

Scientifically based Pigeon Health Programs will optimize your breeding season

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Introduction

The success of a show pigeon fancier's next season hugely depends on raising perfectly healthy babies. Although genetics, nutrition, and husbandry are critical, no sick or weak babies can be expected to grow into a champion show pigeon. Many sub-clinical carrier diseases may be transmitted from stock birds to babies, so it is also mandatory to ensure that the breeding stock is cleared of these diseases before breeding commences. The breeding season is a highly stressful time for pigeons, and this stress will often re-activate low-grade slumbering carrier diseases that were not evident before. If you breed healthy babies, they will become healthy champion pigeons, and when placed back into stock, they will have a far better chance of breeding healthy babies of their own. It is thus clear that now is the time to prepare for breeding next year's champion.

When compiling a Breeding season Health program, it is essential to divide the programs into a Pre-Breeding and a Breeding program. During the Pre-Breeding program the stock pigeons are treated to eradicate the carrier diseases and are vaccinated correctly so that they transfer the optimal immunity against diseases to their youngsters. This will protect the youngsters during the critical time of weaning and ensure they do not pick up any diseases from their parents. During the Pre-Breeding program, the fanciers must use the correct Nutraceuticals and Supplements to stimulate their fertility and immunity, activate the thyroid gland, and provide energy and vigor. These supplements should be formulated explicitly for pigeons and should supply all the trace elements, vitamins, and minerals that ensure perfect eggshell formation and growth of babies. Lastly, breeding pigeons should also be supplied with an excellent Probiotic and Pre-biotic supplement that will ensure optimal digestion and prevent overgrowth of Candida and pathogenic bad bacteria such as Salmonella and E. coli. These supplements should be started 6 weeks before the coupling and continued for the full breeding season.

Nutraceuticals and Supplements for the prevention of disease

Stimulating the fertility:

Fertility in show pigeons is often sub-normal. This is partly due to the anatomical build of certain breeds that is not conducive to effective coupling. Traditionally, Fancy pigeons have also not been genetically selected for optimal fertility, and due to small gene pools, inbreeding is often found. Deficiencies of certain vitamins, minerals, and trace elements also

play a vital role. It has been well established that the grains grown in modern times lack certain nutritional elements because of the leeching of these elements from the soil. The overuse of pesticides on grains also has a detrimental effect on grain quality. It is thus imperative to supplement show pigeons' diet during the breeding season with a breeding supplement that is well-balanced and formulated specifically to optimize fertility in pigeons.

These breeding-specific pigeon supplements differ dramatically from chicken supplements and even those developed for pigeons during the racing or showing period. These supplements normally contain more trace elements, minerals, and oil-soluble vitamins such as Vitamin A, D, and E. These elements are normally not soluble in water and are thus best given over food. If fanciers use a pigeon-formulated oil supplement to add to the food, they must ensure that it contains high levels of Vitamin E and states specifically that it will stimulate fertility. It is also critical that such an oil contains the correct Omega 3 to 6 ratios. **AvioFeather and Immune oil** is a unique mixture of optimally balanced Omega 3,6 and 9 oils fortified with optimal Vitamin A and E levels. It contains six different oils, including cold-pressed Garlic oil, which acts as an immune stimulant.

AvioGel is a unique powder formulation that has been specifically developed to be mixed with water and then transformed into a quick-drying gel that may be mixed with food. This novel food adherent gel enables pigeon fanciers to add these food-based supplements effectively to the grain. **AvioGel** also has the incredible advantage of including top-grade Apple Cider Vinegar and Grapefruit seed extract that stimulates immunity, prevents Candida overgrowth, and acts as potent Antioxidants.

The Thyroid gland of pigeons is key to activating the breeding season and the complex balance of hormones that regulates fertility and libido. It is prudent for fanciers to provide a supplement that will stimulate the optimal function of the Thyroid gland. Supplementation with **AvioBludform**, which contains chelated trace elements, balanced minerals, and top-quality bio-active Iodine in the drinking water, once per week will ensure optimal Thyroid function and prevent anemia.

