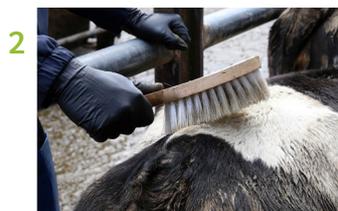


SCRATCH CARDS



Scratch cards are an excellent method of heat detection in both cows and heifers when cattle are outdoors and rumps clean. They are also extremely useful when the number of animals coming into heat is reduced - as the season progresses. The scratch cards shown here in the picture 'Estrus Detect' are superior to the previous self-adhesive cards, as they stay much better and are not scratched as easily and are easier to read.

1. Apply scratch cards to dry hair on a dry day otherwise the glue will not adhere. Watch the forecast. Cost of a roll of 100 cards is €55 and a can of glue €20. 75c per card applied. Wear gloves to avoid glue on hands.
2. Do not clip, glue needs hair for adherence, just comb or brush, to remove loose hair and dirt. Loose hair is shed easily in the spring and will take the scratch card with it when shed.
3. Layout the number of cards corresponding to the number of heifers in the crush in a clean dry non-windy and dust free area and spray with glue. Dust sticking to the card reduces the adhesiveness of the glue. Ensure to cover the entire card to the edges of the cards.
4. Spray cleaned brushed rump area in an east to west direction where the card is to be applied, across the back bone.
5. Patience required now until the first card gets tacky. Wait ... When tacky it will stick to your glove and not fall to the ground.
6. Apply the card to the sprayed area- East to West.
7. Secure in place by applying gentle pressure especially at the edges.
- 7a. Card properly applied.
8. Heifer in heat, grey rubbed off and red exposed. Can also get green and yellow cards.
9. Lot of mounting, grey and red rubbed off, white exposed and edges curled from mounting.
10. In narrow heifers the complete card may not be rubbed red, just the entire centre area. As the mounting heifers body did not touch the edges of the card.
11. Get heifers into the yard each day and check scratch cards.
12. As heifers are being A I'd, cut the hair off the tails. Long tails are those yet to be inseminated.

TOP TIPS

Watch the forecast for a perfectly dry day to apply the cards.

Patience - Wait till the 1st card is tacky before application - It will stick to your glove.

Reapply the cards the day after being inseminated. Can reapply the card over the existing card if it is well adhered.

On the day of insemination put a band of tail paint or a crayon mark on the cows or heifers back that will not be rubbed off by mounting. This will indicate the animals that have been served and will avoid drafting them the following morning for insemination. One day repeats may reduce conception rates.