



## **Worms and Worming - Fact Sheet**

### **Things you should consider**

- What is your horses worming history?
- How is the pasture your horse grazes managed? (Rested, rotated, shared)
- Do you regularly poo pick?
- How many horses share the pasture?
- Do you know the worming history of all the field mates?
- Are the field mates all treated at the same time?

### **Do you need to worm?**

With growing resistance to worm treatments, worming should only be done when necessary. Faecal worm egg counts (WEC) and Tapeworm tests are routinely run to determine their individual worm burden. You can then worm – or not depending on the results of these simple tests. The results are given in 'eggs per gram (epg)' and a positive result is considered in horse with **MORE THAN 200epg**.

A faecal worm egg count requires a fresh faecal sample (less than 12 hours old). We request a large pinch from about 5 individual faecal balls are taken and placed in an airtight, leak proof container e.g. sandwich bag. Label the sample and drop it into the practice as quickly as possible. If you cannot bring the sample in immediately we recommend refrigerating the sample until you are able to drop it off (ideally within 24 hours of sampling). We can detect all types of worm except for tapeworm and encysted redworm using this simple test. We would recommend testing horses every three months.

Tapeworms are not detected on faecal worm egg counts but can be detected using either a blood test or a saliva swab (both are available through your Vet).

### **A basic worming program**

For adult horses kept on a well-managed pasture that is regularly poo picked and rested, where there are no new horses introduced, a basic worming program could be adopted. If any of your results during the year come back as high then your worming program may need to be adapted to check that

burden levels have decreased. Pregnant mares, foals and youngstock will need to adopt a slightly different approach so speak to your Vet for advice.

<b>Time of year</b>	<b>Basic worming programme</b>
Spring	Faecal worm egg count
Summer	Faecal worm egg count
Autumn	Faecal worm egg count
Late Autumn/early Winter	We would often recommend treating for encysted redworm and tapeworm at this time of year, as these types of worm are not detected on faecal worm egg counts. Tapeworm testing can also be done.

Two weeks after worming, we would often recommend a follow up faecal worm egg count to make sure resistance to the product used hasn't developed. With resistance to common worming products becoming more of a problem, it is important to ensure that the worms in your horse are susceptible to the worming product used!

Unfortunately worming is not black and white and there are lots of factors to consider so please phone your Vet to work out an individual worming programme appropriate for your horse and yard - we are always happy to discuss worming!

**REMEMBER a small worm burden is normal**  
**Statistics say that 80% of worms are found in 20% of horses**