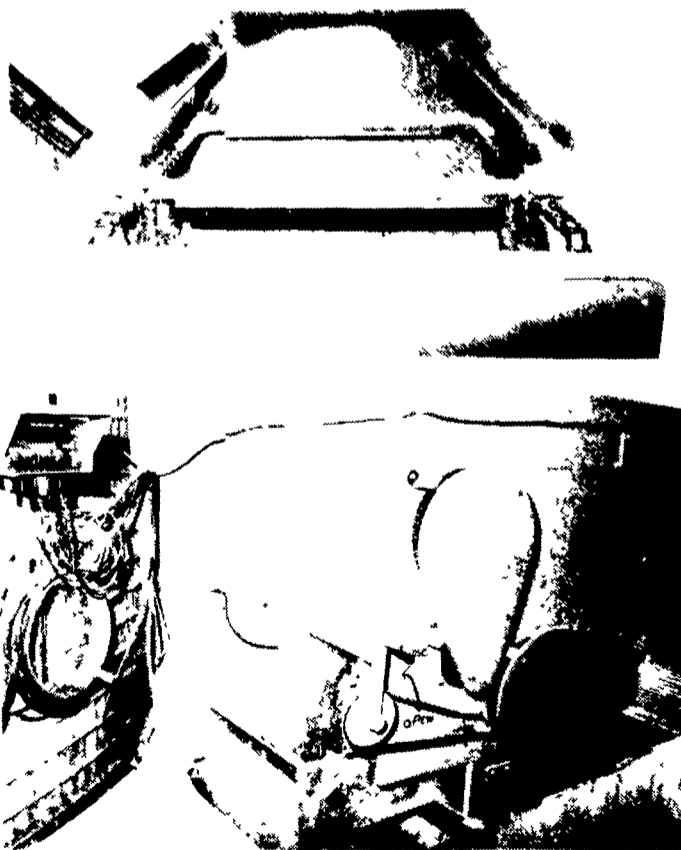
New sire proofs were also part of the presentation. Bair noted that the USDA data places Atlantic's sires well above the average in the AI industry, showing the genetic superiority of the sires available to members.

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