



BREEDIN' BRIEFS

Internal and external parasites can be a cause of poor health for all horses. They are a diverse and complex group of organisms that can have complicated life cycles with migrations and various stages that effect numerous tissues. The performance horse often comes to mind when discussing the merits of an aggressive anti-parasitic program due to their high performance level. However, heavily booked stallions and late pregnant or lactating mares have just as much demand for whole body health. Foals can be especially impacted as they are growing and forming the foundation for the rest of their lives; some damage caused by larval parasite migrations result in permanent loss of functional capacity of organs including the lungs and liver.

ADULT HORSES

Mature horses should be de-wormed every 2-3 months depending on their environment and exposure to other horses. Densely housed horses or those that travel a lot may require more frequent de-worming due to increased likelihood of exposure. One general recommendation is:

- Month 1: Pyrantel pamoate
- Month 4: Fenbendazole
- Month 7: Ivermectin + Praziquantel
- Month 10: Oxibendazole
- Month 13: Moxidectin

Repeat Cycle

FOALS

Foals should be aggressively dewormed at an early age to prevent ascarid migration damage to the liver and lungs. Recommendations are:

- High concentration of foals:*
- Months 1,3 & 5: Fenbendazole
 - Months 2,4 & 6: Pyrantel pamoate
 - 6 to 12 months: daily in-feed de-worming

- Lower concentration of foals:*
- 2 months old: Pyrantel pamoate-double dose
 - 4 months old: Ivermectin
 - 6 months old: Pyrantel pamoate-double dose
 - 8 months old: Ivermectin + Praziquantel
 - 10 months old: Oxibendazole
 - 12 months old: Ivermectin

Great progress has been made in the safety and efficacy of anti-parasitic agents. The keys to successful internal parasite control are 1) rotation of products to address all organisms since no single product is effective against all parasites (this is true even with adult horses on daily in-feed dewormer; an ivermectin containing product should be used twice a year), 2) treat all horses in the herd, even those that don't look poor, so that they do not shed and affect the others and 3) monitor efficacy of your program with routine fecal egg counts.

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