

The Mill

Why do a Fecal Egg Count?

The Problem:

Parasites are becoming resistant to current de-worming products. De-worming products are becoming less effective because of this.

Horse's health can be adversely affected with a heavy parasite burden (colic, chronic coughing, poor keeper, poor performance, unthrifty, internal organ damages, etc...)

How has this happen?

- Over use of de-worming products
- Inappropriate use of de-worming products
- Not knowing what parasites were present when de-worming
- Deworming according to the calendar
- Treating all horses the same when de-worming
- Many other factors affecting grazing practices and pasture management

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS (THERE ARE MANY MORE)

What can we do?

Performing fecal egg counts on a regular basis and tailoring your deworming program based on these results is the single most important thing you can do to improve your parasite control strategy.

Treat with the right drug, at the right dose, at the right time, in the right horse.

What is the ultimate goal of any deworming program?

To reduce parasite reproduction and contamination of the environment

Interesting facts

20% of the horses harbor 80% of the parasites

Worming according to the calendar encourages parasite resistance.

Not all horses are equally susceptible to parasite infection.

Removing feces from the environment before eggs become infective provides parasite control that is superior to deworming.

New additions to a herd can introduce resistant strongyles to a previously “clean” population.

More than 150 different parasites can infect horses (only a small number pose a real problem for horses)

The most important parasites (the big 4) to target are round worms, Large and small strongyles and tape worms.

Younger horses are more prone to problems associated with parasites and should be treated differently than adult horses.

The active ingredient in dewormers influences the interval between deworming times

Horses pastured with donkeys are more likely to harbor lung worms and should be treated accordingly

Pasture management practices that may help.

Rotate pastures

Do not overcrowd pastures

Plant annuals such as winter wheat

Rotate livestock species in pastures when possible

Quarantine and deworm all new horses prior to introduction to the herd

Remove feces from grazing areas on a regular basis (every few days)

Avoid feeding from the ground

Harrow pastures only when climatic conditions (hot summer temps) will kill the developing parasites

Leave freshly dragged pastures empty for several weeks to allow the weather to kill the maximum number of parasites.

There are three classes of dewormers

Benzimidazoles (Fenbendazole, Oxibendazole)

Pyrantel (Strongid)

Macrocyclic lactones (Ivermectin, Moxidectin)

How to make sure the proper dose is given

Here is a way to estimate your horse's weight

Measure heart girth (directly behind elbow)

Measure body length (from point of shoulder to point of buttocks)

$\text{girth} \times \text{girth} \times \text{length} \div 330 = \text{body weight}$

Consult your veterinarian if there are any questions concerning your horse's fecal egg count results and recommendations about your deworming program.

Egg reappearance period

Moxidectin- 12 weeks

Ivermectin- 8 weeks

Pyrantel- 4 to 6 weeks

Benzimidazoles- 4 weeks

Classifications of shedders

Low egg shedders	<200 eggs per gram of feces	deworm? no
Moderate egg shedders	200 to 500 eggs per gram of feces	deworm? maybe
High egg shedders	>500 eggs per gram of feces	deworm? Yes

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