

Deworming & Fecal Egg Counts



A fecal egg count (FEC) is required to determine how many parasite eggs a horse is shedding, and therefore how often the horse should be dewormed in a year. An FEC consists of collecting 2-3 fresh fecal balls and examining them under a microscope. A deworming program can save money and allow the use of less dewormer.

When to perform a FEC:

- At least once yearly for every horse on the farm before deworming
- Testing new horses before introducing to pasture
- Testing the efficacy of a deworming product with high shedders

3 categories based on amount of parasite eggs being shed:

1. A "**low shedder**" has 200 eggs per gram (EPG) or less
 - Typically needs to be dewormed *twice* a year (spring and fall)
 - I. Spring – ivermectin or moxidectin (Quest)
 - II. Fall (after the first frost) – ivermectin with praziquantel (Equimax) or moxidectin with praziquantel (Quest Plus)
2. A "**moderate shedder**" has 200-500 EPG
 - Typically needs to be dewormed *3-4 times* a year
 - I. Spring – ivermectin or moxidectin (Quest)
 - II. Late Summer – pyrantel pamoate (Strongid paste) or fenbendazole (Panacur)
 - III. Fall (after the first frost) – ivermectin with praziquantel (Equimax) or moxidectin with praziquantel (Quest Plus)
3. A "**high shedder**" has >500 EPG
 - Typically needs to be dewormed *4-6 times* a year (potentially every 2 months)
 - I. Spring – ivermectin or moxidectin (Quest)
 - II. Late Summer – pyrantel pamoate (Strongid paste) or fenbendazole (Panacur)
 - III. Fall (after the first frost) – ivermectin with praziquantel (Equimax) or moxidectin with praziquantel (Quest Plus)
 - IV. Winter – pyrantel pamoate (Strongid paste) or fenbendazole (Panacur)
 - V. A reduction count performed 2 weeks after deworming is recommended for horses with greater than 1000 eggs per gram

Additional information:

1. Horses should be dewormed based on an accurate weight estimate with a weight tape. This is especially important for very large or very small horses/foals to avoid under- or overdosing; bigger horses may need more than one tube.
2. All horses should be dewormed for tapeworms at least once per year (praziquantel). The most ideal time to do this is in late fall, after a frost.
3. Once per year, all horses should be treated for encysted small strongyles. This requires a Panacur PowerPac or Quest / Quest Plus.
4. To deworm for bots, we recommend using an ivermectin or moxidectin product in the fall.

5. We recommend using original name-brand products. Unfortunately, some generic (and low-cost) products have been shown to have less than the needed amount of active drug compound; therefore there is no real cost saving and you can be contributing to resistance.



As every situation is unique, it is best to work with your veterinarian to develop the ideal program for your horse!

Deworming Protocol Guidelines

Recommendations:

1. Pasture management:
 - a. Rotate pastures
 - b. Remove manure frequently
 - c. Harrow/drag pastures in hot weather and keep horses off the pasture for 2 months
 - d. Avoid overstocking pastures
2. Testing the efficacy of a deworming product:
 - a. Fecal egg count reduction test – the worm egg count should decrease 90% when a fecal egg count is repeated 14 days after a deworming product is used
 - i. Recommended on horses who have 1000 eggs per gram or more
3. Performing a fecal egg count:
 - a. To provide the greatest information about an individual horse's parasite load, it is important to know when the horse was last dewormed and with which product.
 - i. For moxidectin (Quest products) – it must be 16 weeks or more since the horse was dewormed to perform a fecal egg count
 - ii. For ivermectin (Zimectrin or Equimax products) – it must be 12 weeks or more since the horse was dewormed to perform a fecal egg count
 - iii. For fenbendazole (Panacur) or pyrantel (Strongid) – it must be 9 weeks or more since the horse was dewormed to perform a fecal egg count

Caution: Do not allow any dogs to lick up dewormer that is dropped by your horse.

Mare and Foal Deworming



Recommendations:

1. Pregnant Mares:
 - a. Deworm as usual for beginning of pregnancy, but when the last set of pre-foaling vaccines are administered at 4-6 weeks pre-foaling, please deworm with a product containing ivermectin with praziquantel (Equimax) or moxidectin with praziquantel (Quest Plus)
2. Foal Schedule: *important to dose by weight, especially when using Quest/Quest Plus
 - a. 2 months of age – fenbendazole (double dose of Panacur or SafeGuard)
 - b. 4-5 months of age – pyrantel pamoate (Strongid)
 - c. 6 months of age – moxidectin with praziquantel (Quest Plus)- dose based off of weight. Do NOT overdose.
 - d. 8-9 months of age – fenbendazole (double dose of Panacur or SafeGuard)
 - e. 10 months of age – ivermectin
 - f. 12 months of age – pyrantel pamoate (Strongid)
3. Once a year old, recommend deworming at least every 4 months. At 2 years of age, you may deworm based on shedding status.