

newsletter

# FEBRUARY 2016

B L E N D I N G N A T U R E A N D T E C H N O L O G Y



## in this month's issue

1. Latest Advice on De Worming
2. How to weigh your horse

## LATEST ADVICE ON DE WORMING

The aim of any worm control programme is to reduce pasture (or environmental) contamination and prevent worms from causing disease or loss of performance while slowing down the rate at which resistance develops.

Resistance occurs when a previously susceptible parasite population can no longer be controlled by an anthelmintic drug. The active ingredient in a horse dewormer kills the sensitive parasites, leaving only the few resistant parasites to proliferate and go on to form new generations of resistant parasites that can no longer be controlled by the drug.

By order of magnitude, reported resistance is as follows: (most resistance to least resistance)  
Fenbendazole > Pyrantel > Ivermectin > Moxidectin

Resistance to these drugs is worldwide and is often present on the majority of yards.

The subject of resistance is far more severe than many of us realise and if resistance is allowed to continue, then all worms will eventually develop resistance to dewormers. If this was to happen, we would no longer be able to revert worm associated disease such as colic, weight loss, diarrhoea and poor performance. It is therefore imperative that horse owners understand how to use dewormers effectively.

It used to be thought that the most effective way was to deworm every 8-10 weeks changing the active drug in your dewormer each time. However studies have now shown that rotating active ingredients can actually increase the rate of multiple drug resistance and that the only way to manage worm related conditions while preventing resistance is to maintain a population of worms that are not exposed to the anthelmintic drug used and to decrease the selection pressure of anthelmintics.

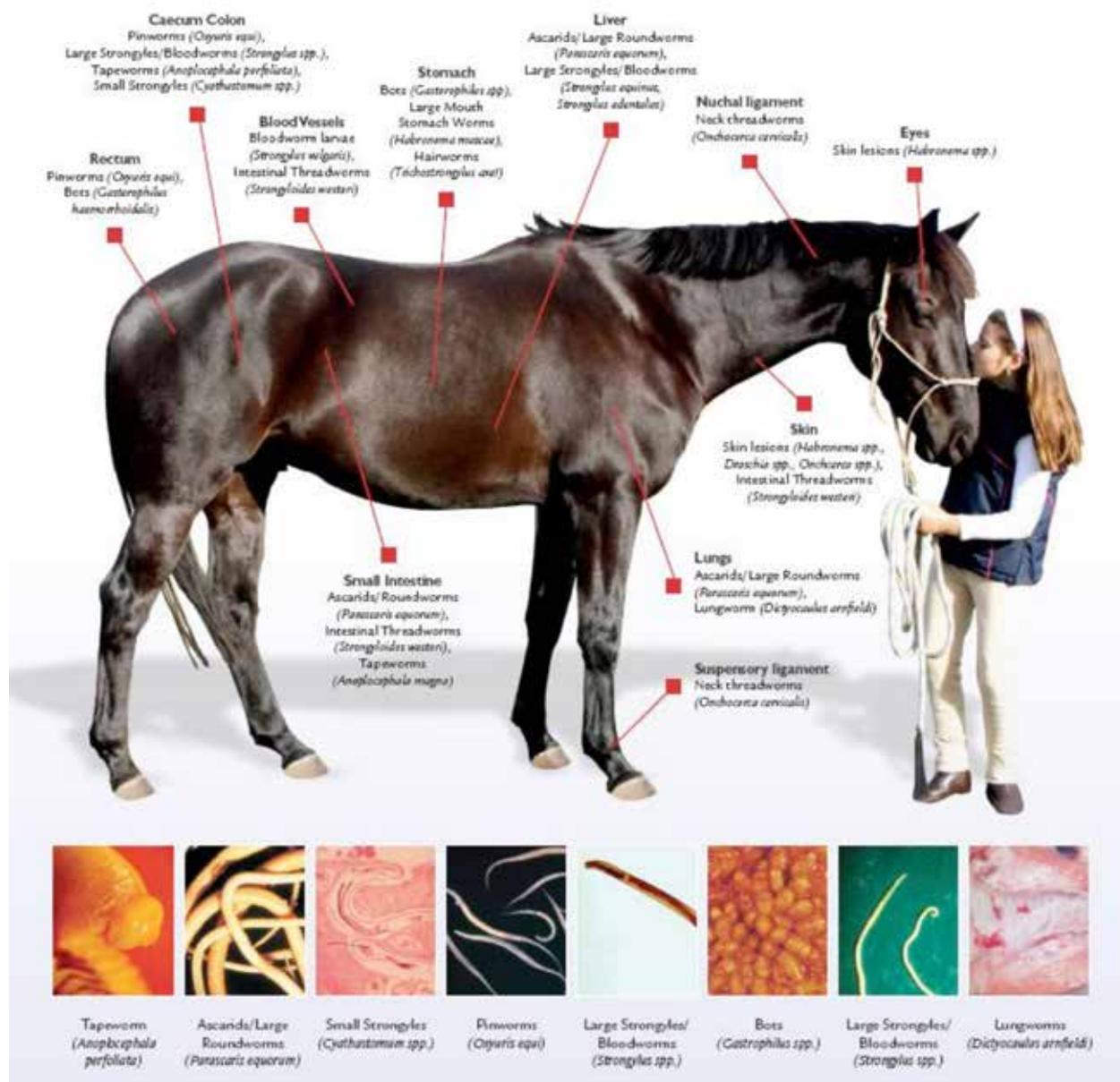
This can be done by using only the maximally effective drugs (so that hardly any worms survive to become resistant) and by using these drugs as infrequently as possible.

