



Updated Equine Deworming Protocol

The Educated Horseman: Health Series



Overuse of equine deworming products is playing a big role in the development of parasite resistance. This has led veterinarians to recommend a more efficient deworming program based on your individual horse's needs.

Research has shown that 20 percent of horses in a herd can carry as much as 80 percent of the parasites. Therefore, some horses may only need to be treated twice a year.

Veterinarians now are recommending that a fecal exam be conducted on each of your horses twice a year. The fecal egg count will help to determine the number of eggs per gram shed in your horse's manure.

Once your veterinarian knows your horse's parasite burden, the vet can classify your horse into one of three categories: low shedder (less than 200 eggs per gram), moderate shedder (200-500) or high shedder (more than 500 eggs per gram). After your horse has been categorized, an individual deworming program can be recommended that will target parasites at specific parasite life cycle stages.

No treatments are required throughout the summer months (May through September). Most worm eggs will not develop into larvae due to the extreme heat of our summers, and those that do develop die when temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

By developing a new deworming protocol that includes fecal analysis and veterinarian recommended procedures, you can reduce annual spending and parasite resistance in your herd. The classification of your horse into one of the three shedding categories and the time of year in which you deworm your horse is just as important as the following recommendations to help reduce the parasite burden within your herd:

- Rotating pastures.
- Cross-grazing pastures with ruminants.
- Removing manure.
- Avoiding overstocking of pastures (allow 1-2 acres per horse).

Adult horses located in the South can use the following protocol:

Low Shedders

- ♦ **October:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Ivermectin.
- ♦ **January:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Moxidectin plus praziquantel.

Moderate Shedders

- ♦ **October:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Moxidectin.
- ♦ **January:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Moxidectin plus praziquantel.

High Shedders

- ♦ **October:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Moxidectin.
- ♦ **January:** Perform fecal analysis. Treat with Moxidectin plus praziquantel.
- ♦ **April:** Treat with Oxibendazole and/or pyrantel or fenbendazole at a double dose for five days.

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Author

Neely Walker, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor (Equine Specialist)
School of Animal Sciences

References

AAEP parasite control guidelines.
www.aaep.org/custdocs/parasitecontrolguidelinesfinal.pdf

William B. Richardson, LSU Vice President for Agriculture
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
LSU College of Agriculture

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