



FACTSHEET

EQUINE FAECAL WORM EGG COUNTS

Faecal Worm Egg Count (FWEC) is a useful guide to ascertain the level of adult worms laying eggs within your horse, and should be used as part of your horse's worming programme. FWEC's can reduce the amount of wormers you need to give to your horse.

All we need is 2-3 nuggets, ideally from different piles, with your surname and your horse's name written on a sealed bag. The sample needs to be as fresh as possible.

When to do FWEC?

³⁵₁₇ From Spring to Autumn every 6-8 weeks.

³⁵₁₇ New arrivals on the yard before turning out with other horses, and include the pinworm test.

Results:

FWEC are a measure of the number of worm eggs found in a horse's droppings, this gives us an accurate representation of the amount of adult worms within your horse's intestine. The results are measured in eggs per gram (epg).

Results < 200 epg would not require a wormer. Those with results 200 epg and over will require a wormer. The wormer recommended will depend on the horse's worming history and the level of burden within the horse. Very high scores will be asked to re-test 10-14 days after treatment to ensure the wormer has worked and no signs of anthelmintic resistance.

This test cannot detect:

³⁵₁₇ **Encysted and immature larvae** (small redworm).

³⁵₁₇ **Bots**, this is because they emerge as larvae not eggs.

³⁵₁₇ An accurate level of **tapeworm**, as they release their eggs in segments.

³⁵₁₇ **Pinworm** lay their eggs around the outside of the rectum, therefore their eggs do not show up in the FWEC.

Additional Testing:

Pinworm test

This test is done by getting a piece of sellotape and pressing around the rectum and either wrapping round a slide, or folding gently on itself to then be wrapped around a slide at the surgery. This test is either **positive** or **negative**.

Anthelmintic (wormers) resistance

Anthelmintic resistance is when the active ingredient in the wormer is no longer effective on the parasite population. To test for this we will perform a FWEC, following this the horse is then wormed and a repeat FWEC is done 10-14 days later, if eggs are found again, it would suggest that anthelmintic resistance is present and the use of a different class of wormers may be necessary.

Tapeworm:

An ELISA blood test gives a more accurate level of tapeworm exposure.

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