Autumn Worming Schedule

Posted on March 2, 2013 by Graham

Although this summer seems to be never ending, it is actually getting closer to autumn. With the long dry period, if your grass has been getting low, animals will be grazing closer to the ground where higher numbers of worm larvae are found. This could cause an **increase in worm burdens**.

On the counter side, the high sunshine levels along with dry ground conditions will hopefully have helped to **keep worm larval development at lower rates**. This may actually reduce the numbers of viable worm larvae available for ingestion; (undeveloped larvae will not progress to adult worms when ingested and long dry periods can kill larvae).

However if we do get rain while the weather is still warm, conditions will rapidly change back in favour of larval development. Numbers will rapidly increase and be available for ingestion easily as grass levels will still be low. This will quickly result in an increase in adult worm burdens.

Continue to **pay attention to good worm control practice**; pick up droppings as regularly as possible. If harrowing – leave the paddocks for as long as convenient afterwards to allow larval death by drying out and to allow sufficient grass cover to get above the level where larvae are highest in numbers. Identify horses with low immunity to worms, these are the biggest shedders of eggs. They will have high faecal egg counts as soon as worming treatments have worn off. Use **faecal egg counts** to schedule your next required worm treatment. This reduces onset of resistance by only treating when required.

This month, get faecal egg counts up to date and treat as necessary. **You can drop a fresh sample in to the clinic and get a result within 24 hours.** All young horses, under three years, should be treated regularly as they do not develop good natural immunity until three or four years old. We are recommending all horses should get a pre winter treatment of a Moxidectin and tapeworm combination, such as **"Equest"**. This should reduce numbers of burrowing hibernating larvae (Cyathostomes-small redworms) and subsequently reduce spring egg output. It will also take care of Bot larvae burdens.

This can be done at end of April start of May.

Should you need to discuss a worming program for your horses, contact the clinic to talk to one of our helpful nurses or vets. Enjoy the rest of summer, for you know it won't be long before the mud is back!

Ray Lenaghan.