



Homeopathy as an alternative to antibiotics in animal husbandry

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Use of antibiotics in farm animals

- EXTENSIVE use
- Consequence:
 - Resistance of bacteria to antibiotics
 - (both in animals and in humans)
 - Pollution of the environment

Council regulation (EC) 1804/1999 on organic farming

“when animals become sick or injured, they should be treated immediately by giving preference to phytotherapeutic or homeopathic medicinal products....”



Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007

on organic production and labelling of organic products

“chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products including antibiotics may be used where necessary and under strict conditions, when the use of phytotherapeutic, homeopathic and other products is inappropriate”

Homeopathy

- Like cures like
 - Totality of symptoms
 - Individual choice of remedies
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- Very good results by experienced prescribers
 - No standardized remedies for diseases!
Few vets interested in homeopathy

Differences in countries

- In German-speaking countries:
Veterinarians treat farm animals with homeopathy
- In the Netherlands:
Veterinarians not interested, but (organic) farmers are!

Since 2001:

- 30 courses for farmers
- Over 400 farmers in total

Analysis

- Good results:

Diarrhoea, problems around birth, cough, acute mastitis, prevention of milk fever, epidemics

- More difficult:

Chronic mastitis, high cell count: more individualised homeopathic approach necessary



Use of homeopathy in animal husbandry

- Pigs, calves, chickens, turkeys, sheep, cattle
- Most common diseases treated:
diarrhoea, pneumonia, infertility,
mastitis, birthing problems, etc.

Major benefits of homeopathy

- Homeopathy can prevent the use of antibiotics
- Homeopathy can prevent diseases by using it in the early stages of discomfort
- Epidemic diseases can be treated with homeopathy, both in a preventive as well as a curative way. With one remedy often a whole epidemic can be treated
- Viral diseases can be treated with homeopathy

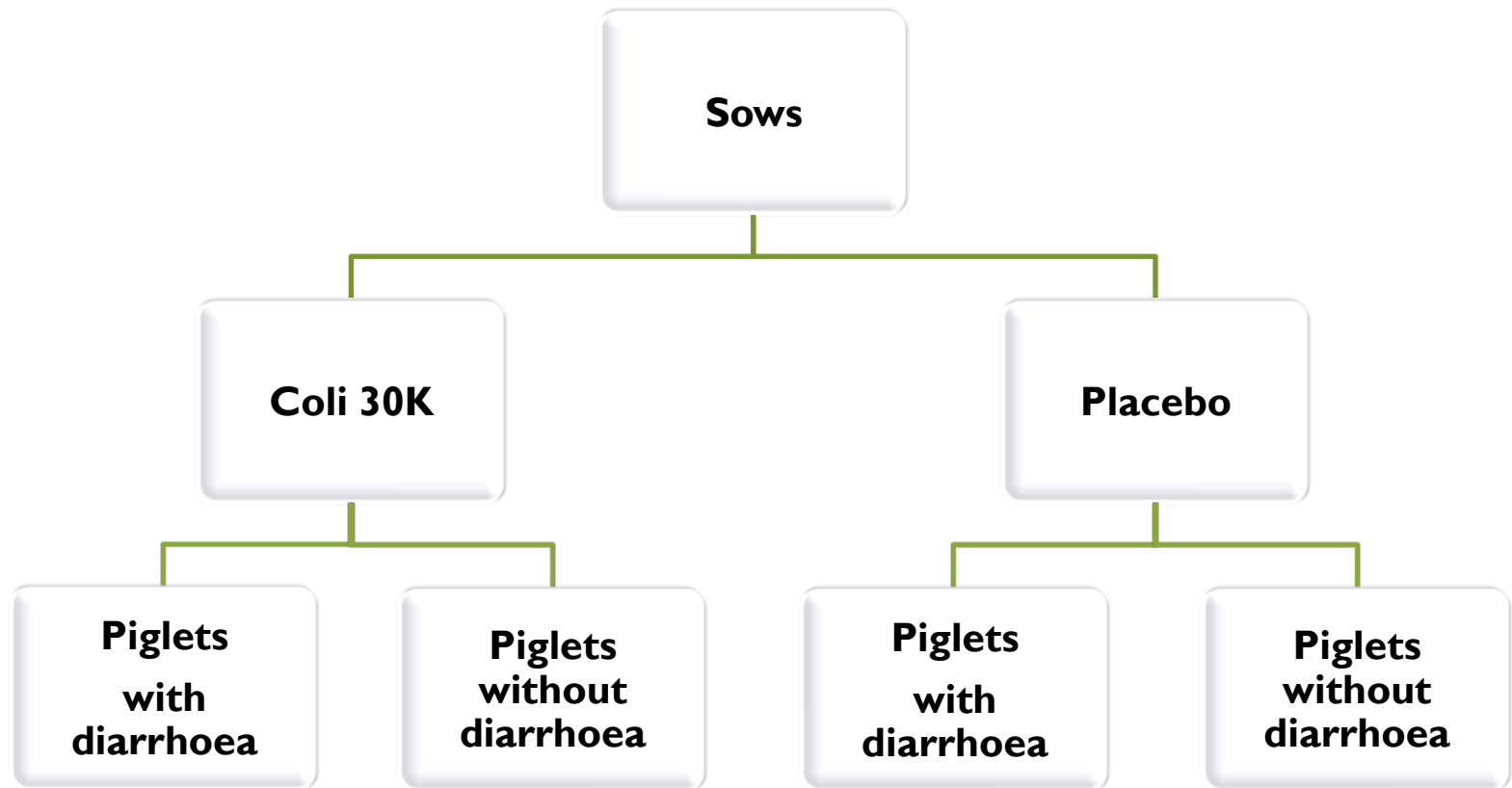
Homeopathy as replacement for antibiotics in the case of diarrhoea in neonatal piglets