Selective Biannual Deworming plan:

- Each adult horse should be dewormed twice a year, in Spring and Autumn using a moxidectin dewormer.
- Not all horses sharing a pasture or living space should be dewormed at the same time. Their deworming should be staggered during the deworming season to maximise the unexposed worms.



- A Faecal egg count reduction test (FECRT) should be performed once a year (in autumn) to determine if there is any resistance developing. This involves performing a faecal egg count (FEC) with your vet, followed by deworming with Moxidectin. A second faecal egg count is then taken two weeks later. If the FEC does not drop by 90% then there is likely a management or resistance problem.
- A FEC is performed three times a year: in winter, spring and summer. This helps to identify horses that are susceptible to worms and are shedding large amounts of worm eggs into the environment. 70% of healthy adult horses develop a good immunity to worms and do not shed many worm eggs back into the environment. However around 30% do not develop good immunity and shed large amounts of eggs into the environment, seen by a large number in their FEC.
- Horses that are shedding more than 250 worm eggs per gram of faeces (seen in the FEC) should be dewormed in winter and summer also. Horses with low shedding do not need to be dewormed during these times.
- Clear your field of faeces regularly and is absolutely crucial after deworming, removing dung at 24hr intervals.
- In a rotational grazing system, always move horses to a fresh pasture well before deworming so that pastures can be contaminated with worms that won't be exposed to the drug before treatment to prevent resistance.
- For all new horses perform a FECRT and stable for 48hrs after treatment. Keep these horses isolated until the FECRT results are given.
- Know your horse's weight so that the correct dosage is given.



## HOW TO WEIGH YOUR HORSE

As a horse owner/care giver it's important to understand how to accurately weigh your horse. Not only will this help you to keep an eye on his overall body weight but also for practical purposes such as calculating his diet, giving de-wormers or medications.

The most accurate method of weighing your horse is on an equine specific weighbridge, however, this type of equipment is not often available, which is why using a weigh tape or a weight formula are the most practical solutions.

### How to use a Weigh tape

Weight tapes are generally widely available at your feed store and they are valuable tools for objectively calculating and monitoring your horse's weight. Look out for weigh tapes that have separate Pony (14.2 and under) and Horse (14.2 and over) measurements as these are the most accurate.

The tape should be placed over the lowest point of the withers passing around the horse as close to the elbow as possible. The tape should be pulled firmly around the horse but not so that it dents the flesh. The tape will be on a slight diagonal angle when in the correct position. Do not place the tape as you would a girth, ensure the tape passes as close to the elbow as possible. To help make the reading as accurate as possible have your horse stood square on a flat surface. If your horse is initially tense wait until he relaxes before taking the measurement. It is helpful to initially have someone with you to reassure the horse and ensure that the tape is in the correct position on both sides of the horse and that it is not twisted.



