

A SIMPLE ORGANIZED APPROACH TO EQUINE BREEDING

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The purpose of this paper is to provide an outline of steps that, if followed, will maximize successful conception of pregnancy for the equine breeder. Regardless of how many mares an owner or manager plans to breed, Establishment of an organized mare selection and management program is the first step towards success.

BREEDING PREPARATION CHECKLIST:

The suggested timeframe in the article below was designed to facilitate early foaling but the outlined process can be begun at any time.

<http://www.harrisequinedvm.com/pdfs/foaling/preparing.pdf>

The above schedule is a starting point for discussion of getting mares ready to breed. Older mares or mares with a prior history of breeding failure are more challenging and more labor intensive which usually equals more management and veterinary costs.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1) **HISTORY:** Has the mare foaled previously? Any lost foals? Any breedings that failed to conceive or carry? Any difficult births?
- 2) **BASIC HEALTH:** Physical exam. Lab values: CBC/chemistries/thyroid. Uterine palpation or ultrasound. Consider biopsy if Indicated by history or exam.
- 3) **STALLION:** Choose a stallion for all the right reasons but if the mare is older sub-fertile for any reason choose a stallion that has good semen quality. In the case of shipped or frozen semen choose a stallion that either ships or thaws well.
- 4) **TEASING CHART:** The most efficient way to track a mare's heat cycle is still with a stallion. The mare's behavior tells a story that cannot be heard any other way. A mare can be followed using ultrasound or palpation but these methods add extra veterinary and management expense and do not allow for the fertility stimulation that teasing provides. If a stallion is not available where the mare is stabled some gelding are good for teasing or a stallion might be brought in short-term. Miniature stallions make safe

tease stallions on farms that are unaccustomed to working with stallions. Or, it might be worthwhile to investigate transfer of the mare to a facility with the capability of monitoring the mare's reproductive cycle.

5) ORGANIZATION: The key to success when breeding mares are organization and communication between the mare owner and manager and the stallion manager and the veterinarian.

6) INVOLVED COSTS FOR VETERINARY SERVICES DISCUSSED ABOVE:

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