



Worming your birds

Setting up a regular worming routine

There's a divided opinion on worming flocks; some keepers send faecal samples for testing and worm, or not, on those results. Most adopt a quarterly worming regime alongside their regular manual checking of the birds.

How are my birds infected? Intestinal worm eggs are left in grass in wild bird droppings, they are then eaten by our free ranging chickens, where the eggs start to hatch and populate their intestines



How to get a test done to see if they need worming: There are a few testing labs online; I tend to use [Westgate Labs](#) as they do a very quick service and the results are sent to you by email as soon as they have done the test. They will advise whether you need to worm at that time, and which worms are present. They also have an excellent helpline to discuss results or general intestinal parasite problems.

How to worm: Ideally, your flock should be wormed at least twice a year, every quarter for optimum health and productivity; the current licensed wormer for poultry is **Flubenvet**, which is sold either as a powder, or pre-medicated layers pellets (the latter is easy to order online, and far easier to use). This is fed to the flock for **7 whole days**, with the birds restricted to their run so that they eat as much of the pellets as possible, and avoid filling up on other things. Flubenvet can be bought from any licensed outlet or online, so you don't need a vet prescription, and there's no need to withdraw the eggs from human consumption either.

What about herbal products? There are various herbal based gut conditioning products, such as [Nettex's Herbal Gut Conditioner](#), on the market, which will help to keep the gut flora in top condition, and less hospitable to intestinal parasites, but you should always worm regularly with a licensed product, as a heavy load of worms could kill a hen. It is a good idea to support your flock's good gut health by dosing regularly with **Herbal Gut Conditioner**, and adding [Mineral Boost Powder](#) to their feed once a week.

How to keep worm eggs to a minimum: even with clear, waterproof covers on all the runs, the litter inside will become damp... an ideal breeding ground for intestinal worm eggs; this is why it is so important to treat the ground as well as the birds - to minimise re-infestation. So, every 3 months when you have just finished treating your birds with Flubenvet, clear the run of litter, sprinkle the base with [Nettex's Ground Sanitising Powder](#) to kill off any worm eggs and bacteria, and then lay a good clean layer of [Aubiose](#) or Rapport. Once a week, sprinkle **Ground Sanitising Powder** on the litter and rake through. This dual product approach to worming will keep them healthy and productive. Please don't rely upon visible worms in their droppings as a sign that they have worms – most gut worms aren't easily visible, and by the time you can see them, the worm count will already be pretty high.