

This may of interest to a few.....Some of the readers are aware that I actively participate in the racing sport. When shipping birds to a race, often 3500 birds are entered and the watering system (trough) will tend to service 4-500 birds each. Thus, often a recipe for disease.

A few months ago, my race team came down with Circo Virus. Those that are not aware of this disease, it can be very deadly, primarily hitting young birds. It is similar to AIDS in humans, it completely shuts down the immune system, making the birds in danger to any infection that is normally kept in check. The disease being a virus, has no cure yet when the disease runs it's course, the birds are not carriers, unlike salmonella. Those that have problems with Circo, treat for secondary infections, coccidia, typhoid, etc. Of course, the medications place further strains on the birds. Generally, one tries to replace fluids as much as possible and one treatment is give the birds Pedialyte or even Gatorade. Incidentally, all birds are vaccinated for PMV and typhoid at 4 weeks, again at 10 weeks.

I lost about 8 young racing homers, 3 Modenas and nearly 40 Voorburgs. The disease took a toll on the Voorburgs, they apparently were just more susceptible. I lost almost all the yg birds, save those that have been recently weaned. Treated for the secondary problems, cleaned daily, changed the PH of the water, added vitamins and probiotics regularly. Yet, daily, one or two more birds would come down with the disease (confirmed by the Cal State Lab and Dr. Zollars in Indiana) The samples sent were negative for salmonella, PMV, Adeno, cocci, & e.coli.

In a conversation with a friend from Norway, he reported that a woman in Sweden has recommended treating bird viruses with carrot juice! She is not a pigeon fancier and I think I was told she may be a gypsy from one of the Eastern Countries. (Hungary?)

Apparently, she raises other types of domestic birds or fowl. Of course my reply was, "Really, you know that doesn't make sense, one can't treat a virus!" His reply was, "Don't kill the messenger, I'm just repeating what some of the Europeans are doing for Circo, PMV and Adeno." OK, but after loosing nearly 50 birds, one often gets desperate and will try something that goes against conventional wisdom. One yg bird loft had continual problems, the other lofts had either old birds or much older youngsters and were not infected. The birds that became infected were generally between 8 -12 weeks of age. Additionally, I kept 4 youngsters that normally would be dispatched that were desperately sick. Circo places a huge demand on the kidneys, a great amount of urea is produced and the birds rapidly became dehydrated and emaciated. Within 3-4 days, they are so "down" they are incapable of walking. Within 12 hours they die. So, I took the advice, made a 50/50 blend of carrot juice and water. Held the very sick birds to the drinker and gave the same blend to two lofts. This was on a Sunday, in fact July 5. I repeated holding the birds to drink about three or four times that day. The next morning before work I noticed what I thought was a slight improvement but fully expected the birds to be dead upon

my return from work. Later, the birds appeared brighter, they no longer closed their eyes and while they could not walk yet, they were definitely improved over the day before. Also, no sick birds in either of the two treated lofts. On Tuesday, I was surprised to see the very sick birds try to eat and definitely the treated lofts showed an improvement. Only held the birds twice to drink since I went to work that day.. Tuesday evening, the sick birds were standing and tried to eat on their own. Wednesday morning, were eating and the responded well to offerings of safflower. I continued with the carrot juice until Friday and one week later, a visitor would not be able to tell which birds were sick. Of course, their weight is still down, but all are recovering nicely and next weekend they will be removed from isolation and join the community loft again. They were eager to take a bath last Sunday and fly readily to perches in the isolation cage.

So.....A couple of ideas here....The disease actually ran it's course and was in the final stages anyway.....or, my constant good care allowed survival of the fittest. Or?????

does the beta carotene that is high in carrots acts as some blocking agent to a virus?

Do carrots, high in sugar content and carbohydrates contribute to a recovery process? Is there something else?.....ironically, I spoke to a racing homer fancier who's wife is a Chinese physician that specializes in Eastern remedies and life styles. I told him of the above and he rather smiled and said, "Of course, carrots have been used for years for viruses as well as other vegetable products". He indicated that this is a treatment for PMV and Adeno as well and apparently used readily in Europe and the Far East. So, I cannot comment more on the subject, makes little sense to me...but, if the birds even faintly look sick, carrot juice will be in the mix. just sharing some findings, don't kill the messenger.