

Explanation of Equine Faecal Worm Egg Counts

What do your results mean?

Once we receive your samples we will have your results ready within 24-48 hours, we can then contact you either by email, fax or phone to inform you of our findings. Your results will be calculated into eggs per gram. The table below will help you decide whether you need to worm or not by showing you how many eggs per gram are classed as a positive sample and therefore require treatment.

Eggs per Gram	Significance	Treatment?
0 - 200	Negative	Not required – In 3 months time a repeat worm egg count should be carried out.
> 200	Positive	Worming treatment required – Type of wormer to be used depends on time of year.

Worm egg counts should be carried out every 3 months, whether or not your horse received treatment at the end of the last three-monthly interval.

Worming Calendar

Month	Worming programme
November/December	Treat for encysted redworm using a fenbendazole or moxidectin wormer (e.g. Panacur Equine Guard or Equest). Equest will also treat bots. Also treat for tapeworm using a double dose of pyrantel(e.g. Strongid P) or a single dose of praziquantel (e.g. Equitape)*
March	Worm Egg Count – only worm those with a count higher than 200epg
June	Worm Egg Count – only worm those with a count higher than 200epg
September	Worm Egg Count – only worm those with a count higher than 200epg
November/December	Worm as last November/December

*Equest Pramox will treat both encysted redworm and tapeworm.

We recommend that your horses should be treated for tapeworm and encysted redworm once per year, even if your horse's worm egg counts are lower than 200epg. This is due to the fact that worm egg counts are not sensitive to these types of worms.

Resistance to wormers

This problem has become more common in the last few years and is now considered a significant problem, as if worms develop resistance to the wormers currently available there are no new products to use to treat them. It is therefore essential that we only treat horses that have a high worm burden in order to keep the current wormers working effectively. The best and easiest way to determine which horses have a high worm burden is to use worm egg counts.

Resistance has occurred due to worming programmes that suggest we worm horses every 4-10 weeks, leading to worming products being overused and being used when they might not necessarily be needed. It is important to note that not all horses grazing together will have the same worm burden, with age being a significant factor. It is therefore important to worm egg count each horse individually.

We can help you check for resistant worms within your horse by doing a worm egg count reduction test. This involves sampling before worming first. If your horse has a positive result, worm your horse and then send us another sample in 10-14 days. If the wormer you have used is ineffective, your horse's worm egg count will still be 200epg or more.

Good horse management techniques can help reduce worm burdens

- Keep grazing as clear of droppings as possible, remove droppings at least twice a week.
- Do not overstock your pasture.
- Where possible, have rest periods for your grazing areas.
- Grazing with other species such as sheep has been shown to be useful.
- Use a weigh tape to ensure that your horse is being dosed correctly. Underdosing leads to wormer resistance.