

Whether you keep your pigs in an indoor system or they are kept in more extensive outdoor systems it is likely at some point your pigs will need worming. The information below is to help you understand the risks to your pigs, and advise you on your options in protecting them against internal parasites. Please speak to your vet regarding testing and realistic treatment options.

Why do we need to worm?

A build-up of worms in the gut will have several impacts on your pig depending on which worm species it is. Common signs include weight loss, an inability to thrive with poor growth rates, diarrhoea or loose faeces, coughing and respiratory distress. If not dealt with promptly this can seriously affect the health and welfare of your pigs.

Six main UK worm species:

	Clinical disease	Age of Pig	Manifestation of disease
Roundworm (<i>Ascaris suum</i>)	Milk Spot liver	Growing Pigs	Poor growth rates, coughing
Stomach Worm (<i>Hyostongylus rubidus</i>)	Inflammation of lining of the stomach	Sows - Predominantly Outdoor	Inappetence leading to loss of condition
Nodular Worm (<i>Oesophagostomum spp.</i>)	Poor Immunity formed	Sows	'Thin Sow Syndrome'
Whip Worm (<i>Trichuris suis</i>)	Inflammation of Large intestine	All ages	Mucoid haemorrhagic diarrhoea
Lungworm (<i>Metastrongylus apri</i>)	Inflammation of the airways	Growing animals – Outdoors	Marked cough
Threadworm (<i>Strongyloides ransomi</i>)	Enteritis	Pre weaning	Pre weaning scour



Metastrongylus apri in airway

Trichuris suis on caecal surface



Milkspot liver caused by *Ascaris suum*

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Monitoring

Worm Egg Counts - Fresh faeces must be collected and your vet will do the rest. We would encourage performing these on a quarterly basis in breeding / adult herds as a long term monitoring strategy. Results must be interpreted with caution as Roundworms can shed eggs intermittently and Whip worms may cause disease before the eggs are shed. We may see negative results even with clinical disease in your pigs.

Abattoir - 'Milkspot liver' is reported by abattoirs and will indicate the presence and level of *Ascaris suum* in your herd.

Management

Prevention is better than cure and although blanket treatment seems an easy option it is not encouraged as this can cause worms to become resistant to the available treatments. Hygiene is the key management tool as transmission of worms occurs by ingestion of eggs.

- Regularly cleaning out pens that pigs are living in
- All in all out systems - proper disinfection and drying between batches
- Preventing build up on pasture – moving to fresh ground as regularly as is practical

Treatment Options:

Products with any of the active ingredients below will be capable of worming your pigs, you must only use products licensed in pigs and your vet will be able to prescribe these. A specific worming protocol should be based on the RUMA guidelines 'Anthelmintics in Pigs'. All treatments must be recorded in your medicine book and meat withdrawal periods adhered to.

Fenbendazole – e.g. Panacur AquaSol 200mg/ml, PigFen 40mg/g granules

Flubendazole – e.g. Flubenol 5% Oral powder

Ivermectin – e.g. Bimectin 1% solution for injection

When to worm?

General principles:

- Breeding herds with no evidence of disease – 6 monthly worming
- Growers and weaners – Wormed at weaning
- Pigs that are constantly on the same pasture – 3 monthly worming



Please refer to RUMA guidelines for specific cases
(<https://www.ruma.org.uk/pigs/anthelmintics-pigs/>)

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