

Detection Mating Area (DMA)

Remember: For a task to be readily performed and performed well, it has to be easy to do!

1 Situate the detection mating area (DMA) close to the weaned sow area/gilt service area, but do not allow constant boar contact or chance boar contact when moving the sows into the area. Boar contact has to be controlled.

2 Preferably have either a single or pair of boars dedicated to one insemination/detection pen; this will prevent the boar(s) from becoming distracted from the sows adjacent to them.

3 If the sows are brought to the DMA in a large group, ensure that no boar contact is available to them whilst waiting in the holding area. You do not want to see any standing reflexes here.

4 Decide what AI system best suits your facility i.e.

- Small pens for detection, insemination and post AI rest
- Small pens for both detection and inseminations and larger pen post AI
- Small pens for detection and insemination and moved to sow stalls post AI
- Small pens for detection, insemination in sow stall and leave post AI

Do not try to detect for signs of heat in sows when in stalls

5 Whatever the system, the principles are the same: -

- No boar contact before heat detection/insemination
- Pre-AI, in holding area/pens – no boar contact
- Detection/insemination area - boar contact with active, 'chatty' boars
- Post-AI area and boar contact – sufficient space for 15-30 minutes rest

6 Ensure that within the DMA all the partitions and gates are in good condition and good working order. Provide an area for semen storage, AI equipment, recording materials and rubbish collection. Provide a radio to help with operator boredom and monitor operator fatigue. Reduced results have been recorded where operators do more than 15 consecutive inseminations. Have short breaks or rotate jobs.