

# SPRING NEWSLETTER

TALES FROM THE PRACTICE



Beginning in the *Spring* monitor your horse's worm burden with 3-4 faecal worm egg counts at approximately 8 weekly intervals until the first frost in the autumn.

We will only advise worming if your horse has a particularly high burden.



If the faecal worm egg counts over the summer months have been low then **NO WORMING** will be required going into the winter months.



We would then recommend **testing for Tapeworm** over the winter months.

This can be done via a blood test or an saliva test.

## WORMING UPDATE.

If you've been keeping an eye on our social media channels the past few weeks you will have noticed some changes to our worming advice. New research published by leading equine parasitologist Dr Martin Nielsen supported by the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) has highlighted the need for a reduction in our use of anthelmintic drugs to prevent the development of wormer resistance. From now on we will be adopting a new approach led by strategic diagnostic testing and regular faecal worm egg counts (FWEC).

In order to help reduce your horse's worm burden here are a few pasture management tips for the team at Tyrrells:

- Regular poo picking is essential to reduce worm burden. Removal of faeces from the pasture helps to break up the lifecycle of the worms and prevent them from reproducing in that area.
- Muck piles should not be kept near grazing pasture or should be regularly removed as worms can migrate back on to the field if left too close.
- Appropriate stocking density meaning that there is a safe number of horses in a space, the BHS advises that you should aim to have 1-1.5 acres of land per horse, they do not need access to this at all times, this can be on a rotation basis. The horse's weight and condition should be closely considered when determining how much pasture they have access to, in order to provide the enough space the use of other type of turnout pens, for example wood chip or sand pits should be used when needed.
- Where possible allow the rotation of paddocks and allow the fields to rest for at least 6 months - this is to allow the worms to die on the pasture and prevent reinfection.
- Prevent grazing pastures away from home to limit exposure to new populations of worms.



## JT CYCLES SOUTH AMERICA

As many of you will know our principal vet Jason Tyrrell is a very keen cyclist in his spare time often disappearing for miles and miles around the countryside on a sunny afternoon. Last month however he took on a pretty big challenge. At the end of January 2022, He ventured to Argentina to cycle a route taking him from the Andes mountains to Buenos Aires! As part of a team of 8 which included a former team GB Olympic cyclist Jason finished the 1500km route in just under 7 days. Who knows what adventure he'll choose next?



Photos from James Appleton Photography



## GASTROSCOPY CLINIC SUCCESS!

Just before Christmas we ran two days of gastroscopy clinics here at our practice in Hertfordshire. It was a great opportunity for our clients to bring their horses in and benefit from the expertise of our experienced vets Charlotte Ingham BVetMed (Hons), MRCVS and Charlotte Fenn BVetMed, MRCVS and Oriol Obradors Cert AVP, MRCVS. The Gastroscopy Clinic proved really popular with our clients and although this time we only had limited availability for these dates. Keep your eyes peeled for potentially more in the future.

## AI CPD

As the 2022 breeding season gets underway, we are making sure we are all ready to go here at Tyrrells. Max Schuster BVetMed, MRCVS recently completed his BEVA practical AI CPD making him eligible to be listed on the BEVA list of approved AI vets. Here at Tyrrells we have a wealth of breeding experience having been on the BEVA list of approved AI practices for many years now and offer a wide range of reproductive services. If you are thinking of breeding from your mare in the 2022 season, please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01763287744 or via email [office@tyrrellsequine.co.uk](mailto:office@tyrrellsequine.co.uk).

## KINGFISHER RESCUE!



While out visiting clients Oriol picked up an unexpected passenger who was sat in the middle of the main road. The kingfisher had a brief overnight stay at Reed Veterinary Surgery and once he was deemed fit and ready, he was released back into the wild!



# EQUINE WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

WITH JULIETTE EDMONDS BVSC MRCVS



Most leisure horse eat more calories than they need from grass alone. For example, a 250kg pony living out on grass might consume sufficient calories to fuel a 500kg race horse in a single day!

Obesity is a major welfare risk to our equine population and that's why it is important that as responsible owners we do everything we can to keep on top of it. It doesn't feel much like it at the moment but spring will soon be upon us and although we are all waiting for those lighter evenings, the change in season brings with it an added risk of richer grass. The sugar content of grass can be as high as 15% in the early spring so it is now that we need to prepare and get our horses weight under control before the grass begins to grow.

