

STUD SERVICE — FROZEN OR FRESH - CHILLED ? ? ?

Sounds a little like ordering orange juice, doesn't it? It is probably more a thing of the future, but it is here now, in fact and is happening in a few instances. I have had inquiries about it myself, and I know of at least one NMDC member who has had it done for her own use and others who have inquired about it for their own studs.

One purpose of having semen frozen is to preserve semen in long-term storage for your own future use from a stud that has qualities you consider to be irreplaceable and important to your breeding program or to the breed in general. Once frozen, semen lasts indefinitely -- researchers say as long as 10,000 years. (Think of the storage fees!) One of the drawbacks to this is that they want studs that are from 2-4 years of age for best results and our studs tend to be much older than that when we realize their value (generally by the quality of their offspring).

Frozen semen can be shipped to the bitch instead of shipping her to the stud and her being boarded at the stud owners for several days. Fresh-chilled semen can also be shipped by Air Express but timing is very important and must be well-coordinated on both ends with the time she is ready to be bred. Each breeding must be a separate shipment, as one entire ejaculation is used for each breeding and cannot be split and kept on refrigeration as sperm lasts longer inside the bitch than it does in the refrigerator. (Length of time inside the bitch is generally considered to be approximately 36 hrs.).

Another problem is the cost and availability of facilities. Besides the stud fee due the stud owner, the stud owner and stud must be ready to go to a certain vet trained in the procedure at the right time; it would involve at least two trips. The owner of the bitch would probably need to go at least four times to a different facility. These laboratories and trained veterinarians are few are far between at present. The only ones I know of are in Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Santa Rosa, CA, although there may be others. I think there is one in Texas somewhere. The owner of the bitch generally pays these extra charges.

Add to this the added uncertainty of a litter (odds are admittedly not as great as in natural breedings), the additional paperwork (AIs need to be certified to the AKC). and the additional time spent, it seems to me that it will be awhile until this is a routinely accepted practice!

However, if you desire additional information, you can contact:

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