The growth of certain molds on grain will produce Mycotoxins that cannot be detected without very specialized tests. One of these Mycotoxins is called Zearalenone and is well known to cause infertility in poultry, farm animals, pigs, and even dogs. A supplement that contains effective mycotoxin binders will prevent the absorption of these Mycotoxins. **AvioEntromune** contains such mycotoxin binders and should be given twice a week. Mycotoxins are cumulative toxins, and if absorption can be prevented twice per week, it prevents many of the negative effects that these have on immunity and fertility.

Cutting-edge scientific research done specifically on pigeons has proven conclusively that one of the Nutraceutical compounds known as Co-enzyme Q 10 will stimulate fertility in

pigeon cocks by stimulating sperm production and health. Taking this research into account, Aviomed developed **AvioFertical**, which contains as one of its key ingredients Co-enzyme Q10. As Q10 and many other unique elements included in **AvioFertical** are not water soluble, this world breakthrough Pigeon-specific breeding supplement should be added to the food. AvioFertical contains the magical Food adherent gel, so simply mixing it with water and then mixing the gel with food ensures that none of the valuable ingredients are lost.

Stimulating the immunity:

A strong and healthy Immunity is mandatory in show pigeons as no amount of drugs will ever be able to replace a healthy immune system. If a pigeon's immune system is not optimal, it cannot rid itself of the carrier diseases, and vaccination failures will ensue.

The following elements, Beta-glucan, Avian strain Pro-biotics, Pre-biotics, Grape seed extract, Garlic powder, and Mycotoxin binders (FOS & MOS), are mandatory for inclusion in any cutting-edge pigeon-specific supplement that claims to act as an immune stimulant and gut protectant. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss each of these separately. Twice weekly supplementation with a product that contains all of the above is advised. **AvioEntromune** is currently the only product that contains all of the above and is one of a kind in the world.

Ensuring perfect eggshell formation and growth in babies:

In the past, Calcium supplements combined with Vitamin D3 and Magnesium as Cofactors have been relied on to ensure perfect eggshell formation and growth of babies. However, the latest research has concluded that pigeons need more than one form of Calcium salt and more bio-available salts to ensure optimal Calcium absorption into the bloodstream. When acquiring a Calcium supplement, it is important to verify whether these higher-quality Calcium salts are, in fact, included in the formulation. AvioFertical is currently the only known pigeon-specific breeding supplement that contains three different calcium salts of high bioavailability. Twice weekly supplementation with AvioFertical will ensure perfect eggshell formation and optimal growth of babies, even giant breeds.

Ensure optimal digestion and prevent overgrowth of Candida bad bacteria:

As is the case with so many health-related concepts, newer research often means that newer formulations must be developed to ensure health optimization. Research has concluded that when Probiotics are given in conjunction with the specific sugars and fibers called FOS and MOS, the good bacteria given will have a far better chance of establishing themselves and growing in the pigeon's intestine. The high-level inclusion of Avian-adapted

Probiotics along with FOS and MOS found in **AvioEntromune** will ensure optimal gut health and aid in reducing Gastrointestinal diseases such as E- coli and Salmonella.

Medicines for the prevention of diseases

Unfortunately, many proponents of the "natural way" will try to convince pigeon fanciers that breeding and showing successfully without using medicines is possible. These "naturalists," rather than realizing the importance of combining natural products with medicines, much like their arch enemies, the "medicine men" who only want to use medicines, often serve their own selfish economic purposes and do not want to admit that by correctly combining the use of medicine with natural products health is best served! Pigeons are notorious carriers of diseases and will transmit these to their babies or will become ill as a result of these carrier diseases as soon as they are stressed. Many of these diseases in pigeons do not yet have effective vaccines produced specifically for pigeons and thus need to be treated. Pigeons, however, must be vaccinated with at least Paramyxovirus vaccine Paratyphoid shots before breeding commences. It is also important to realize that not all medicines are antibiotics – many parasitic and protozoal diseases are treated with antimicrobials that do not have the same side effects as antibiotics.

