

STAMP OUT FOOT ROT USING NATURAL CURES

It's been almost 20 years but I remember it as if it were last week. A group of us holistic vets were sitting at a lecture spellbound by one DR JOHN RENNER, who, at the time, was the oldest practicing physician in the United States. Early in his colorful career as a homeopathic and herbalist doctor and professor (he was teaching back in the 1930's before these topics became verboten in the standard practice act), he discovered one major and career-crowning observation.

Here it is. When humans eat the wrong foods, and he felt the worst detriment was the spiraling increase in consumption of white sugar, the liver swells with glycogen storage. He could actually palpate a patient's liver with his hands in order to determine the extent of swelling. We all eagerly lined up to have his strong bony fingers push into our bellies just below the ribcage and bounce the liver. Most of us had a 1"-3" extension of the entire liver beyond it's normal size. Uh-oh, trouble ahead, perhaps.

The significance of this observation is that Dr. Renner realized that the swollen liver causes a nasty back up of the portal circulation, the blood flow that comes up from the lower legs, pelvis, intestines and genitalia. This back flow caused the blood down there to stagnate and become sludgy. Now here's the gem, this stagnation is the true physical causation of such common degenerative conditions as hemorrhoids, uterine fibroids, pelvic inflammatory disease, bladder infections, prostatic cancer and/or hypertrophy, uterine problems, varicose veins and much more.

While you ponder the gravitas of Dr. Renner's stunning assessment, and while you ponder the sad consequences of the blank expression upon the faces of virtually the entire medical establishment after hearing his theory, we can now at least take his medical wisdom and put it to work, especially as it applies it to the livestock world. We are talking about all farm animals that live long enough to get chronic problems, primarily horses, cattle, dairy cattle, sheep and goats, and breeding hogs.

If conditions such as laminitis, foot rot and hairy heel wart plague animals with impaired circulation to the legs and hind quarters, how do we switch mental gears from too much sugar consumption as a causation for mankind, to determine the parallel causation factors for farm animals? Secondly, as a very important corollary, we must also examine how fertility issues, mastitis, high somatic cell counts, uterine infections (metritis), and bull sterility might be woven into the same equation.

THINK BEYOND PASTEUR

For these answers we have to broaden and reframe the picture of chronic disease. We have to explore the multi-factorial causation etiology as opposed to the dumbed-down "germ theory" of modern medicine. The latter treats the living being as a walking petri dish that bumps into a random germ and, boom, gets sick. It's virtually never that simple. As Beauchamp proved in his Pasteur-trumping body of work, it's not the germ,

it's the "terrain", the terrain being our immune system and status of well-being. You are now thinking holistically.

TRUE HEALING COMES FROM WITHIN

More and more scientists are realizing that the acid-base balance of the body, body pH, may be at the root of more pathology than any single factor. And, of course, body pH is the sum of everything we eat or do. In general, an acid state, that is, below a pH of 7 is conducive to disease whereas, in general an alkaline pH, one above 7, is considered a healthy state. We know that the base saturation minerals, which are calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium, must be present in the soil, plant and animal to keep the hydrogen ion in check. Depleted minerals = more hydrogen = more acidic condition. We will get back to the use of minerals to correct and prevent foot diseases in a minute.

Additionally, the rumen is the great determiner of body pH. We know that consumption of starchy grains will generate more of the lactic acid-producing amylytic rumen flora, and this is an acid that should never be in the rumen, whereas grass forage feeds the cellulitic rumen flora, the ones that bring the other volatile fatty acids mostly acetic (vinegar) that actually buffer and normalize pH. Incidentally, by sticking a small bit of pH strip paper into fresh manure one can determine rumen pH. It should ideally be 6.4 to 7.0. This is one of the most powerful tests to determine the health status of a ruminant, it costs pennies and only takes a minute.

So, right there, graziers who provide good grass forages are preventing disease. Additionally, I should mention that forages high in NPN (funny protein) cause a build-up of ammonia in the bloodstream. Ammonia is extremely irritating and inflammatory. This grain-induced combination of excess acid and excess ammonia have now escalated laminitis over mastitis as the #1 cause of premature culling in the commercial dairy industry. As I've mentioned before the savage culling rate of dairy cows in commercial herds, over 8 million burnt-out cows a year, only 1.8 lactations, is an abomination to the credibility of dairymen across America. Incidentally, grasses that are high in NPN and crude protein tend to be low brix. These types of grasses can also clog the liver with excess ammonia.

