

Compliments and confirmation of ASIC's process after 10 month's use at Maple Creek Lane, LLC

We have been using the Absolute catheter since February of 2007. I feel very fortunate that we discovered this technology while we were starting up our 2700 head sow herd. There were only two of us to heat check over 1200 gilts a day in a less than ideal setting. The off site breeding unit was a remodeled outdated pen gestation sow farm, so there were many challenges we had to overcome without sacrificing production.

The **use of the Absolute catheter gave us that ability to manage our time and meet our production goals.** We could focus the majority of our time on heat detection; knowing that the insemination itself would only take minutes and not hours.

We are now at our permanent site and I really can't say enough about the Absolute catheter and ASIC's support staff. The training and support ASIC provides for this technology is second to none; from the on site hands on training to the availability of staff for questions.

The Absolute catheter has performed in the manner in which it was designed. Our overall farm production has benefited greatly from the use of the Absolute catheter. There are two of us still running the entire breeding department; we have staffed the other budgeted technician in farrowing so that we can have someone taking care of pigs all day. This would not be possible if we were using traditional AI methods as we would need that 3rd technician for the breeding department. Two of us can have everything heat checked and bred in about 1-1 1/2 hours or less. Our born live has been at a strong 12-12.5 on average on our P2 sows; it is also not uncommon to see sows have 15, 16, 17 or even 20+ pigs born alive.

The Absolute catheter plays a significant role in our daily operations and I feel by utilizing this technology it will continue to maximize our production and focus more attention on baby pig care. Thank you for this amazing product it truly has surpassed all of my expectations. Feel free to give out my email address to anyone who has questions or just wants to hear more how I feel about the Absolute catheter. Last quarter we farrowed 89.46%; I want to be above 90% this quarter and hopefully hang around 91-92% permanently.

**Kyle Thomas
Site Manager
Maple Creek Lane LLC
maplecreek@zumatel.net**

Original expectations and goals are listed below...

Dr. Aljets this is something I wanted to put together so that everyone has all of the information needed to make an educated decision. I know that the initial cost of the Absolute Catheter is nothing short of shocking compared to that of a traditional foam catheter. With that said; I think we have a few interesting points to look at in our situation of being in the start-up stage.

The benefits that I see going with the Absolute Catheter from a labor budget stand point is that you wouldn't have to fill that assistant breeding position. You are talking about one less salary, one less person to pay bonus, insurance benefit, potential work comp claims, etc. We could run day to day operations with 5 1/2 to 6 employees. On the breeding side 2 of us would be able to do more in one day than a farm fully staffed with 1 quality person and 2 average people using traditional catheters.

I am picturing TWICE a day heat checking on gilts/sows, having time to introduce boars at 140-150

days of age, identifying and recording heat cycles to maximize herd longevity. This means that all gilts will get daily controlled boar exposure. To me the most important thing is heat detection. It is something that takes a lot of experience and TIME. I think that in this industry we somewhat rush through heat checking, not allowing enough time for the female to get adequate exposure. I think that people know in the back of their minds that breeding is going to take up the majority of the day, and lets be honest, sometimes it's a lot of waiting around (never fun). This is where I will toot our own horns a little. My take on the subject is that you can teach a monkey to AI a sow. I would like to take advantage of our breeding experience and willingness to do things the way they should be done with allowing us use the majority of our time doing the things that will get us to that 94% farrow rate and 28 P/S/Y, the things I described above.

From experience at BP we found that it takes on average of 30-40 seconds/gilt for insemination. That is from the time the first catheter is inserted to the last one is taken out. Currently we are spending a lot of quality time heat checking, which is great, but then we know that we have to give adequate time for those gilts to go into refractory, move them into snake, have some down time (about 1 hour) and reintroduce a boar, put belts on and spend about 1-1 1/2 hours just inseminating. This is where I think we can maximize efficiency. By cutting down on insemination time drastically, getting more semen where it needs to be; cutting down on that "weekend" drop off in production, and getting the full genetic potential out of these females. I am confident that we could accomplish many of the highest goals that the industry has set forth for the future of production. I really don't think that a 94% Farrowing rate or 28-29 P/S/Y would be that far out of our reach with utilizing this new technology once we realized the maximum potential of this product.

I think that we have had a lot of success with these catheters at BP. Except for that one group that was moved during implantation and was a struggle to put on the trailer, our conception rates are in the 90%. If you would have told be that we'd be preg testing at 90% breeding at BP and transporting pregnant gilts I might have chuckled a little.

The following spread sheets are from the ASIC CD-Rom. I kept out labor budgets because it called for hourly wages and since we are salary I didn't think that would be of benefit to you. Some of these numbers I entered might be a little off such as some of the costs (pig profit, Daily costs/animal, and semen costs...since I am not quite sure the actual number). I played with some numbers. Page 1 is if we did 90% and 11.5 BL normally. Then in the EXPECTATIONS I changed the farrow rate only 1/2 % to 90.5 and born live 1/2 pig to 12. The results show a potential profit of \$80,656 in production only (not putting into account that breeding assistant salary). Page 2 is if we did 90% and 11.5 BL normally. Then in the EXPECTATIONS I changed the farrow rate 2% to 92% and the born live 1 pig to 12.5. I think these expectations are on the modest side. The results show a potential profit of \$194,987 in production only (again not putting into account that breeding assistant salary) I also used \$1.00 for catheter cost, I am sure that would be lower. I know I gave Matt a copy of this disc, so if you have a chance to take a look it has some pretty good information. I have also included some trial information that I was able to find.

I hope that you realize that I am presenting this information in the best interest of production and ultimately your bottom line. I am sure some might think that this is an attempt to make our day "easier" or allow us to work shorter days. To them I say "You must not know the person I am or want I want to accomplish with VMC Management, or in my career." The purpose of putting this packet together was to just get this information in front of you because I know you are very busy and because ultimately it is your decision. I am very curious to see what we can do with these catheters here at Maple Creek Lane. I am fine with whatever decision you reach, but I would still just ask to try them again for one week. I hope that you know that I am very very dedicated to my new position and I want to blow the doors off of these records. I would also like to thank you again for this opportunity you have entrusted in me. I look forward to working with you for years to come. Thank you again for your time.

Respectfully yours,

Kyle Thomas
Maple Creek Lane LLC