

Vol. 34 No. 318

July 2020

Timed AI programs, not just for cows

Many of you are already familiar with the use of OVSYNCH and other timed artificial insemination (TAI) protocols in adult dairy cows. These programs are used on most dairies to some capacity to ensure all cows are bred in a timely matter with a reasonable opportunity for conception. Heifers on the other hand, are mostly bred based on naturally occurring heats or heats brought on by prostaglandin injection (estrumate, lutalyse). This makes sense since heifers tend to show much stronger heats than lactating cows and have much higher conception rates. Breeding heifers off natural heats may be all that is needed for farms with good heat detection. However, like cows, replacement heifers can also benefit from TAI protocols.

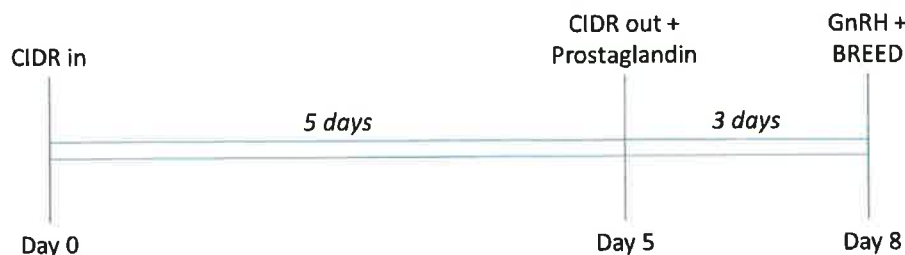
Reasons to use TAI in heifers

1. Ineffective heat detection on farm (insemination rate below 70%)
2. Inconvenience to detect estrus on farm
3. Inadequate facilities
4. Replacement heifer facility far away from main farm
5. Cleanup program for heifers not bred by a certain age

So, what are our options?

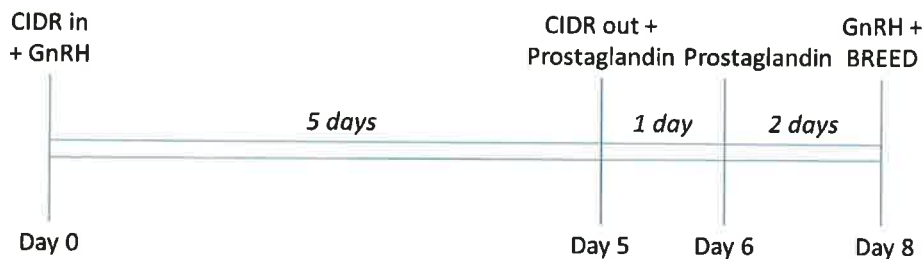
Here are a few things to consider. Heifers have 3 follicular waves in their estrus cycle vs lactating dairy cows which typically only have 2. This means that when GnRH (fertiline, 1st shot in OVSYNCH) is given to a heifer she is more likely to be at the beginning of a new follicular wave and is less likely to synchronize to the program. This also means heifers are more likely to express estrus before the program is complete. Long story short, for a TAI program to be effective in heifers, it must be designed to be shorter than a dairy cow program and be supplemented with exogenous progesterone to take control of the heifer cycle. For this reason, studies have shown that traditional OVSYNCH is typically not effective for TAI in heifers (but we do have some herds doing this that seem to be an exception). An 8-day Heifer CIDR OVSYNCH program (sometimes called CIDR COSYNCH) has been designed to achieve this.

HEIFER CIDR OVSYNCH – 1



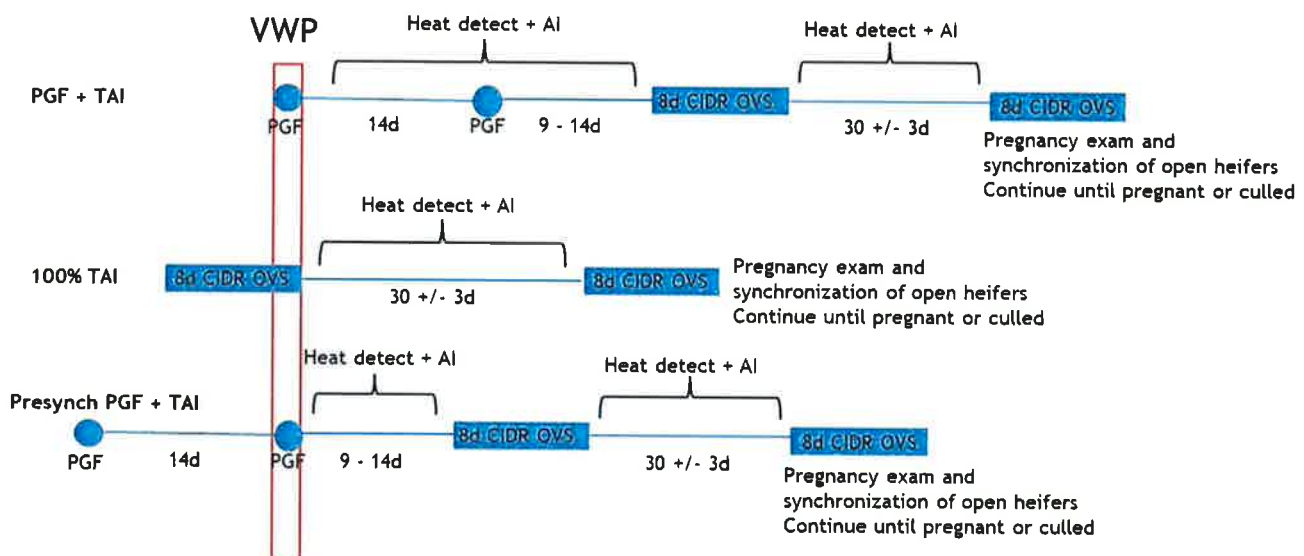
The CIDR ensures high progesterone levels before the prostaglandin injection. Expected conception rates with the above program should be 50-55%.

