

# **BAY CITY VETERINARY CLINIC**

“Because We Care”

## **Equine Artificial Insemination**

We are proud to offer Artificial Insemination (AI) here at Bay City Veterinary Clinic, and we would like to thank you for selecting us to assist you in your breeding program. The ability to ship cooled semen makes it possible for breeders to arrange matings that might otherwise be impractical due to location, and allows mare owners to consider the selection of superior performance stallions. Transporting mares and foals can be stressful and costly, and foals are particularly vulnerable to disease and injury. AI may also have other cost saving benefits (board, mare care, etc.), though these benefits may be offset by the increased management costs, shipping charges and ultrasound fees for AI. If you are planning to raise a registered foal, be sure to check the corresponding association's rules regarding semen transport in advance; not every breed registry permits the use of transported semen.

Prior to breeding season, we recommend that your mare be in good physical condition, fully vaccinated and worm free. We also recommend a pre-breeding exam, which should include palpating the mare to examine her reproductive tract, and obtaining a specimen from the mare to be cultured to determine if any infection/irregularities are present. This should be done 30 days prior to breeding. If infection is present, we can perform daily uterine flushes for three days and re-culture. At this time, you will also need to make your stallion selection and contact the stallion owner to find out what days they actually collect semen from their stud. This is very important when trying to orchestrate the insemination with the optimal timing of the mare's heat cycle.

Once your mare has been found to be in good breeding condition, the next step is to determine where the mare is on her breeding cycle. A mare cycles every 21 days. The first 14 days are building follicles toward ovulation. The next 4-7 days are when the mare is actually “in heat” and ready to breed. You will need to observe the mare closely and to mark these days on your calendar when you observe signs of “horsing” (raising her tail, urinating frequently, squeeling, a winking vulva). On about the 14<sup>th</sup> day of her cycle, we will ultrasound her to determine if follicles are developing and we will determine what date she will likely ovulate. Once she is determined to have mature follicles, you will order the semen to be shipped for delivery the following day. After receiving the semen, it will be tested for content and motility. We will then proceed with inseminating the mare. After insemination, she can go home, but she will need to return in 15-16 days for an ultrasound to determine pregnancy and to rule out the possibility of twins.