

CHAPTER 4.6.

GENERAL HYGIENE IN SEMEN COLLECTION AND PROCESSING CENTRES

Article 4.6.1.

General considerations

Observation of the recommendations described in the articles below will very significantly reduce the likelihood of the semen being contaminated with common micro-organisms some of which are potentially pathogenic.

Article 4.6.2.

Conditions applicable to artificial insemination centres

- 1) The *artificial insemination centre* is comprised of:
 - a) animal accommodation areas (including one isolation facility for sick animals) and a semen collection room, these two premises hereon designated as semen collection facilities; accommodation areas should be species specific where relevant;
 - b) a semen laboratory and semen storage areas;
 - c) administration offices;
 - d) a pre-entry isolation facility which is not compulsory in case of horses.
- 2) The centre should be under the direct supervision and control of a centre *veterinarian*.
- 3) Only animals associated with semen production should be permitted to enter the centre. Other species of livestock may exceptionally be resident on the centre, provided that they are kept physically apart from these animals.
- 4) Donors and teasers on the centre should be adequately isolated from farm livestock on adjacent land or buildings for instance by natural or artificial means.
- 5) The entry of visitors should be strictly controlled. Personnel at a centre should be technically competent and observe high standards of personal hygiene to preclude the introduction of pathogenic agents. Protective clothing and footwear for use only on the centre should be provided.
- 6) Individual semen containers and storage rooms should be capable of being disinfected.
- 7) The centre should be officially approved by the *Veterinary Authority*.
- 8) The centre should be under the supervision and control of the *Veterinary Services* which will be responsible for regular audits, at an interval of no more than 12 months, of protocols, procedures and records on the health and *welfare* of the animals in the centre and on the hygienic production, storage and dispatch of semen.

Article 4.6.3.

Conditions applicable to semen collection facilities

- 1) The semen collection facilities should include separate and distinct areas for accommodating resident animals, for semen collection, for *feed* storage, for manure storage, and for the isolation of animals suspected of being infected.
- 2) Only animals associated with semen production should be permitted to enter the semen collection facilities. Other species of animals may be resident at the centre, if necessary for the movement or handling of the donors and teasers or for security, but contact with the donors and teasers should be minimised. All animals resident at the semen collection facilities should meet the minimum health requirements for donors.
- 3) The donors and teasers should be adequately isolated to prevent the transmission of diseases from farm livestock and other animals. Measures should be in place to prevent the entry of *wild animals* susceptible to ruminant and swine diseases transmissible via semen.
- 4) Personnel at the centre should be technically competent and observe high standards of personal hygiene to preclude the introduction of pathogenic agents. Special protective clothing and footwear for use only at the semen collection facilities should be provided and worn at all times inside.

- 5) Visitors to the semen collection facilities should be kept to a minimum, and visits should be subject to formal authorisation and control. Equipment for use with the livestock should be dedicated to the semen collection facilities or disinfected prior to entry. All equipment and tools brought on to the premises should be examined and treated if necessary to ensure that they cannot introduce disease.
- 6) *Vehicles* used for transport of animals to and from the semen collection facilities should not be allowed to enter the facilities.
- 7) The semen collection area should be cleaned daily after collection. The animals' accommodation should be kept clean.
- 8) Fodder introduction and manure removal should be done in a manner which poses no significant animal health risk.

Article 4.6.4.

Conditions applicable to semen laboratories

- 1) The semen laboratory should be physically separated from the semen collection facilities, and include separate areas for artificial vagina cleaning and preparation, semen evaluation and processing, semen pre-storage and storage. Entry to the laboratory should be prohibited to unauthorised personnel.
- 2) The laboratory personnel should be technically competent and observe high standards of personal hygiene to preclude the introduction of pathogenic agents during semen evaluation, processing and storage.
- 3) Visitors to the laboratory should be kept to a minimum, and visits should be subject to formal authorisation and control.
- 4) The laboratory should be constructed with materials that permit effective cleaning and *disinfection*.
- 5) The laboratory should be regularly cleaned. Work surfaces for semen evaluation and processing should be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each workday.
- 6) The laboratory should be treated against rodents and insects on a regular basis as needed to control these pests.
- 7) The storage rooms and individual semen containers should be easy to clean and disinfect.
- 8) Only semen collected from donors having a health status equivalent to or better than the donors at the semen collection facilities should be processed in the laboratory.

Article 4.6.5.

Conditions applicable to the management of bulls, rams, bucks and boars

The objective is to keep the animals in a satisfactory state of cleanliness, particularly of the lower thorax and abdomen.

- 1) Whether on pasture or housed, the animal should be kept under hygienic conditions. If housed, the litter should be kept clean and renewed as often as necessary.
- 2) The coat of the animal should be kept clean.
- 3) For bulls, the tuft of hairs at the preputial orifice, which is often soiled, should be cut to about 2 cm. The hair should not be removed altogether, because of its protective role. If cut too short, irritation of the preputial mucosa may result because these hairs aid the drainage of urine.
- 4) The animal should be brushed regularly, and where necessary on the day before semen collection, paying special attention to the underside of the abdomen.
- 5) In the event of obvious soiling, there should be careful cleaning, with soap or a detergent, of the preputial orifice and the adjoining areas, followed by thorough rinsing and drying.
- 6) When the animal is brought into the collection area, the technician should make sure that it is clean, and that it is not carrying any excessive litter or particles of *feed* on its body or its hooves.

NB: FIRST ADOPTED IN 1986; MOST RECENT UPDATE ADOPTED IN 2010.