Picture 1 shows the correct placement of weigh tape.  
(picture courtesy of Effem Equine via [www.bhs.org.uk](http://www.bhs.org.uk))

## TESTIMONIALS

Dear Equus

I would just like to thank you for providing a superior product to the South African market.

My horse, PC, is currently on Equus Cool n Perform 12% and is so well on it.

He is laid back by nature but the Equus Cool n Perform 12% gives him enough energy to work and perform at his best in dressage and show jumping, without getting fizzy.

I have seen vast improvements in his condition, coat quality, hoof growth and mane and tail growth since he started eating Equus Cool n Perform 12%.

Kind Regards  
*Hayley Kruger*



### How to use a weight formula

If you don't have access to a weigh tape then when done correctly a weight formula can be used. Once again make sure that your horse is standing square and is relaxed. Using an ordinary measuring tape measure, around the girth in the same method as with the weigh tape (see picture 1).

Record the reading in cms.

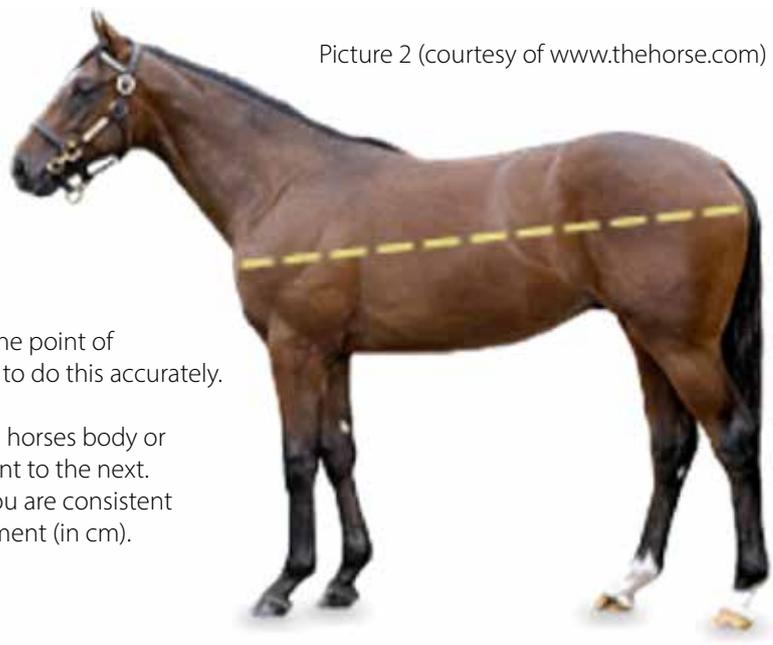
Next, measure from the point of shoulder to the point of buttock (see picture 2). You will need a helper to do this accurately.

The tape can either follow the contours of the horses body or simply be held taut and in place from one point to the next. Ensure that whichever method you choose you are consistent each time you measure. Record this measurement (in cm). Insert the readings into the formula below:

$$\text{Weight (kg)} = \frac{(\text{Girth})^2 \times \text{Length}}{11,877}$$

Both of these methods will only give you a guide to the weight of your horse. However, if used in a consistent manner they can provide an accurate method of monitoring any changes. When using these methods try to ensure that you estimate the weight around the same time of day and in similar circumstances in respect to feed/exercise. This will help to provide a more reliable and consistent estimation.

Picture 2 (courtesy of [www.thehorse.com](http://www.thehorse.com))



Office: 087 820 4580  
Feeding Advice: 073 423 5491 / 083 998 6824  
Email: [info.equus@driehoek.co.za](mailto:info.equus@driehoek.co.za) or [tech.equus@driehoek.co.za](mailto:tech.equus@driehoek.co.za)

*For an absolutely free consultation with no further obligation contact our professional consultants to schedule a visit to your yard.*

Hannah - 073 423 5491 - [tech.equus@driehoek.co.za](mailto:tech.equus@driehoek.co.za)  
Helen - 083 998 6824 - [helen@driehoek.co.za](mailto:helen@driehoek.co.za)