

**MacArthur Barstow & Gibbs**



**VETERINARY SURGEONS**

# Equine Worming Programme 2023-2024



## Worming Programme 2023-2024

Our Worming Programme is under constant review based on reports of resistance to different groups of anthelmintics and weather conditions.

### **Why is worm control important?**

There are multiple types of worms which can all affect our horses' health. Coughing, diarrhoea, "girthy-ness", skin issues and problems with circulation can all be caused by migrating worm larvae. The most serious issues we see with worms are colic signs caused by blockages from large numbers of worms, or damage to the guts from mass emergence from hibernation in the spring. This can be fatal.

We have seen a few horses with liver fluke infection after grazing either with sheep or cattle, or in fields where they have been present. A blood sample is available but if fluke has been confirmed on the pasture, a single dose treatment may be required. This is not included in the worming programme but please let us know if you have concerns about this.



### **Why shouldn't we *routinely* worm horses?**

Unfortunately, there is evidence that all different types of worms are developing resistance to the wormers that we have available for horses. We can use worm egg counts, saliva and serum testing to identify the horses most at risk of worm damage.

Targeted worming will reduce the number of resistant worms in your fields meaning your wormers will be more effective and you will need to give wormers less often.

In addition to overuse of wormers, worming for the incorrect weight is a major cause of resistance to wormers. The most accurate way to get a weight from your horse is for us to use our portable weighbridge. This can also help with accurate dosing for medications other than wormers.

Another way to reduce your horses' worm burden is to remove droppings from their pasture at least twice a week. Larvae can survive a few weeks in hot weather but will remain infective for 6-9 months if protected by cold weather.

### What is included in the worming plan?

**Plan:**

This plan has been prepared to run on from our previous year's programme where horses will have been treated with an Equest Pramox where appropriate in December/January. If you have not been on our worming programme before, please let us know and we can start your horse/pony appropriately and according to his previous worming history.

£160 (Inc. Vat and visit to take blood sample)

Action	When
WEC	Mid-June
WEC	Mid-September
Tapeworm Saliva test +/- Serum redworm test	October- December
WEC	February
WEC	Mid-April

*Wormers will be available at a discounted rate if indicated by testing.*

A visit is included to take a sample of blood from your horse to run the serum redworm test, during this visit we can also weigh your horse at a reduced cost and discuss nutrition and worming concerns you may have. (Outside of the worming scheme, cost of weighing is £30 visit to premises then £10 for one horse, reducing to £5 per horse for over 3 horses).

Wormers and worm egg count kits can be posted at a small extra cost. You will receive text reminders when the wormers are ready to collect or when a sample is due. Please complete the Registration Form and return it to the surgery with your payment.

### **Worming Programme Terms and Conditions:**

1. Payment must be made in full at the time of application.
2. You may cancel your plan and receive a refund for unused products only under the following circumstances: you move your horse outside the normal geographical area covered by MacArthur Barstow & Gibbs; your horse is sold; or upon the death of your horse.
3. Wormers supplied on the plan are only for the horse/s named on the plan. You will receive a reminder when your wormer is ready to collect. The number and type of wormers supplied each year may vary.
4. Please note – all wormers are supplied as 'oral paste'. There may be additional charges for tablets or powder if such an alternative is available.

## Test Details

### Faecal Worm Egg Counts

When submitting samples please follow the guidelines below:

1. Samples submitted must be fresh and less than 4hrs old when collected.
2. Take 'pinches' from at least 5 faecal balls - not just one.
3. Expel air before closing the bag.
4. Keep cool - around 4°C (not in your food fridge though!).
5. Avoid delivering sample on a Friday afternoon or Saturday morning if possible.



- Faecal egg counts do NOT detect encysted stages of small redworm or larvae as the technique relies on adult worms to lay eggs. They therefore provide little evidence of level of infection over the winter months.
- Faecal egg counts do NOT detect tapeworm. A blood test or saliva test will give an indication of level of infection.
- Inaccuracies, i.e. false negatives, can occur if faeces samples are not collected or stored properly prior to testing:

## Equisal Tapeworm Saliva Test

Tapeworms have a 6-month life cycle which is why we traditionally selectively worm horses for them twice a year. Unfortunately, we are now seeing some resistance in tapeworms. For this reason, it is better that we target our worming to horses likely to be affected by tapeworms.

Unlike other worms, tapeworms cannot be identified from faecal egg counts. A saliva test can be picked up from the practice for you to do at home.



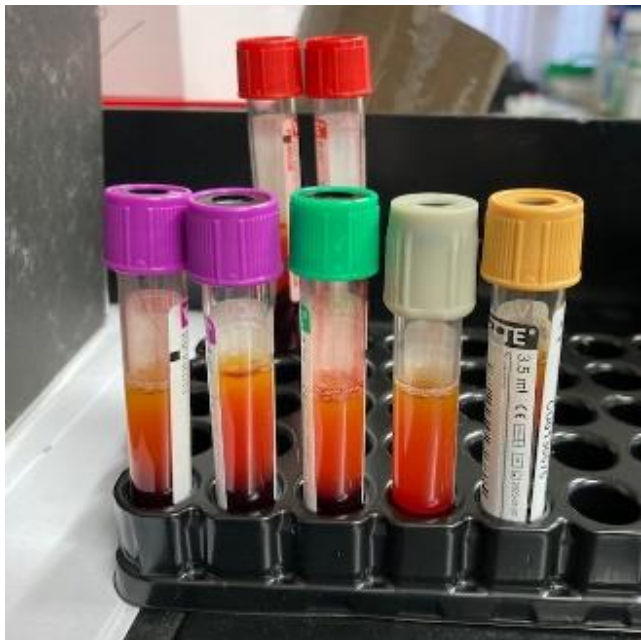
The test involves getting the horse to bite on a spongy swab to obtain a sample of saliva. The swab can then be packaged in the kit and brought back to the practice for us to send away.

Like the faecal samples, this sample should be kept cool and ideally not delivered on a Friday afternoon or Saturday morning if possible.

## Serum Redworm

Only one type of wormer is effective against hibernating redworms, so we need to be selective as to which horses receive this wormer to make sure it stays effective.

A blood test is the best way to identify the presence of redworms in your horse over the winter months when the worms are hibernating and not producing eggs.



It is a very sensitive test but will not work as effectively within 4 months of using a moxidectin based wormer such as Equest. This test is best for horses who have had low worm egg counts over the spring and summer to judge if they require an autumn wormer. Horses with consistently high worm egg counts should be given a wormer in the autumn as we can expect their redworm levels to be high.

***Please remember this programme is designed for adult horses and ponies of known worming history. If you have horses below 3 years or in-foal mares please ask us for details of a worm management routine tailored to them.***

**MacArthur Barstow & Gibbs**



**V E T E R I N A R Y   S U R G E O N S**

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