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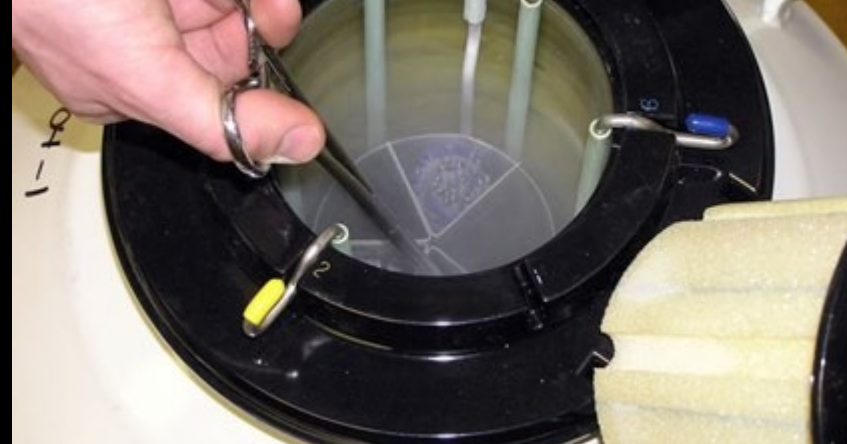
Questions to Ask Before Breeding With Frozen Semen

Frozen semen offers many advantages to mare owners, but it is important to understand that not all frozen semen is the same.

Breeders can achieve excellent results with frozen semen if the semen is of good quality; is provided in adequate numbers; and has been processed, stored, and shipped properly. All too often, however, mare owners and veterinarians are disappointed with the results they obtain with frozen semen that might not have been processed properly or was distributed without adhering to strict quality control standards.

The best way for a mare owner to ensure success is to breed to a stallion whose owner or agent is willing to stand behind the product and offer a pregnancy guarantee, just like they would with cooled semen or live cover. If a guarantee isn't available, ensure that a reputable, professional laboratory collected and froze the semen and that you can obtain objective information about the semen quality.

Here are some important questions to ask the stallion owner or semen agent before you sign a contract:



Ensure that a reputable, professional laboratory collected and froze the semen.

Photo: Courtesy Sandro Barbacini, DVM

What are the terms of the contract?

- Is there any guarantee of pregnancy or semen quality?
- How many doses of semen will I get per cycle, per year, and per contract?

Where was the semen frozen?

What is the typical post-thaw semen quality for this stallion?

- How was it measured?
- Who performed the post-thaw evaluation?
- Can I get a copy of the report?

Do you have any fertility data for this stallion's frozen semen?

- What is the stallion's percent pregnant per cycle and per season?

What does a "dose" of semen consist of?

- How many straws and what size straws?
- How many sperm per dose?
- How many progressively motile sperm/dose?

What health testing was done on the stallion before the semen was frozen?

- Was he tested for equine viral arteritis and contagious equine metritis?
- Is the semen cultured free from mare pathogens?



Be sure your veterinarian has adequate doses of good quality frozen semen to inseminate your mare with.

Photo: Courtesy Sandro Barbacini, DVM

What happens if my veterinarian says the semen quality is bad?

What is the procedure for ordering semen?

- How much notice is required?
- Does my vet need to have a storage tank?
- How long can we keep the shipper?

What if I have doses left over?

The bottom line is that you want to deal with a stallion owner or semen agent that shares your common goal of producing a healthy foal at a reasonable cost. Remember fertility is equally dependent upon the stallion and the mare's fertility and your best chances for success are achieved by working with a team of experienced professionals. Select a good reproductive veterinarian to manage your mare's inseminations and ensure that you provide him or her with adequate doses of good quality frozen semen by getting satisfactory answers to the above questions.