- Aim: prevent (*Escherichia coli*) diarrhoea in neonatal piglets with a homeopathic treatment
- Hypothesis: the homeopathic agent Coli 30K diminishes the occurrence of diarrhoea in piglets

Experimental set-up

- Placebo
 - Triple blinded (administration, scoring, analyzing)
 - Randomized
- = all ingredients for sound research

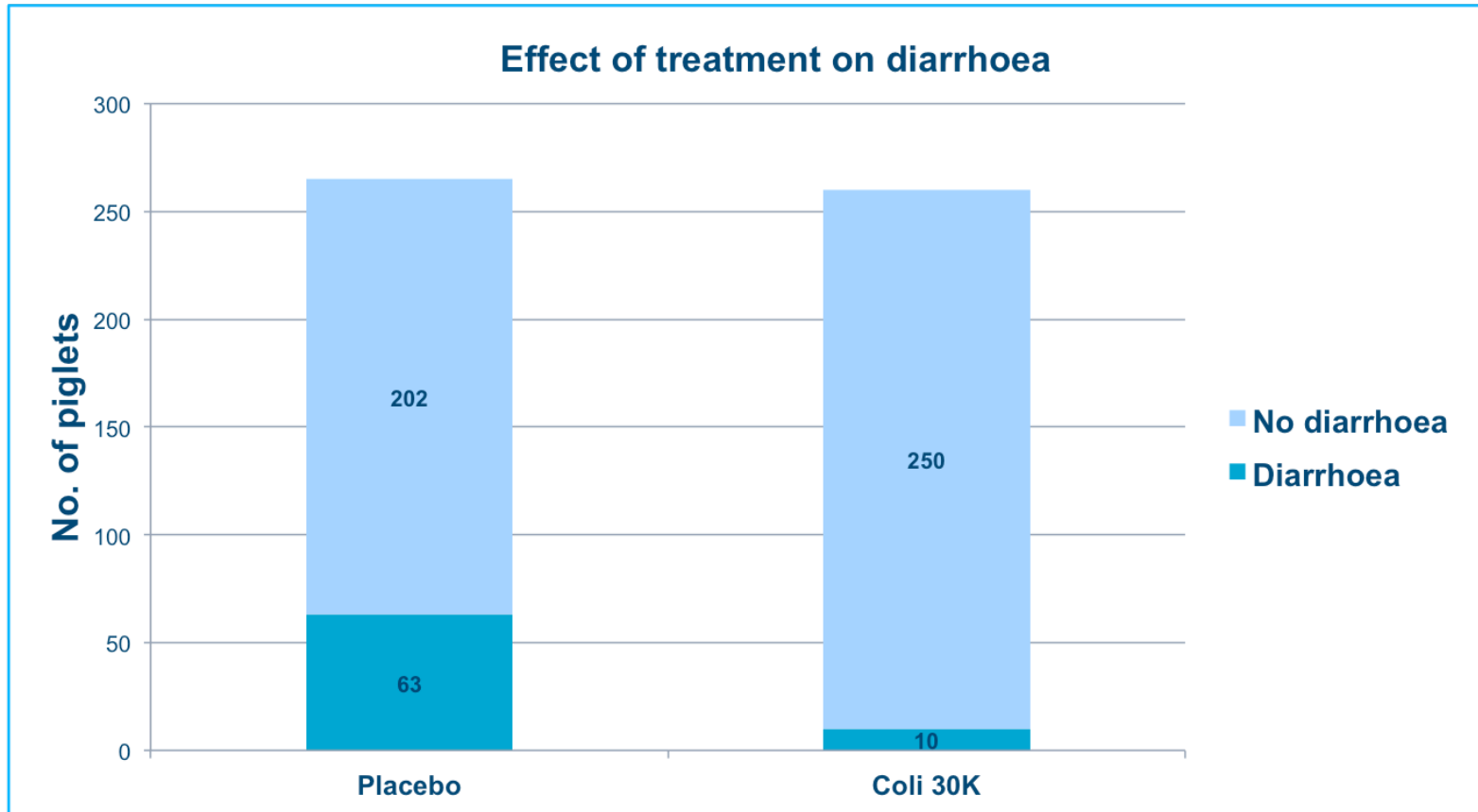
On-farm experiment



Farm situation

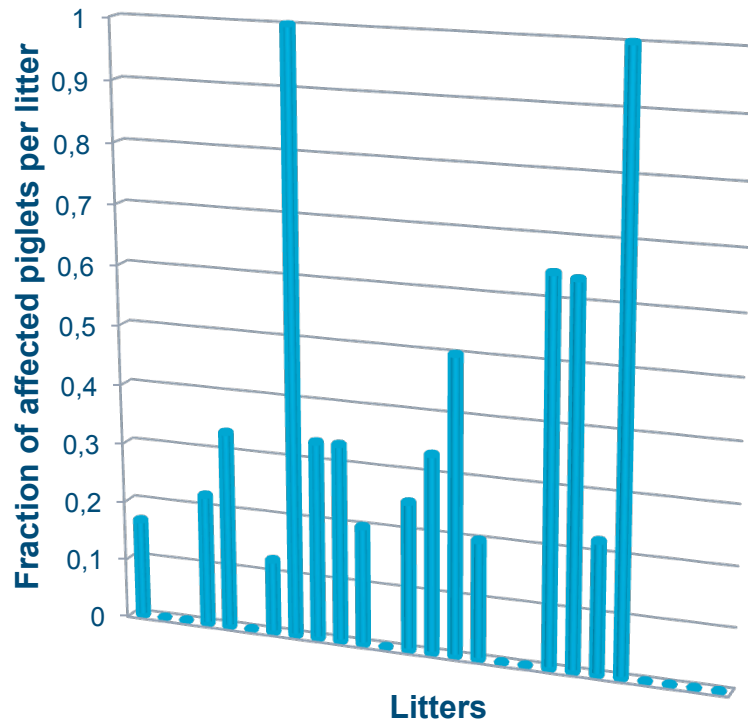
- Commercial farm with \pm 300 sows
- Conventional housing in individual cages
- In the past: diarrhoea in piglets was treated with Colistine (aka polymyxin E = antibiotic)

Significance: $p=0.0024$

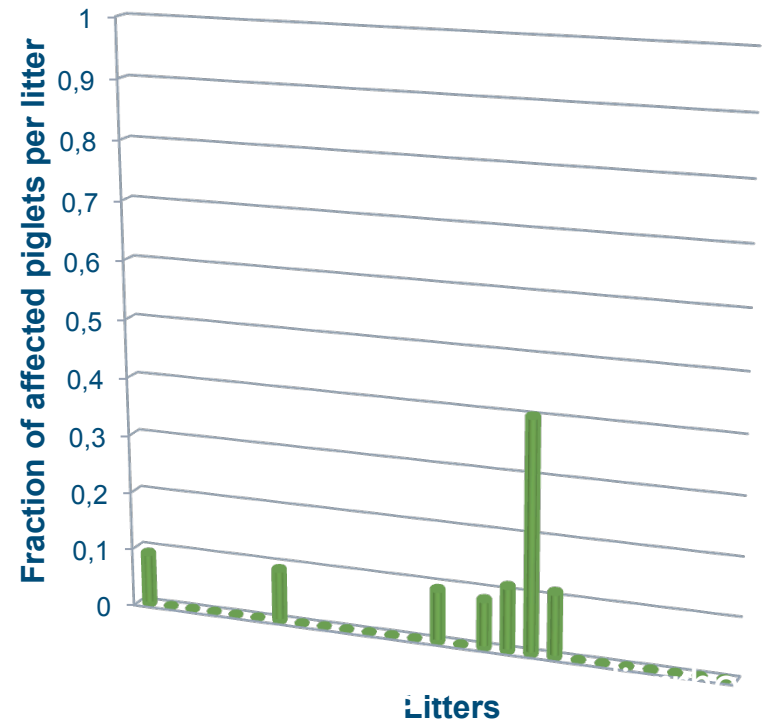


Litter effect

Placebo



Coli 30K



Conclusions

- The homeopathic treatment Coli 30K has a significant influence on the appearance of neonatal diarrhoea in piglets ($p= 0.0024$)
- First parity litters well protected against diarrhoea
- Less spread of disease in homeopathically treated litters

Discussion

- Coli 30K and other homeopathic preparations made from infectious agents are much easier to prescribe than mainstream homeopathy
- More research on the possibilities of homeopathic treatment of farm animals is strongly recommended



Challenges we meet when practising homeopathy in farm animals

- More difficult to prescribe than conventional drugs: few veterinarians are interested
- Homeopathic remedies are generic and inexpensive, so no strong pharmaceutical lobby
- EU regulation requires registration: economic profit for homeopathic manufacturers too low to afford dossier costs

Suggested solutions

- More pressure on veterinarians to use homeopathic remedies and more homeopathic education of vets
- Education of farmers
- Simplification of the EU rules for homeopathic medicines: authorising homeopathic pharmacies to produce the medicines instead of registration per medicine

Experience in practice

- Veterinary homeopathy can be very effective
- More and more farmers use only homeopathic remedies for their animals and therefore don't need any antibiotics
- Homeopathy can play a major role in the reduction of antibiotics



Future of healthcare for humans and animals

- Chemical substances (and antibiotics!) are only used under strict conditions
- Promoting health with the holistic, patient-centred approach of CAM included is mainstream healthcare
- Positive side effect: reduction of healthcare-costs