

GALLOP INTO SPRING

with the Tribune

Pasture rest can help stop spread of parasites

Dewormers effectively fight against the parasites infecting a horse and are essential to parasite control.

As a general rule, adult horses should be dewormed every two months.

Depending on the effectiveness of the dewormer, parasite egg output by the horse should be reduced for four to eight weeks after treatment.

Parasite infection in the foal can be controlled very effectively by keeping the mare as parasite-free as possible both during pregnancy and after birth of the foal.

Deworming the mare with an effective product in the last month of gestation can effectively control the transmission of strongyloides westeri from the dam to the foal.

The following are some guidelines which can be successfully applied by horse owners when deworming.

- All horses within an age or pasture groupings should be dewormed at the same time with an anthelmintic to target specific parasites.

- New arrivals at the farm should be isolated and dewormed before introducing them to the pasture.

- If possible, the pasture should be rested at least once a year for two to six months. This helps reduce the number of some infective forms of certain parasites.

- Avoid overcrowding pastures.

- Do not spread fresh manure on pastures that are being grazed. If manure must be put on the pasture, it should be composted at least two weeks before spreading.

- The method of administering a dewormer is not important as long as instructions are followed and the full dose given.

Another important method of parasitic worm control is good pasture management.

Methods commonly used include pasture rest, rotational grazing, segregated pastures, manure removal, chain dragging, harrowing and plowing.

Pasture Rest

- Consists of alternately grazing and resting a pasture at six-month intervals.

During the resting period, some of the infective worm population in the pasture can be killed off by sunlight, heat, cold and lack of hosts to be infected.

Rotational Grazing with Cattle

- A variation of pasture rest that allows the pasture to be put to use during the rest period.

Equine parasites generally cannot complete their life cycle in cattle and vice versa.

Segregation

- Implies that weanlings and yearlings will be grazed in separate areas from mature horses.

If broodmares are dewormed within a month before foaling and parasites are carefully controlled while the mares are nursing their foals, parasites will be less likely to pass from dams to their foals.

Manure Removal

- Should be performed as often as possible. If manure is collected from pastures at

least twice a week, the number of infective larvae on the pasture will be reduced and parasite infections will not be readily spread.

Chain Dragging

- Dragging chains behind a tractor

breaks up manure piles and exposes them to sunlight.

It is the most effective when done during hot, dry weather because such conditions are detrimental to the parasitic larvae.

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