

Sexcel™ Success - Heifer Rearing

To maximise the best possible chance of success when using Sexcel, heifers should be settled, stress free and reared successfully to an optimal weight and body condition score.

1. Rearing management goals

- Complete any veterinary recommended preventative treatments such as vaccinations disease or anthelmintic treatments at least 4 weeks prior to breeding.
- Keep the heifer group in the same group and environment (breeding pen) for 6 weeks prior to and following breeding.
- Keep heifers on the same diet for the 6 weeks prior to and following breeding;
 - i. Increasing the nutritional value of the ration prior to breeding is advisable under the guidance of a nutritional consultant.
 - ii. Special attention to levels of copper, zinc, selenium, iodine and vitamins A and E are needed over the 12 week period before service.
- Avoid new heifers entering the group during the breeding period where possible.
- Reach 55-60% of target mature weight at start of planned breeding (330-360 kg for an animal expected to calve in at 600kg).
- At least 12 months of age.
- Target body condition score of 2.5-3.0 on the 1-5 BCS scale at service.
- Growth rates of 0.75-0.8kg/day are recommended for Holstein Friesians from birth to calving.
- Target 90% of mature weight at calving.

2. Breeding period

- Observe heifers for at least 3 weeks prior to breeding to ensure normal oestrous events are occurring.
 - i. Observing 2 natural heat events is best.
- If no oestrous is expressed prior to start of breeding or the heifer has not expressed oestrus within 4 weeks of eligibility for insemination, present to a veterinary for examination.
- Accurately identify heifers that are eligible for service.
- Best results are obtained when inseminating heifers following excellent heat detection accuracy.
- Use a safe and low stress handling facilities for restraining heifers for insemination.
- Retain heifers in the breeding group until 6 weeks post breeding and when confirmed pregnant.
- Accurately record the identification of the heifer inseminated and Sexcel product used.