HEIFER CIDR OVSYNCH – 2



Here is a modified version of the program. A GnRH injection is given when the CIDR is inserted to ensure follicular growth and the presence of a dominant follicle at the time of prostaglandin injection. This may also result in the development of a young corpus luteum (CL) by the time of CIDR removal which will require an additional prostaglandin injection given 24hrs after the first to make sure this CL regresses and progesterone drops in time for breeding. If you give the first GnRH you **must** give the second prostaglandin otherwise you can actually hurt your conception rate. Expected conception rate is 50-65%. The only real disadvantage is having to catch the heifer an extra time for the second prostaglandin injection.

Ok, so now let's look at a few basic options on how to use the heifer CIDR OVSYNCH in the repro program



VWP (voluntary waiting period) is the age when heifers become eligible to breed, 395 days is common.

The first option, PGF (prostaglandin) + TAI, utilizes prostaglandin injections to induce heat in heifers. Should expect approximately 70% of heifers to show heat shortly after the first injection and 90% after the second. Any heifer that is still not bred gets enrolled in the TAI program. A reproductive exam of these stragglers is probably not a bad idea either, to make sure they are reproductively normal.

100% TAI is as it sounds. Heifers receive TAI to be bred at the start of the VWP. If they happen to be observed in heat before pregnancy exam, they get rebred. Open heifers are reenrolled.

The Presynch PGF + TAI is a modification of the first program where the first prostaglandin injection is given before the VWP and heat detection and breeding starts after the second injection. This program is designed to tighten the window that all heifers are bred relative to the voluntary waiting period to increase reproductive efficiency.

Of course, there are other options utilizing Heifer CIDR OVSYNCH that can be customised to meet your needs. Talk to your veterinarian to see what the best options are for you.

Thomas Veens DVM



LISTOWEL
#8451 Road 164
Listowel, ON N4W 3G6
1.800.565.2047
T 519.291.2060
F 519.418.2065
E ldclinic@heartlandvets.ca

MOUNT FOREST
322 Main Street, N.
Mount Forest, ON N0G 2L2
1.877.523.4422
T 519.323.4422
F 519.323.4334
E mfclinic@heartlandvets.ca

Holiday Office Hours

Our staff has been dedicated to continuing to provide service and care to our clients and their pets/animals. In an effort to show our appreciation and to give our staff a much-deserved break and opportunity to recharge we will be closing our offices on the Saturday of the next 3 public holiday weekends. The Saturday's that will be affected will be the Civic Holiday (Saturday August 1), Labour Day (Saturday September 5), and Thanksgiving (Saturday October 10). As always, we will continue to provide 24-hour emergency services for our clients. In the event of an emergency please contact us at 1-800-565-2047. On behalf of the partners and staff at Heartland Animal Hospital & Veterinary Services, we would like to thank you for your business and continued support.

Veterinary Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Much has changed with the alarming presence of the COVID-19 virus in Ontario. During this time, it is important that we maintain a safe food supply. Our veterinarians will continue to play a role in animal health, welfare, and food safety. At the time of this writing, we are still providing herd health and emergency service. In response to the pandemic, our clinic is taking many precautions to ensure everyone's safety. We care very much about the health and wellbeing of our clients, staff, families and community. Below are some of the changes we have implemented. Please be aware that as this pandemic develops, we may have to adjust our procedures in response.

Veterinary farm visits

- Vets will be contacting farmers before our arrival to the farm to assess the level of risk, the comfort of both parties and to clarify our expectations for social distancing
- Once on farm, we will be wearing gloves during the visit and try to maintain a distance from people of at least six feet wherever practically possible
- Care will be taken to wash and disinfect hands and contacted tools and equipment before re-entering our vehicle

Technician farm visits

- Techs will continue to assist veterinarians as necessary. The same precautions as above will apply
- Technicians will continue to provide services, such as dehorning, but we ask that no farm personnel are in the immediate vicinity during their visit

Clinic procedures

- Our clinic will remain open, but business hours may be subject to change
- Clients will be met at the door by one of our customer care representatives
- Purchases will be set out at the door
- Laboratory samples will be received at the door

We thank you for assistance in helping us continue to provide veterinary care while considering the health of yourselves and our staff.

Stay healthy!

