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Deworming

Recently traditional deworming strategies have been revisited, subsequently leading to changes in how we view both parasites and their control. We have to move away from the every other month or daily deworming programs of the last 40 years and towards a philosophy of monitoring more and actually deworming less. The concern is the development of resistance to our current arsenal of anthelmintic products and the fact that no new and improved products are on the horizon. It is critical that we understand that zero tolerance for parasites in our horses is unachievable and a low grade parasite load is normal, acceptable, and may even be beneficial. Stabling, number of horses, pasture maintenance, and manure disposal will vary from farm to farm and must be taken into account when designing a parasite control program. Each owner, with the help of their veterinarian, must design a deworming strategy that works for their unique set of circumstances.

START WITH FINDING OUT WHAT YOUR ACTUAL PARASITE CONCENTRATION IS.

- Twice annual fecal exam (mid to late spring and late fall)
 - Fecal egg counts (microscope counts of how many eggs/gram stool)
 - LOW shedder (0-200 eggs/gram)
 - MEDIUM Shedder (201-400 eggs/gram)
 - HIGH Shedder (401 plus eggs/gram)
 - Your veterinarian will take this information along with your horse's age, health status, environment, stable logistics, and parasite history, and design a strategic deworming protocol that works for you and your horses.

DEVELOP A DEWORMING SCHEDULE & PRODUCT LIST, USING THE ABOVE INFORMATION

- The majority of horses (80%) fall into the Low shedder category. The base protocol we at Bristol Veterinary Service recommend based on LOW shedders is:
 - Deworming
 - Mid/Late Spring (April/May)
 - Quest Plus
 - Late Summer (August/September)
 - Anthelcide or Strongid (Alternate years)
 - Late Fall/Early Winter (Late November or December)
 - Ivermectin based product with Praziquantel.
 - Zimectrin Gold or EquiMax
 - MEDIUM & HIGH shedder may require alternative schedules both in frequency and product. The goal is to have all horses on a premise in the LOW category

Bristol Veterinary Service will then provide you an annual program calendar to assist you in implementing both scheduled fecal rechecks and anthelmintic administration. We also provide several options for your convenience and savings, from fecal exams alone, fecal exams with recommendations, as well as product sales through our in-house or online pharmacy, home delivery or on farm administration by our vets. Our staff will be happy to discuss which programs best fit your unique situation.