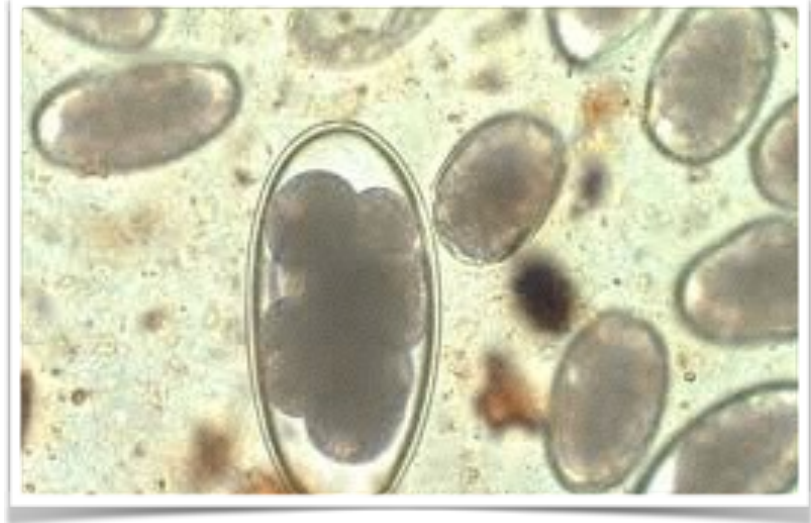


EQUINE NEWS

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How to collect and submit a good fecal sample

1. Samples need to be fresh to be valid. Samples should be collected immediately after defecation for most accurate results.
2. Samples should be placed into a clean, dry container. Ziplock sandwich bags work well. Squeeze out the air before sealing. Be sure samples are labelled with the horse's name and the date and time of collection.
3. Immediately after collection, samples need to be refrigerated until submission.
4. Submission to the clinic needs to occur within 24hrs of collection.



Building a Parasite Control Program

The Basics

In an average herd of horses, 80% will naturally have a low parasite burden and 20% will have a high enough parasite burden to require treatment.

Identification of parasite burden in an individual horse is done by analysis of feces via fecal egg count (FEC).

Rotational deworming is no longer recommended because of the rise in parasitic resistance to current deworming products.

Tapeworms and bots cannot be detected on FECs. Therefore, it is recommended to treat all horses once a year in the winter time with a dewormer that targets these parasites.

Understanding your FEC

What we can assess on FEC:

- Small strongyles (cyathostomes) and Large strongyles (strongylus)
- Roundworms (Ascarids)

What we cannot assess on FEC:

- Bot larvae burden
- Tapeworm burden

What's my number?

The results are in eggs per gram (epg). Research has developed cut off values based on the epg to determine if treatment is warranted or not. This will be decided by your veterinarian based on your individual farm situation.

Deworming Alternatives

There is a growing number of products marketed as alternative or natural deworming. Please consult with your veterinarian before adding these products to your program. Remember that high parasite burdens can cause severe illness and even death in horses. Relying on products that lack scientific evidence of efficacy can put your animal at unnecessary risk.

When to test?

Every farm is unique. An individual parasite program should be implemented by consulting with your veterinarian. The following are general guidelines:

Horses should be tested in the spring (April/May), mid summer (July) and fall (Sept/Oct).

Horses with elevated FECs should be treated as per your veterinarian's recommendations.

Who to test?

For an adult population, every horse on property should be tested. If a random sampling is collected, individuals with high burdens will not be properly identified. Failure to identify and treat high shedding horses puts the individual horse at risk of illness and puts the herd at risk with higher parasite shedding onto the pasture.

Special considerations - pregnant mares

Pre-breeding - deworm based on FEC

1st trimester - deworm once fetus is over 60 days

2nd trimester - deworm midway

3rd trimester - deworm 1 month prior to foaling date

Special considerations - foals and horses under 2 yrs old

Because the target parasite in foals is different than in adult horses, different dewormers and different doses are used. Please consult with your veterinarian to create a deworming program for your foal.

Start deworming at 2 months of age.

Repeat deworming every 8-12 weeks until 6 months old.

Perform FEC at 6 months of age. Program thereafter will be tailored to meet individual needs based on risk.

Impaction colic in foals - foals with very high worm burdens are at risk of fatal worm impactions if dewormed inappropriately. Always consult your vet before deworming your foal.