

# Artificial Insemination in Cold Weather

COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION  
SERVICE



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We must take special precautions in handling bull semen during the cold weather. Exposing semen to the cold results in cold shock which damages sperm cells and reduces fertility. Cold shock occurs when semen is thawed and then subjected to cold environmental temperatures before being deposited in the cow or heifer.

Here are some precautions to take to minimize cold shock:

1. Make sure the animal to be inseminated is caught before the semen is thawed.
2. Minimize the distance between where the semen is thawed and where the animal is inseminated.
3. The semen should be thawed and handled in a warm room.
4. Before the straw is placed in the insemination gun warm the insemination gun by rubbing it briskly with a paper towel.
5. Wrap the assembled insemination rod in a clean paper towel and tuck it in your clothing close to your body to keep it warm during transport to the animal.