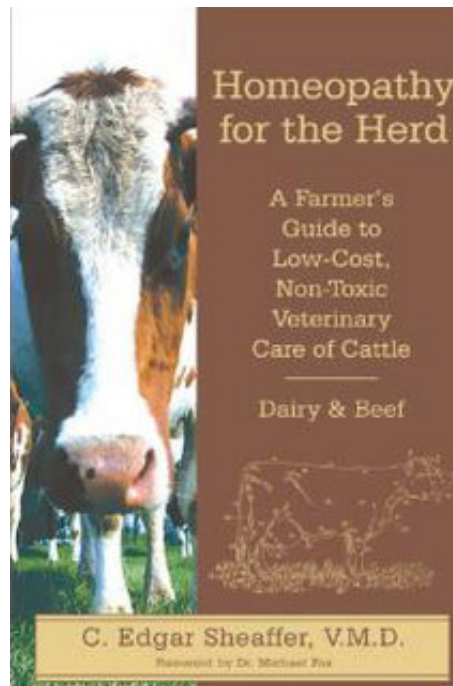


C. Edgar Sheaffer Homeopathy for the Herd

Reading excerpt
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2.

Why Use Homeopathy on the Farm?

Homeopathic medicine allows the farmer to begin with a few basic first aid medicines and then proceed to more and more complex treatments. I recommend that you start with simple first aid cases to build your confidence and knowledge. Many severe health situations can be avoided by following the recommendations in this book. Every well chosen homeopathic remedy will stimulate the immune system of the animal thereby making that animal more resistant to disease and healthier over the long term. A herd that has been treated with conventional drugs will respond to homeopathic medicines if the treatment changes are made slowly over a period of time. It is critical that a period of transition is allowed, but you will see the benefits of homeopathy.

Three points need to be made at the onset. Institute homeo-therapeutics at the first sign of functional disorder. If possible, never give drugs or any other treatments that will suppress a healthy immune response. Always be aware of any side effects of any therapy given. It is always easier and cheaper to prevent disease than it is to treat sick patients. The farmers and veterinarians with

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whom we have consulted over the last twenty years have become better observers. By the third herd health exam farmers often proclaim, "I am now noticing small changes in attitude just before symptoms appear." This improved ability to observe early changes in attitude (energy or playfulness) leads to a shorter disease course after a homeopathic prescription. In addition, as the veterinarian examines each animal during regular routine herd health exams, the same holds true. Subtle changes like dullness of eye or hair, sluggish activity, irregular estrus cycles, small ovaries, and discolored mucous membranes give the veterinarian reason to institute a homeopathic prescription before clinical disease develops.

When first using homeopathy it is important to understand that changes take place over time. I know of a case in which an animal was given Naxel, Gentomycin, Albon, Prednisone and Banamine for an illness. As a last resort a homeopathic prescription was given, but the animal did not respond. The strong medicines that had been administered were likely blocking or overwhelming the benefits of homeopathic remedies. This situation frustrated both the owner and the homeopathic veterinarian. In my early years of homeopathic prescribing, I was always amazed when positive results occurred in similar situations. Those few and far between successes kept my interest stimulated to continue trying homeopathic medicines. Now I think homeopathy first and find I generally get good results.

It is always in everyone's best interest to communicate with your local veterinarian regarding your desires to include these medicines in the management of the herd. Changing to homeopathic medicines does not mean you will no longer require the service of a veterinarian. The transition to holistic herd health necessitates a working relationship with an open-minded practitioner. It would be prudent to avoid the use of steroids, anabolic drugs and modified live vaccines with those animals on which you want to use homeopathic medicines. If this advice is not followed, the beneficial effects of the homeopathic medicines will be lessened.

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In any emergency situation notify your local veterinarian. Most veterinarians would rather be involved in the case in the beginning than be called after the situation has progressed in intensity.

Predisposition to Chronic Disease

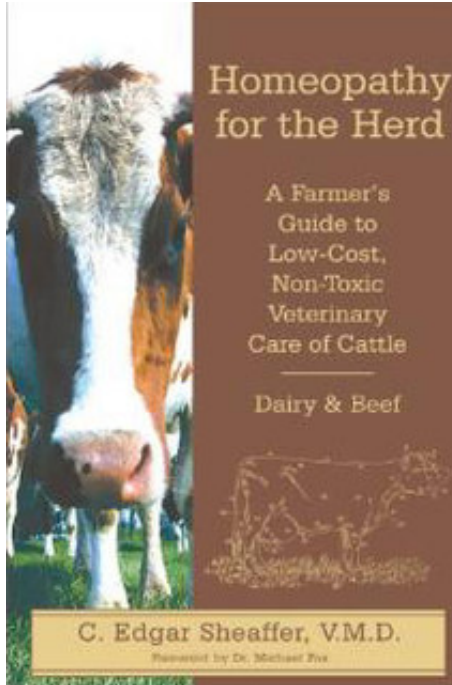
We know that serious illness, allopathic drugs, and vaccination all contribute to chronic disease, but it is also clear that often predisposition to disease is hereditary. Diseases such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, alcoholism, schizophrenia, and many others have an inherited component. It is also known that DNA, the genetic makeup of an individual, is a factor in predisposition to disease.

In veterinary medicine, it is well known that certain diseases such as Leukosis in certain families of Jerseys, Johne's disease in certain families of Guernseys, heat exhaustion in certain families of Holsteins and others, are clinically observed and documented. Powerful acute diseases such as pasteurellosis, bovine virus diarrhea, strangles in horses and coliform mastitis to name a few can predispose to serious chronic disease if treated with suppressive drugs. If a bovine mother's internal health is compromised, it will be reflected in the health of her calf.

The term *miasma* was first used by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann to describe this underlying, hidden disease weakness or the predisposition to disease. Dr. Hahnemann for whom Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is named, observed this continuing weakened disease state and only with the use of homeopathic medicines was he able to see an improvement in the health of his patients and thus a lessening of the weakness. These miasmatic conditions or chronic disease states exist in livestock and food-producing animals. It takes the form of hidden chronic disease that becomes manifested at critical stressful times of life. The very best farm management, be it organic or intensive rotational grazing or any of the other beneficial holistic farming methods practiced, will see improved health, but chronic disease may still rear its ugly head. It is the wise steward, using the natural/homeopathic approach on a regular basis, who will see less and less chronic disease.

This is an illustration of chronic disease in an organic herd. Good nutrition, particularly that coming in the form of high qual-

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