

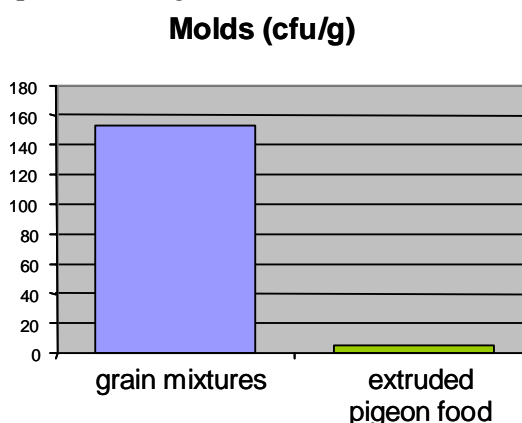
FAQ:

Some sceptics claim that the use of extruded feed increases the risk of fungal infections in pigeons. Is this claim correct and scientifically founded ?

Fungal infections (or aspergillosis) occur only very rarely in pigeons because pigeons are fairly resistant to fungal infections by nature. Moreover, the aspergillum fungus responsible for most fungal infections in birds is an opportunistic pathogen. It is only in cases of high infection pressure and reduced immunity that clinical infections occur.

Stress is a major factor which puts pressure on defences against fungi. This stress can be caused by factors like transport, flying conditions, or fluctuations in temperature. Furthermore, vitamin deficiencies (especially vitamin A) and manifold use of antibiotics, chemical substances, or high concentrations of ammonia on the pigeon loft due to overpopulation can contribute to the development of fungal infections.

There are traces of fungi everywhere and they usually get into the pigeon loft via the litter. According to scientific literature, the feed is seldom the source for aspergillosis in pigeons. Moreover, in the case of extruded pigeon feed the heat treatment during extrusion reduces the concentration of fungi on the feed considerably.



Extruded pigeon food also contain several substances which increase the pigeon's resistance to fungi:

- The vitamin A supplement in the extrudates ensures a healthier mucous membrane epithelium which is less susceptible to fungal infections.
- The addition of organic acids to extrudates restrains the growth of fungi naturally.
- Some producers add natural clay minerals to extruded pigeon feeds. These clay minerals bind the ammonia in the intestines and ensure a healthier pigeon loft and lower concentrations of ammonia.
- Nutraceuticals are also processed into the latest generation of extruded pigeon feeds to stimulate resistance to infections. For example, carotenoids (beta-carotene and lutein) improve both the humoral and cellular immunity.

Conclusion:

There is no scientific evidence to prove that the use of extruded pigeon feed increases susceptibility to fungal infections. On the contrary, thanks to the sterilisation effect during extrusion and the addition of substances such as vitamin A, organic acids, clay minerals, and nutraceuticals, the lower fungus contents help to prevent fungal infections.

You will find more detailed scientific background information about extruded pigeon feed on the web site www.versele-laga.com:

Scientific dossier

Extruded pigeon feeds: new insights and trends

Part 1: anti-oxidants and oxidative stress in muscle activity.

Part 2: extrusion pellets and intestinal health.