

What is an Equine WormTest

Equine WormTest measures the number of worm eggs in the dung sample of your horse.

Monitoring the worm burden of your horse helps to identify when, and if, treatment for worms is required. Failure to “worm” horses when necessary may lead to weight loss, colic, scouring and death and to contamination of the paddock. Future grazing of horses in that paddock may expose them to a heavy worm challenge.

Worming when not necessary is a waste of time and money and may promote the development of worm resistance to a particular drench.

Appearance alone is NOT a good indicator of whether a horse requires worming. A visual inspection may indicate that the animal has a severe worm burden, but often, substantial worm burdens will exist in a horse that appears normal.

Some horses have a degree of resistance to worm infection, do not develop significant worm burdens and therefore do not need treatment.

Regular monthly *Wormtest* monitoring can provide a useful guide to the timing of worm treatments. Every horse or selected horses from groups of similar age can be tested. Testing can be performed at critical times during the year. For example -

- before moving horses to a new paddock;
- at foaling;
- before considering a summer drench; or
- before releasing new horses onto the property etc.

If a horse presents with the clinical symptoms of worms, such as tail rubbing, weight loss, scouring or colic consult your veterinarian. Together you may decide to use *Wormtest* to assess the level of worm infection.

The effects of worm infection are greater in young horses such as foals, weanlings or yearlings. For this reason you should not neglect the worm control program for these “younger at risk” horses. The use of *Wormtest* can help determine the optimal treatment interval for young horses.

To protect unweaned foals from the effects of worms monitor the worm level of their mothers. Testing pregnant and just foaled mares is also important.

If worm treatments are not working effectively, *Wormtest* can also be used to assess the efficacy of a treatment. Treatment failure may be due to resistance; underdosing or use of an unsuitable drench. Incorrect weight estimation or the failure to administer a paste correctly can also cause inadequate worm removal.

Wormtest can become a useful tool in assisting to develop a yearly worming plan and to maintain the health of your horse.

TEST KITS

Kits are available from:

Animal Health Laboratory
Mt Pleasant Laboratories
Dept Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment
165 Westbury Road
Prospect TAS 7250
P: 03 6777 2111
E: specimenreception@dpipwe.tas.gov.au