

FAECAL EGG COUNTS (FEC)

A FEC involves microscopically examining a small amount of faeces and counting the number of eggs seen. We then convert this to “eggs per gram” and recommend deworming your horse using cut off values that are based on research and widely accepted by equine veterinarians around the world.

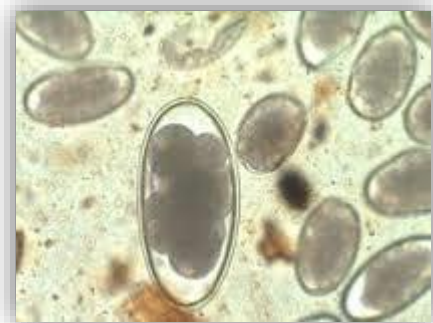
When do I get a FEC done?

- FEC should be performed every 3 months as minimum (ie. 4 times a year, change of season).
- When your horse develops clinical signs commonly associated with worms: weight loss, lethargy, poor coat condition, pot-bellied appearance.
- We routinely recommend FEC when attending mild colics.
- If we have performed a FEC on your horse for the first time we will often recommend a FEC Reduction Test (FECRT) if your result indicates deworming is necessary. This evaluates whether your dewormer has worked and therefore whether your horse has any parasite resistance to the particular product used.
- The FECRT involves:
 1. FEC at day 0 (so when you are due to deworm again/3months)
 2. Administration of dewormer as recommended.
 3. FEC at day 10-14 post deworming.
- The first FEC is best done in the spring or Autumn, not in the heat of summer when there are fewer parasites.



How do I do a FEC?—> quick answer: we do it, so you don't have to get your hands dirty!

1. Check to see when you last wormed and what with. We recommend getting a sample of manure at least 3 weeks after the previous dewormer, this will allow us to see what worms are left and reproducing.
2. Collect a table spoon amount of fresh manure (from within the last 12-24 hours) in an airtight container or the ziplock bag provided in our FEC kits. The fresher the sample the better as eggs will breakdown with time and temperature.
3. Drop the sample straight to Emerald Veterinary Clinic (400 Main St Emerald) or if not possible then keeping it refrigerated until you can drop it off (no longer than 24 hours) as this will slow hatching of eggs. Please note, we do not perform FEC over the weekend, so all drop offs need to be Monday- Friday during business hours.
4. Please call or text us on 0412 619 740 to let us know you are dropping off a sample so we can ensure it is collected and we can have the results back to you within 24 hours. Earlier drop offs are better as they allow us to get them done the same day.



What do the results mean?

For accuracy of results we generally perform the FEC on the same day that it is dropped off. The number of eggs counted to converted to eggs per gram (epg) of faeces which reflects the the number of adult worms that are reproducing (shedding eggs) within your horses gut (ie. their worm burden).

As recommended by the American Association of Equine Practitioners we use 200-300 eggs per gram as our cut off for whether a horse requires treatment with a dewormer. If the FEC is >200-300epg then we recommend deworming and what drug to use is based on what previous dewormer was given and how long ago it was given. If the FEC is <200-300epg and your horse in good overall condition then we recommend a repeat FEC in 3 months or sooner if clinical signs of a worm burden appear.

We get the results to you within 24 hours following manure drop off and are happy to discuss any treatment recommendations or answer any questions you may have.

An additional note

*Due to the nature of FEC's, a FEC result of 0epg does not necessarily mean your horse has no worm burden. We cannot see encysted worm larvae (cyathostomes), tapeworm, pinworm or bot infestations represented in FEC's. Please refer to our client handout for more information regarding worms and strategic worming.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact us on 0412 619 740.