



A Quick Guide to Worm (Faecal) Egg Counts

Why do a faecal egg count (FEC)?

Reduce wormer usage by only worming when necessary and in the long term hopefully save money! Resistance is becoming a problem so by using strategic FECs we can reduce the risk of resistance developing, so wormers work when we most need them.

How to take a faecal egg count!

- Take a fresh dung sample (less than twelve hours old) ensuring you know which horse it has come from.
- Take a good pinch from approximately five different faecal balls in a pile, ensuring your sample size is not too small.
- Double bag your sample or use the pot provided - ensure the air is squeezed out of the bag before sealing or fill the pot. Make sure it is leak proof!
- Don't delay getting the sample to your Vet or lab for testing, if there is a short delay whilst you collect the whole yard, keep it in the fridge (away from your food!). The sample should not be frozen.
- Ensure your sample is clearly labelled with your name and your horses' name.

How often should you perform a FEC?

Roughly every three months is recommended. Your Vet may recommend a further test two weeks after worming has been performed to check the wormer has been effective and resistance is not developing.

Does a faecal egg count detect all worms?

No it does not detect encysted redworm or tapeworm. Unfortunately there is no good test yet for encysted redworm so this should be factored into your worming programme. Tapeworm can be detected using blood or saliva tests, which are available through your Vet.

What happens once I have done my FEC?

Your Vet or SQP (Suitably Qualified Person) will report the worm egg count results and advise whether your horse needs worming. Usually worming is recommended over 200epg (eggs per gram). Your Vet or SQP will be able to tailor your worming programme to your yard.

Worms and worming is a complicated subject so for any questions about sampling your horse or planning your worming program please give us a call on 01296 621840 or email equine@whvc.co.uk