

## Other things to consider when integrating a WEC into your yard worm control programme:

### Pasture Management

**'Poo Picking'** - markedly reduces the pasture population of worms. This should be done at least twice weekly.

**Field Rotation** - allows eggs to die off before horses graze the area again. Ideally 1 year gap.

**Co-Grazing** - use other species such as sheep to help reduce egg numbers by acting as 'biological vacuums'



**Quarantining New Horses** - it may be prudent for new arrivals to undergo a period of worming or testing.

**Correct Dosage Rates** - use weight tapes/bridges to improve accuracy.

**Parasite Refugia** - is the parasite population that is not exposed to the drug at the time of treatment. This is the most important way of slowing resistance. Worm control strategies that retain a refugia of worms which are sensitive to wormers in any given population should be encouraged. An adequate refugia population of sensitive worms dilutes the transmission of resistance genes to the next generation of worms.

### Limitations:

While WECs are revolutionising the way we create worming control programs we must be mindful of their limitations:

They do not give an accurate assessment of encysted larvae, bots, pinworms or tapeworm.

A one-off negative WEC does not guarantee the absence of a worm burden. While WEC may give a reasonable indication of pasture contamination sometimes the correlation between the egg counts and the number of adult worms is poor with some adult



worms producing different numbers of eggs per day. This is why we recommend a series of WECs throughout the grazing season to ensure we are not placing animals under increased risk.

### How to use the kit:



Fill out the submission form and write your details on the labelled plastic bag. Inside the labelled bag is a smaller sample bag. Using the glove provided fill the sample bag with a fresh sample of your horse's dung. **Try to collect a few small samples from different portions of the dung** . Use a portion of the mixed sample to place in the sample bag (we only need 2g). Close the bag tightly to **ensure it is sealed against leakage**.

Place the sample bag in the larger labelled plastic bag before putting it in the addressed padded envelope. If this is performed in a flat orientation less than 25mm wide, it can be posted as a large letter.

Fill in the sender details on the label on the reverse of the envelope.



SAMPLES MUST BE SENT FIRST CLASS with a minimum of a **LARGE LETTER STAMP** the same day as they were collected.

Only send one sample per small padded envelope.

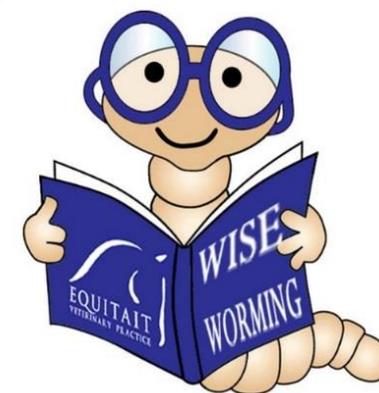
Your results will be sent to you by e-mail and given to the nearest 50 eggs along with a suggested treatment protocol for you to discuss with your own veterinary



surgeon which you should always do prior to choosing a treatment regime.

**Thank you for using the Equitait Wise Worming Worm Egg Count Kit.**

## WORM EGG COUNT KIT



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## Benefits of performing Worm Egg Counts:

- Treat only the horses that are shedding large numbers of worm eggs
- Reduce wormer resistance
- Save money

## Why should we be considering Worm Egg Counts?

**80% of the worm population comes from 20% of the horse population.**

Some horses harbour high worm burdens while others consistently maintain a low burden. In many cases we are routinely worming horses that already have a low parasite burden.



**Resistance is increasing** to our wormers as a result of regular and intensive worming treatments.

**There are currently no new wormer classes being developed for use in horses.**

Routine treatment of all animals at a fixed interval all year round is no longer considered a sustainable or reliable approach. Instead we need to balance treatment, in order to control worm-associated disease, with the requirement to preserve drug effectiveness.

It is important that any worm control strategy is devised in conjunction with your own veterinary surgeon, who

can choose a strategy which is best suited to your individual situation. We would hope they would want to integrate worm egg counting to help combat the problems raised above.

## What is Worm Egg Counting?

Worm egg counting involves a process whereby a known amount of fresh dung is put through a precise process, allowing eggs produced by roundworms to be identified and counted under a microscope. A calculation then converts this count to the number of eggs per gram (**epg**) of faeces. This number of eggs per gram is a standard measure which gives us an estimate as to the number of eggs contaminating the pasture from individual horses.



A WEC is used to identify infestation of common adult worm species including small (cyathostomins) and large adult redworms (strongyles) and large roundworms (ascarids) in your horse.

Our method of sampling is sensitive to an accuracy of 50 epg. Current thinking suggests that counts of 200 epg per gram or less are considered low and often it is recommended that these animals are left untreated. It is thought that a low level of infestation enhances the horse's natural immunity to the parasites and provides a sensitive refugia population. Horses with counts greater than 200 are usually treated with an appropriate wormer.

Prior to any treatment or absence of treatment please consult your veterinary surgeon and follow the data sheet recommendations enclosed with the wormer.

Treatments used will depend upon previous treatments and any known resistance issues.

## When should you Worm Egg Count?

WECs are best utilised during the grazing season (March to early October) every 10 -12 weeks. There is less value in performing these in the winter months when the majority of the larvae are encysted in the horses' gut wall.

Timing of WECs is important if a wormer has been used. They should be done no sooner than the normal egg reappearance period (**ERP**) following the previous wormer treatment (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1: Egg Reappearance Periods**

Generic Name	Example Product Names	ERP
Fenbendazole	Panacur	4-6 wks
Pyrantel	Strongid P, Pyratape P,	4-6 wks
Ivermectin	Eqvalan, Equimax, Noromectin,	8-10 wks
Moxidectin	Equest, Pramox	13 wks

Faecal egg count reduction (**FECR**) tests assess the prevalence of resistance to a particular wormer. To undertake these, a number of horses with high WECs should be tested just prior to and then 14 days following worming and the two results compared. Large farms or yards are advised to do an annual FECR test to determine which wormers are effective on their yard.

Selective treatment based on WECs are currently not generally recommended for yearlings or foals however FECR tests are useful in this age group to help identify which wormers are likely to be effective, particularly against *Parascaris equorum* (ascarids).

If you would like to order more WEC kits or see more in depth information on worm control please go to [www.equitait.com](http://www.equitait.com).

