



Westgate Labs worm counts working for YARDS

Find out how to make a worm count based programme work with the horses on your yard

HOW TO TAKE A SAMPLE



One.



Two.



Three.

You will need to organise a dung sample for a worm count from each horse starting the programme.

Collect the samples:

Follow our easy photo guide. Choose a day to collect samples when worming is due or overdue for most of the horses. This is important so that you don't get a false result caused by wormer still working in your horse. The dung should be as fresh as possible but can still be posted the day after collection.

1. Use the glove to pick up about five small pinches from a fresh dung pile.
2. Press the dung into the sample container, filling it to the top to exclude air.
3. Label the sample with horse's name and number it too if you are sending more than one sample in the envelope. Please write in ball point pen as water based inks may wash off.
4. Put the container in the plastic bag. Do not put any paperwork in with it.
5. Put sample, paperwork and payment or voucher into the post paid return bag. Pop in the post box.



Four.



Five.



Visit Youtube to watch 'Taking a horse's worm count sample to send to Westgate Labs'

■ contact us

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(01670) 791994
info@westgatelabs.co.uk

■ your horse's records

Log in direct to the database for your results and test record. Three-monthly email reminders to either test or worm, will help you keep on track.

■ Pinworm

If you suddenly find thin, white, pointy worms appearing in your horses' droppings these are probably pinworms. They are a very common problem, difficult to get rid of but usually causing no more than irritation in the horse. Ask for our pinworm information sheet.

A word about the test

Westgate use the industry standard 'modified McMaster' egg count method. Samples are prepared using a centrifuge to spin out more worm eggs. Two slides are run out for examination under the microscope and an average count made of the two. This method is far superior to simple strained methods which you might find elsewhere.

Join us

Join us on Facebook and Twitter. Ask your worming questions and join in the wormy discussions. Visit our website for further information:

www.westgatelabs.co.uk

www.facebook.com/westgate.labs
[@westgatelabs](https://twitter.com/westgatelabs)



WESTGATE EXTRAS

Dear yard owner,

It has always been our mission to improve the way horses are wormed in the UK and that remains at the heart of everything we do. Good worm control is fundamental to the management of a larger yard. These days that means the correct use of a test based programme with worming doses added as appropriate. Times have changed and the old ways are not the best, with drug resistance becoming a real problem.

We try to make it as easy and economical as possible to run a worm count based programme on a yard. The yard price per count is a flat rate so remains the same whether you test one sample from say a new horse or the entire yard. The service is fully backed up by qualified advice whenever you need it from the friendly team of SQPs, no question too small.

We hope the information in this brochure will help you to promote the system on your yard and to understand just how easy it is to get started.

At Westgate we strive to give a friendly and professional service which is second to none. Westgate Labs are AHDA Associate Foundation Partners and members of BETA, winning the prestigious BETA innovations award in 2005.

We look forward to working with you,
Best wishes,

*Gillian, David & the
Westgate team*

www.westgatelabs.co.uk

■ 'Think twice before using wormers'*

Worming advice has changed. All the experts now agree that good worm control starts with using worm counts, only adding wormer doses as they are needed. Phew, this is what we have been saying for years!

Resistance to wormers

Horse worms are getting clever and evolving to become resistant to some worming drugs, especially those which have been around for a long time. This means that you can no longer rely on keeping your horse worm free purely by giving him wormers.

It's much better to know what is going on and target the wormers at the wormy horses and at specific seasonal problems like tapeworms and encysted redworms.

Using wormers sparingly should also mean that they stay effective for those times when our horses really need them.

Using worm counts

Basing your worming on faecal egg counts is the modern approach to worm control. This does not mean that you give up worming, only that the correct doses are used at the correct time and horses that don't need worming are not wormed. Importantly you can identify the horses who carry the parasites and treat them accordingly.

All that is really needed is for one person to take control and make sure that everyone joins in. You can ask for advice from our friendly team at any time, it's all part of the service.

TARGETED WORMING

"I have found Westgate to be always helpful, fast and efficient yet offering a personal touch."

Sue

How does a worm count programme work?

A normal, mature, healthy horse can follow a very simple pattern of testing and dosing. The basic idea is to test a small dung sample about three times a year to check for worm eggs. If all is well then don't worm. Complete the year by treating for tapeworm and possible encysted redworm as winter begins. Foals, youngsters, neglected or older horses will require more attention.

I've heard that worm counts don't show all the worms though?

That is quite correct. Nevertheless a worm count is still a very useful tool. Encysted stages of redworm are not mature so don't lay the eggs which are counted in the dung sample. It is important to treat with an effective product in the winter months then you can rely on your worm count results over the next season. Tapeworm eggs often appear in dung samples but you still need to cover tapeworms in your plan as the test is not definitive. Alternately ask your vet for an 'Elisa' blood test.



How do I start this programme on my yard?

You should already have a worming policy in place on your yard. If horses are mixing yet everyone is 'doing their own thing' then you have a situation where parasites will thrive as wormy horses re-infect the horses that have been wormed. Some horse owners will have very fixed ideas about worming based either on long established practices such as rotating wormers annually or following a programme set out by the wormer manufacturers.

! You may need to point out the BVA guidelines (download a poster from: http://www.bva.co.uk/public/documents/BVA_Anthelmintics_poster.pdf)

Horse owners should know that regular dosing is no longer recommended and is causing widespread resistance problems. It is very hard to change from what was looked upon as 'best practice' until a few years ago. It is important that everyone follows the new method and that all the horses are sampled together.