Pre-breeding season treatment should be started 6 weeks before breeding

commences: Pigeons should be vaccinated and treated before the breeding season against the following viral, bacterial, protozoal, and internal and external parasitic diseases:

External parasites – Apply **AvioEctoBan**, the world's first spot-on formulation, uniquely containing synergistically acting Fipronil and Imidacloprid, to all breeding birds six weeks before the season starts. **AvioEctoban** is an extremely safe, effective, and long-acting treatment against all lice, mites, and Pigeon Fly. It must be applied every 6 to 8 weeks.

Coccidiosis and Worms - Treat pigeons preventatively against Coccidiosis and worms by dosing with the extremely effective and safe **AvioCoxiworm** tablets before breeding commences.

Salmonella- Paratyphoid- Treat all the breeding pigeons for 10 days with the proven Polybiotic antibiotic **AvioTyphoidCure**, the only proven combination product that contains Amoxicillin, Furaltadone, and Chloramphenicol in the drinking water. Vaccinate the next day with a good, inactivated Paratyphoid injectable vaccine and critically important repeat vaccination after 14 days.

Respiratory disease- Treatment for respiratory disease needs only be done if the typical symptoms of rales and wet eyes are seen periodically in the lofts. Pigeons showing respiratory symptoms may be suffering from Ornithosis, Mycoplasmosis, or even Orniplasmosis. Suppose the fancier believes that they have a problem with respiratory

disease. In that case, all breeding pigeons should be treated with **AvioSpiradox**, a combination product containing Spiramycin against Mycoplasmosis and Doxycycline against Ornithosis for 7 days and then followed up by **Aviodox** alone for a further 3 days. Both these products may be given in the drinking water.

Trichomoniasis- More than 40% of pigeons carry Trichomoniasis and will transfer it directly to their babies when feeding. It is well known to reduce the immunity of babies and may, in some cases, even cause severe disease symptoms. Many of these Trichomonas organisms have developed resistance to the normal products used in the past. It is imperative that fanciers treat all the breeding birds for 2 days with a product that contains both Ronidazole as well as Secnidazole in the drinking water. **AvioNidazole** will ensure that these resistant Trichomonas organisms are not transmitted to babies and will make future treatments more effective.

During the breeding season, it is suggested that a six-weekly health program be followed:

Pigeons should be protected against the following diseases during the breeding season. This protection should continue for as long as the breeding season lasts.

During the breeding season, no routine antibiotic treatment should be given. If a bacterial or viral disease is encountered, appropriate treatment is instituted.

Worms must be treated every 6 weeks by alternating **Avioworm** over the food or dosing pigeons with **AvioEktoEndo** tablets.

Coccidiosis and Ectoparasite treatment may be done on the same day by applying **AvioEctoban** drops and dosing pigeons with **AvioAvertex**.

Trichomonas treatment should consist of alternating treatment with **AvioZole**, a 10% ultra-pure high potency water soluble Ronidazole product, for 2 days, or with **AvioTrich**, the unique high dose coated Metronidazole tablet, once every 6 weeks.

No other routine medicine treatments should be given, but it is imperative to supplement the pigeon's water and food every week as per the Breeding Supplement program.

Conclusion

Pigeon fanciers that follow the above health programs will be astounded at the improvement in the general health of their breeding birds and a substantial increase in the fertility of their breeding stock. They will find that they have far fewer infertile eggs, and fewer babies will die in the eggs or as they are reared. The program's cost is hugely

affordable compared to the loss of babies and the lower fertility that many Show pigeon fanciers are "used to".

To obtain an e-mail with the easy-to-understand Pre-Breeding, Breeding, and Youngster programs free of charge, e-mail the words "Send Show pigeon Health programs" to Foy's Pet Supplies at info@foypetsupplies.com fanciers may also visit the website www.aviomed.co.za and look under programs and then download the Show pigeon health programs.

In the next article, I will discuss the management and treatment of infertility in show pigeons and the raising of healthy youngsters.