To add to the pain of hoof rot another crippling illness commonly called Hairy Heel Wart occurs with too much frequency. This disease is actually caused by a parasitic spirochete, an organism in the same family as Lyme disease and syphilis. Virtually all the conditions discussed above that render livestock vulnerable to foot rot, make them highly susceptible to hairy heel wart. Likewise, the prevention and treatment is quite similar, and just as natural, it's just more painful and it takes a bit longer.

TO THE RESCUE

Once foot rot has shown up it can proliferate rapidly in the herd. One wakes up to find many animals suddenly limping and unable to ambulate properly. It's always tempting to

treat it externally, and there are many helpful topical aids but it's a disease that is best treated from within.

It's also important to realize that wet conditions and especially muddy paddocks are partially to blame when foot rot takes hold of a herd. Be sure to quickly correct leaky valves on water tanks before mud develops around the water tank. Astute ranchers like Joel Salatin point out the hazards of allowing livestock to degrade the shoreline of stock ponds and creeks and it's best to create a trestle of wood or custom-designed rubber mats which allow drinking from standing water without the damaged and ugly muddy banks.

It was the triple-whammy of acidosis, ammonia saturation and moldy grain or stored forage, something that occurs in most feedlot and confinement livestock situations, that caused animal supplement formulator Jerry Brunetti to create his product Desert Dyna-Min. This product, which he discovered and began marketing over 25 years ago works just as effectively today as it did then. The main action of this mined earth deposit is to buffer the acidosis, soak up the ammonia, detoxify the mold toxins, and provide a mineral "bouillon cube" to rectify shortages. For this condition he recommends approximately 4 oz daily although it's best to offer it free choice.

It's also important to get adequate iodine into these animals. It's almost a given that most soils either never had enough iodine or have lost it over decades of farming. Therefore one must go to the sea to retrieve it. This is why kelp is one of the most important livestock supplements on the farm. Jerry Brunetti recommends organic iodine such as EDDI, which the FDA has limited to a maximum of 50 mg of EDDI per dairy cow per day. This was recently upped from 10 mg because of the consistent and spectacular results for foot conditions.

You can also read about the copper deficiency aspect of hoof degeneration in Pat Coleby's book *Natural Cattle Care*. Copper, copper, copper, it's a vital mineral and one that is quite often missing, or in many cases knocked out by high iron levels. The adult ruminant needs between 150 and 250 mg per head per day.

Zinc is another medicinal mineral and quite often missing. Ruminants need around 1200-1600 mg of zinc daily and this can be supplemented in the mineral box. A simple mixture of minerals is Agri-Dynamics Hemocell-100. This emergency nutraceutical provides adequate zinc, copper and iodine when given at a rate of 4 oz per head per day. Hemocell is recommended for many other infectious disease outbreaks. It also contains therapeutic levels of Selenium (the "Immune Mineral") and it's crucial to maintain 4-6 mg per head per day from all the combined sources.

Another favorite book of mine is *Treating Dairy Cows Naturally-Thoughts and Strategies* by Hubert Karreman, VDM. This book gives you detailed advice about how to aggressively trim infected and diseased hooves. The Karreman approach uses several good and effective alternatives to conventional therapy and a quick read-through will convince you that you will never need to reach for the antibiotic bottle again. His favorite

foot dips are copper sulfate. I like to mix 25 gallons of water with 1-2# of copper sulfate and the same quantity of zinc sulfate, along with Iodine to get the iodine levels going. Hydrogen peroxide at 3% dilution works well too. Another option with great success rates is a walk-in foot box of dry hydrated lime. Remember, it's imperative to peel away the rotted hoof and diseased tissue with a hoof knife before treating topically. Agri-Dynamics has recently released the famous Amazing Blue Goo (Gentian violet) which is an excellent topical. Another topical product that produces good results with the hairy heel wart organism as well as the pathogens that cause foot rot is Australian Tea Tree Oil used topically. Recovery is almost always achieved with a total healing time of 60-90 days for a full recovery.

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT

Stamp out foot disease completely by preventing it. Prevent it by good rotational grazing on mineral rich forages and keeping the feet dry and clean. All animals need exercise, sunlight, oxygen, clean habitat and fresh air. If the forages are slightly lacking in minerals, augment the important minerals with supplements until the forages are adequate. Usually a good mined clay like Dyna-Min and free-choice kelp mixed with seasalt will prevent ALL foot disease. When an occasional outbreak happens, don't panic, clean up the wet spots or mud if they exist, trim and cleanse the infected foot, and be generous and aggressive with all the immune tools and topicals. I mean, how can you possibly go wrong with a product named Amazing Blue Goo?

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