- Consider keeping the horses in smaller groups so that parasite infection is easier to contain.
- Some horses will need testing and also worming. This is not popular but is part of gaining control of worms.
- Youngsters need more frequent tests and worming than mature horses. Please ask.
- Make sure any worming dose is well targeted to the weight of the horse. Check the dose on the syringe as some are small and one tube is insufficient.
- Larger yards should worm for tapeworm twice per year alternating the drug used. Combine praziquantel with winter worming for encysted redworm. Use double pyrantel six months later (also gives limited short term effect for redworm).
- Results should improve over time, leading to less worming being needed.

I'm reluctant to give up regular worming, I'd rather be safe than sorry.

Following a complicated and expensive worming programme does not guarantee that your horse will be free of parasites. Westgate Labs test many horses who have been on worming programmes and still have medium or high worm count results. Growing resistance to some worming drugs means that they may not be effective for your horse. This can only get worse in years to come and there are no new worming drugs. Regular worm counts can identify parasite problems, sometimes only affecting one horse in a herd, so they can be correctly treated.

Isn't it complicated to do?

Not at all! Westgate Labs make it very easy by providing a free collection kit and information pack.

Simply phone for yours:

01670 791994

or order online at:

www.westgatelabs.co.uk

The yard pack includes as many collection containers as needed, large pre paid return bags and commercial rate order forms. Full SQP back up and advice is always available so there is never any need to feel confused about what to do next.

Isn't it expensive?

This is an important question. The main aim of using a worm count programme is to have a healthier horse with good worm control but one of the side benefits is that it is usually a less expensive option. Most people save money on worming by using a targeted programme, sometimes they save a lot. When you first start there may be a period when you need to both count and give a wormer for instance when a horse proves to have a parasite problem. Using tests means that the problem is recognised and being dealt with.

How can I keep track of a worm count programme?

Once we have your email address keep on track with our three monthly reminder to either 'test or worm'.

You can log in to your results record on line. Many yards set up a spreadsheet system or print out the results and put them on a notice board. Record cards are also available just ask.

Lots of helpful advice and information can be found at **www.westgatelabs.co.uk**



friendly, free advice - whichever

Westgate service you choose



faecal egg counts should be the

cornerstone of worming

A targeted programme for mature, healthy horses

Follow BVA guidelines and only worm when you need to. Make it work well for your horse with good management:

- If possible keep horses with the same grazing companions, not constantly changing groups.
- Poo-pick as much as you can, at least twice a week to keep parasite levels down.
- Rest and rotate grazing and don't overcrowd fields.
- Cross graze eg with sheep.
- Keep new horses separate until tested and treated accordingly.

When first starting to use a targeted worming programme all horses should be tested, at a point when worming is due or slightly overdue, so as to get a true result.

	A sample targeted worming programme - for healthy horses, kept at low risk from worms -
Winter	Winter 'Worm count (optional)'. Worm for encysted redworm e.g. with Equest or Panacur Equine Guard (if no resistance present). Equest also treats bots. Equest Pramox also treats tapeworm
Spring	1 Worm count all horses. Worm any with a count of 200 + e.p.g. No need to worm any with low or clear counts.
Summer	2 Worm count as above
Autumn	3 Worm count as above Worm for tapeworm if not done already e.g. with Equitape or double pyrantel.
Winter	Worm as for last Winter
Spring	Begin worm counts again

Here's how to begin:

1. Give out labelled pots for each horse. Samples from overnight stabling are fine.
2. Choose a day to collect samples when worming is due soon.
3. After results, worm any horses with test results of 200 e.p.g. or more. Do not worm clear or low count horses.
4. Wait three months and test again. As before, target your wormers where they are needed. Test every three months except for mid winter. (See below.)
5. Cover tapeworm and encysted redworm with a combined winter dose e.g. Equest Pramox (praziquantel and moxidectin = 'pra-mox')
6. Add a second tapeworm dose six months later e.g. double dose Strongid -P (double pyrantel).
7. New horses should be tested and wormed as necessary before joining the herd.
8. Please email or ring for worming help if you need it.
9. Don't forget! Keep your pasture as clear of droppings as you can. Keep records of each horse's counts and worming over the year.



Helping your clients to accept change...

Clients should respect the policy of the yard owner and recognise that it is your responsibility to look after the welfare of the animals in your charge.

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate have ruled that the yard owner has a legal right to purchase wormers for the animals in his/her charge, with the agreement of the horse owner, and to pass on the costs as part of the livery fee (but you cannot buy wormers and re-sell them to a third party).

Some yards have some clients on a targeted worming programme mixing with horses on regular dosing but this is not ideal.

It is worth emphasising that horses on regular dosing programmes can still carry many undetected parasites and we regularly find unexpected high counts in wormed horses.

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If you are getting good results on this system then you can widen the gaps between counts as time goes on, but at first it is important that you don't leave too long a gap. Youngsters need shorter gaps.

You may want to add a spring tapeworm dose to the above, or perhaps to use a combined wormer such as Equimax or Eequalan-duo if you need to treat redworm and tapeworm at the same time.

It is important to worm for encysted redworm in the winter, even if the counts are clear as parasites can remain in the dormant larval stage for a long time within the horse before making their presence known as mature egg-laying adults.

This plan is only one of many possibilities but will give you an idea of how targeted worming works. We are always here to help you with the plan that will suit your horses so do get in touch.

Why not have a chat with your vet before you start?

