



BLLENHEIM VETERINARY CENTRE LTD



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Equine faecal egg counts

Controlling the worm burden of our horses is an essential part of our yearly management protocols. Usually, this involves a combination of worming products, pasture management and sometimes herbal remedies. Faecal egg counts (FEC) should be an integral part of these programmes to find out whether or not worming is necessary, and if it is, whether it is effective.

Increasingly, worms are becoming resistant to many of the active ingredients in our worming products. This can happen as a result of inaccurate dosing and overuse of wormers. We only have a limited number of drug groups available to worm our horses so if this resistance worsens we will have a real problem.

So before you reach for the syringe please consider:

Does my horse actually need worming? Some horses will have a low resistance to intestinal parasites and finding out who they are will allow you to target your worming strategy more effectively. If the worm egg count is low worming is unnecessary. Leaving some animals untreated reduces selection pressure for resistance and will reduce the total number of treatments required (and costs).

Is the wormer I'm using effective? FECs will help determine if resistance is a problem with our horses and whether the products we buy are doing their job.

We recommend you collect a sample from a few different nuggets within the same fresh pile of faeces (a large handful will suffice). Place it in a clean container and bring it to us to be packaged and posted.

We are currently charging **£10.00** for the lab fees and interpretation by one of our vets.

If you would also like to have a blood sample taken to look at the tapeworm burden of your horse this can be arranged to get a complete insight into your horses worming requirements.

Call us on 01335 342111 for further information and ask for Katie.