

Project WORMS: livery yard owner/manager information document

What is this study about?

Horses can be affected by a number of different worms in their intestines, some of which can cause serious disease. Controlling these worms is therefore vital to keep our horses healthy. However, over the last few years there has been growing recognition that the worms are becoming resistant to the deworming drugs (“wormers” or “anthelmintics”) that we use to control them – this problem is termed “anthelmintic resistance”.

The first phase of Project WORMS asked horse owners how they manage and treat worms in their horses. Around 40% of those who responded indicated their horse was kept on a livery yard, so in the second phase of the project we are interested to know about the strategies used to control worms on individual livery and competition training yards. This information is important to be able to develop and promote new and alternative ways of controlling worms that do not add to the problem of anthelmintic resistance.

Who is carrying out the study?

Project WORMS is an ongoing collaboration between several large veterinary groups and organisations, including VetPartners, CVS, IVC, Equine Reproductive Services, and British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA).

What does the study involve?

We are asking owners/managers of livery and competition training yards in the UK to complete a short online questionnaire (approximately 15-20 minutes to complete) about how they currently control worms on their yard. For the purposes of this survey, we are defining a livery yard as a property where horse owners pay a fee to keep their horses. The yard must have two or more horses belonging to different owners who pay to keep their horses at the yard. This must include grazing land and may, or may not, include stabling for the horses.

What are we trying to find out in this survey?

The information that we collect will be extremely useful to us in making recommendations about the best and safest way to prevent serious worm infestations of the horses on your yards. All of the survey responses will be anonymised, and the results will be presented at appropriate meetings, and published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, horse magazines and online forums. We will post a summary of the results of the survey on the Project WORMS website, and participating vets’ websites when we have gathered and analysed all of the responses.

Has this study been ethically approved?

The study has received approval by the RCVS Ethical Review Panel (ref: 2025-075-Mair).

How do I consent to giving data to this project?

By completing the questionnaire, you are giving us consent to use your responses.

What will happen to the responses from the questionnaires?

All the data provided in the questionnaires will be stored securely in password protected files by the study organisers. The data will be used only for the purposes of this project. Data will only ever be reported in a collated, anonymised fashion and no individual responses will be identifiable. All data will be permanently deleted within 5 years of collection (or before if published).

At the end of the survey if you wish your name to be put in a prize draw you will be directed to another page to provide this information (name and contact email address). Any personal information you provide will be kept separately from your responses and will be permanently deleted within 6 months (or before if the project is closed sooner) of you supplying the information.

How do I withdraw from the study?

You can stop the questionnaire whilst you are completing it at any time. As the data provided is anonymous, once you have submitted your responses on each page, we have no way of identifying them and removing them from the analysis.

What about the prize draw?

At the end of the survey, if you wish to be entered into a prize draw to win £100 Love to Shop vouchers you will be directed to another survey. You will be asked to leave your contact details there. This ensures your responses to the main survey remain anonymous.

How do I find out the results of the study?

You can find out the results of the study in a number of ways:

- A summary will be presented on the Project WORMS website
- The findings will be submitted for publication to a peer reviewed journal
- The findings will be publicised by the veterinary groups and organisations involved with co-ordinating the survey

Contacts

For further information, or if you have any concerns or complaints about this process, please contact Dr Tim Mair (tim.mair@btinternet.com)