

Managing Males - Hot Weather Breeding

Hot weather takes a toll on all animals, but especially the male breeding dog. Hot weather breeding is never a sure thing and can be one of the toughest management times in the kennel. With proper managing you can increase the fertility of your breeding males.

Influences on Fertility:

Season of the year - Research tells us the season of the year does have an effect on concentration of sperm per ejaculate. Increases in concentration occurs in Spring/Early Summer and lower concentration in Late Summer/Fall (Tahs, 1981). Sperm concentration is also thought to be influenced by the length of the day and the environmental temperature. It is possible to control both and have a breeding male that is fertile and can settle females any time of the year.



Temperature control - The breeding male housed outside is sensitive to hot weather as is the semen quality he is producing. When outside temp approaches 102° Fahrenheit – normal body temp – male fertility can suffer. Over 105° Fahrenheit and males can be subfertile or infertile if overheating happens. The issue with the testicle is the stored sperm in the epididymis - (storage at the bottom of testicle) – if it gets too hot the sperm stored for fertilizing ova dies and the sperm replacement can take 60 days. Water misters over the kennel with shade have been used effectively to lower the environmental temp by as much as 10° Fahrenheit. With these applications you can set up timers for the hottest parts of the day, usually the afternoon hours. If you have an air-conditioned kennel, keep males inside and don't allow outside access during the hot times of day. Breed when it cools down in the evening or early morning is even better.

Frequency of use - Physical activity and breeding will increase body temp but we can limit the effect with management. Research done on frequency of use found healthy stud dogs can breed once daily without affecting fertility. Hot weather breeding can be a completely different situation. It is important to never pen breed in hot weather, leaving male with female all day and night. Put the females with the male and remove after the tie to limit the temperature influence and keep sperm numbers per breeding high.

Male Fertility Supplements:

- **L-Carnitine** plays a vital role in the process of sperm development, in promoting proper maturation, and morphology of sperm. It also has a role in ensuring the maintenance of sperm quality and vitality.

- [Vitamins A, C, E, and Selenium](#) are important vitamins and cleansing antioxidants that play a key role in repairing damage caused by the environment and aging.
- [Grape Seed Extract](#) scours damaging free-radicals from your system and literally prevents “rusting” of tissues and cells of the testicle.
- [Zinc](#) has been shown to have a positive effect on sperm formation, sperm motility, and testosterone metabolism.
- [Vitamins - B6, B12 and Folate](#) are vitamins critical to male reproductive health.
- [Vitamin D](#) has been shown to increase sperm motility and needed if males are primarily housed inside.

These are the vitamins, minerals, and herbs found through research to be helpful in mammals for maximum fertility.

Supplement for fertility:

The number of live sperm and limited number of abnormal sperm closely correlates a male’s ability to settle females. [Breeders’ Edge® Oxy-Stud™](#) has all the above requirements and is used to improve sperm volume and count. Heat decreases viability of sperm when sperm count naturally goes down in late summer and fall lowering your stud dog’s fertility. By supplementing Oxy-Stud™ we maintain high sperm numbers to decrease the influence of heat on quality and is best to start 30 days before for best results.

When you properly manage your breeding males during hot weather you will greatly increase your chances of putting consistent puppies on the ground.

-Dr. B

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