*There are several resources available to help owners monitor their horse's weight.*

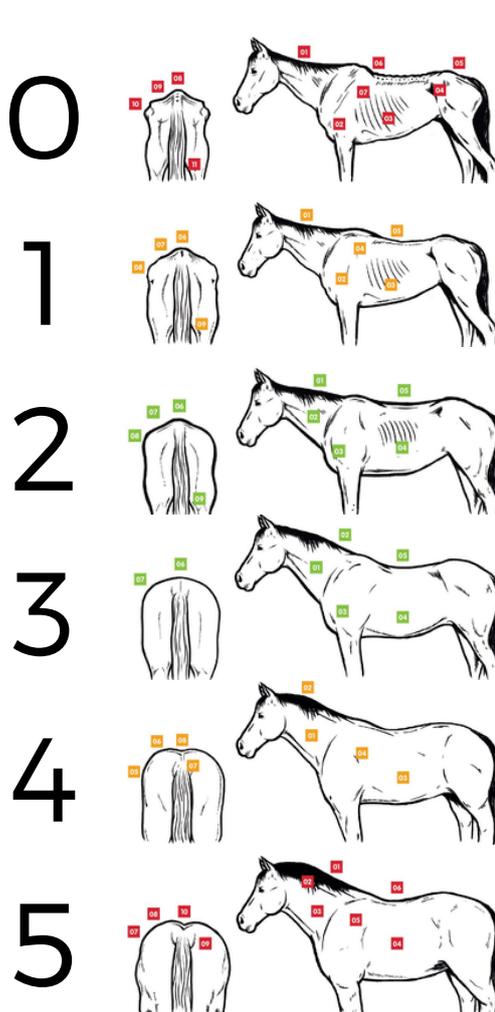
- It can be helpful to keep a record of your horse's **BCS**, either in a diary or in a note on your phone, to help you monitor changes in your horse's general condition.

- Feed companies like **SPILLERS®** have good online resources to help with BCS.

- **Weight tapes** can be a good way to track changes in your horse's weight but be aware these do not take into account the height or build of the horse so may not always be an accurate method.

- If you would like a more detailed evaluation of your horse's weight then our **weighbridge** here at the practice is available to use for our clients. If you would like to arrange a time to do this then contact the office.

## BODY CONDITION SCORING



As vets we use body condition scoring (BCS) as a way of quantifying the condition a horse is in. There are a number of different scales out there, the one shown here is from the British Horse Society (BHS). Generally you want to find your horse in the middle of this scale with visible muscle and a good amount of topline covering the spine.

Key indicators of obesity are where the definition of the muscles in the neck and hind quarters are less visible and you begin to see deposits of spongy feeling fat below the surface of the skin. In more severe cases we see the development of a crest along the top of the neck and a 'gutter' effect of the fat deposits along the spine and hind quarters.

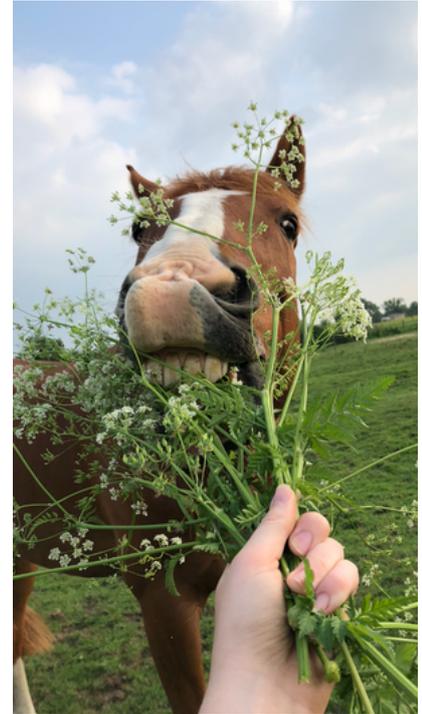
# MY TOP TIPS FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT.

WITH JULIETTE EDMONDS BVSC MRCVS

After evaluating your horse's weight if you've decided they need to lose a few kilos, you can feed your horse as little as 1-2% body weight dry fibre per 24 hours ie. 5kg per 500kg. You can increase the 'bulk' of this fibre by soaking the hay for up to 12 hours, this has the effect of increasing the weight/volume of the feed without increasing the calorie content.

Splitting forage into multiple small holed or double netted haynets that can be fed throughout the day to prevent boredom and periods of starvation. The use of stable toys such as hay balls or treat balls can be beneficial to slow down your horse's feeding time.

Whilst it is important to reduce your horse's calorie intake, they should still have access to regular forage during the day to prevent stress. There is also reduced stomach acid production overnight which will reduce the risk of complications such as gastric ulcers. It is better to factor in longer periods of starvation overnight than during the day as horses would naturally have a few hours overnight where they won't eat.



Feeding straw in place of hay can help reduce your horse's calorie intake whilst ensuring a good volume of forage. You can replace up to 30% of your horse's daily hay ration with straw as a low-calorie alternative. If you want to do this ensure the straw is of good hygienic quality and introduce it into the diet gradually.

Check your feeds! Many laminitis friendly feeds can be higher in sugar and calories than you realise. If you consider that your horse really does need the addition of concentrates into their diet, try to replace typical hard feed with a low-calorie vitamin and mineral balancer.

Consider whether your horse really NEEDS to wear a rug. Keeping warm and maintaining core body temperature is a great passive way for horses to burn calories. If your horse is stabled and protected from the weather, they may not need the addition of a rug to keep them warm at night.

If you want to talk more about your horse's weight and your horse's individual needs the please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01763287744 or via email on [office@tyrellsequine.co.uk](mailto:office@tyrellsequine.co.uk) and one of our experienced team will be happy to talk to you.