

# ▶ Van Gent

## What can we do to keep our pigeons healthy in a more natural way

There are open doors and there are open doors. But non-natural medicines are good when there is a diagnoses or a defect. But when there is no diagnoses a cure with medication can only do damage.



So there is of course a way to keep your birds healthy between races and checks. Measure is everything, so every three or four weeks you can test your birds for trichomoniasis, worms, coccidiosis and others.

### Measurement is everything

First of all it is good to know the hardness of your drinking water you use for the pigeons. There are several testers available. You have the paper testers and the electronic testers. I've done it with the paper testers, but I have recently purchased an electronic tester from one of the Chinese webshops.

Here in the Netherlands the hardness of the water is between 7 and 8,5. This is

measured in the German hardness equivalent. dH. 1dH is the same as 1,253 English hardness.

The desired hardness for pigeons is 5 dH or 6,265 English hardness. Why?

When you lower the hardness of the water it is less attractive for Bacteria and Fungus/Mould. The lower the hardness, the less Bacteria and Mould are in the water. You cannot make the hardness too low, because then the water becomes dangerous for the pigeons for instance and breaks down the calcium.

When you have a hot season like 2018, a lot of fungus/mould are growing in the Crop of the pigeon. And when you lower the hardness of the water, these fungus/mould and micro-organisms will be less and that's better for the health of the pigeons.

### How do you lower the hardness of the water

You can lower the hardness by adding organic Acids. Organic Acids like acetic acid, citric acid and formic acid. These are the most effective and safe.

So you have to find out with each product you use how much you have to add to get to the 5dH. At least twice a week you can do this. For a lot of people this is also one of the methods to prevent the young bird illnesses and keep all kinds of health related issues out.

### What can you use

DHP Cultura, Travipharma, Paloma Blue, Comed and Pigeon Health all have products to do this. DHP, Travipharma have more than one product to do this. Travipharma has weblogs on their site and supporting clips on Youtube.

I have also used from the horses section Apple cider vinegar with garlic for instance.

I think personally that it does not matter how you do it, but that you do it sensible and measure.

### At my own loft

We are now in the second week of May and the racers have got some training done. This week they will be basketed for 200 miles and the week after for 250 miles. Then we have a long distance race of 350 miles on the program. This one will be for the two years and older birds. Then they have enough miles done to do St Vincent or Agen.

The yearlings will get more 250 miles races and then later in the year they will get one or two times 400 miles.

They are now on their first youngster, 20 days old.

They train now between 45-60 minutes per day. I am using the flag and a broomstick with a plastic bag attached to it. The flag you see on the picture I got at the World Championship Cycling in Innsbruck Tirol last year from a Yorkshire promotion group.



The breeders are now on eggs of the 3rd round. I always have two nest bowls in the breeding pens. That speeds up the rounds a bit. When the youngsters are about 12-14 days the eggs for the next round are mostly there already. I even have a couple that is now on youngsters 3rd round of 9 days, while others are now on eggs of 10 days.

### Conclusion

Check your racers regularly, when you are going to use acids, measurement is everything.

Good luck.

Arjan van Gent

[www.van-gent.com](http://www.van-gent.com)