

# For Your Information

Courtesy Of:

## Cotati Large Animal Hospital

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## Parasite Control in Horses

Today we are seeing widespread resistance to many dewormers currently available for use in horses due to the misuse of the products we currently have available to us. Although deworming horses at regular intervals with predetermined drugs is easy and convenient, we now have the tools to target parasites in the horse better and to keep levels low in the herd using less medication.

Horses vary in their susceptibility to internal parasites and therefore should be treated as individuals when it comes to parasite control. Improper use of dewormers in the past has led to the development of resistant parasites. A more thoughtful approach to equine parasite control will both save you money and limit further spread of resistant parasites within the herd. This paper will provide guidelines for designing a parasite control program for your ranch. Using these recommendations, you will find that while some adult horses need to be dewormed 4 times a year, others only need 2 or less treatments per year. Many owners also forget that manure control is just as important to parasite control as deworming medication. Parasite eggs and larvae are deposited into the pasture through the manure. The parasites then grow and move onto the ground where the horse is foraging. Breaking the parasites' lifecycle is accomplished by frequently picking up manure and composting it. Feeding off the ground in a tub or manger is also important.

It is important to first do a fecal exam on your animals before even thinking about which dewormer to select for them. By performing a fecal floatation test, you will not only know whether or not they have parasites, but also the type and quantity. We recommend performing one at least twice a year. More tests may be needed if horses have a heavy parasite load, or to determine if the drug selection was effective for your animals. This determination is usually performed 2 weeks after the medication was given, and is often referred to as a Fecal Egg Count Reduction Test. It is important to treat animals that are in the same pasture or facility as a herd and treat everyone at the same time to prevent one horse from re-infecting the others. Worming all the horses in pasture or group at the same time will also help make sure that the horses are not having a continuous parasite output through one persistent shedder. Rotating pastures a week after worming to a clean area also helps prevent re-infection.

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Below is a table showing the types of dewormers we have available, their spectrum, and the months in which they would be most effective.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Drug</b>	<b>Spectrum</b>	<b>Products</b>
<b>January/February</b>	Moxidectin or high dose fenbendazole	Encysted small strongyles	Quest, Panacur Powerpack
<b>March/April</b>	Ivermectin, pyrantel pamoate, or Moxidectin	Large strongyles	Quest, Eqvalan, Zimectrin, Strongid
<b>May/June</b>	Ivermectin, pyrantel pamoate, or Moxidectin	Large strongyles	Quest, Eqvalan, Zimectrin, Strongid
<b>July/August</b>	Moxidectin or Ivermectin with praziquantel	Roundworms and tapeworms	Quest Plus, Equimax, Zimectrin Gold
<b>September/October</b>	Ivermectin, pyrantel pamoate, or Moxidectin	Large strongyles	Quest, Eqvalan, Zimectrin, Strongid
<b>November/December</b>	Ivermectin, pyrantel pamoate, or Moxidectin	Large strongyles	Quest, Eqvalan, Zimectrin, Strongid

**Foals:**

Use a product containing fenbendazole or pyrantel pamoate to control ascarids (round worms) every 2 months beginning at 2 months of age for the first year of life. Give a double dose each time (a 250 lbs foal would get a 500 lbs dose). Some examples of effective products include Panacur, Strongid, and Safeguard.