



Worm egg counts (WEC) provide insights that can eliminate unnecessary **drenching**, reduce development of **chemical resistance** and help reduce **production and stock losses**.

Private lab

Mostly interstate. User pays, typically fast turn around time.

DAF lab

A free option if your stock are showing signs of illness.

Vet clinic

Local options. User pays, typically fast turn around time.

Rural stores

Some can test onsite with machines, others send samples to private labs.

DIY

Upfront cost of equipment/training. Can test at home as often as needed.

Is the lab quality assured?

Quality assurance (QA) means the lab has participated in a program to ensure their accuracy. Worm egg counting is simple in principle, but imprecise practices can easily lead to inaccurate results. WormBoss has a list of [WEC QA providers](#).

Submit directly by post.

Fee-for-service - varies depending on test.

Most will provide interpretation and management advice.

Must submit through vet or BQ inspector.

Free if there are sick animals. Costs for routine flock monitoring.

BQ vets and inspectors can provide basic interpretation. DAF extension staff can also assist.

Submit to clinic in person or by post. Vet can submit to lab or test in-house.

Fee-for-service - varies depending on test.

Most will provide interpretation and management advice. May provide prescriptions if required.

Submit in person or by post.

Fee-for-service - varies depending on tests.

Sell drenches. Some can provide management advice.



Find equipment suppliers [here](#)

Manually count using a microscope.

FecPak/Parasight/Mini-FLOTAC semi-automated DIY testing.

Training required and awareness of accuracy.



When to test

This will be an individual decision. WormBoss has [regional control programs](#) that suggest times to routinely test depending on your region and environment. In variable or unusual seasons you may need to consider different testing times.

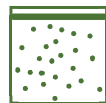


Testing before you drench is a small expense and if you don't need to drench it will save you a lot of time and money.

Follow up testing is extremely useful. A [post-drench faecal WEC](#) is conducted 14 days after drenching and can tell you if your drench was effective.

How to collect samples

You can conduct a WEC on an individual/s or on a bulk sample to estimate the flock average.



A bulk worm egg count involves collecting a range of faecal samples from a water point or mob. It can be done in the paddock. Usually a bulk sample is collected for each mob. Consider collecting more than one bulk sample if a paddock is large, country type varies and distinct mobs are watering separately. A sample kept in an airtight container in moderate temperatures can remain viable for about 5 days.

It's a good idea to seek instructions from your lab, as preferred collection processes vary. WormBoss also has information on [how to collect samples](#). A sample can then be sent by normal mail to the lab. A simple WEC usually costs around \$50.

What test to request - WEC vs culture

A WEC provides you with the number of eggs in a gram of faeces but it cannot differentiate between some common worms e.g. barber's pole and scour worms.



A larval culture is an additional test that determines what type of worms are present. This can help interpret the WEC results. Barber's pole worms, for example, are prolific egg producers and can cause high WECs.

The type of worm can also have important health and management implications. Talking to an advisor can help you determine the value of a culture to your worm management.

What to do with WEC results

Regardless of where your tests are done, you can seek advice from a variety of sources. Consider whether the advice is impartial and the technical expertise of the person advising you.



Advisors should consider if there may be other or concurrent problems such as infectious or nutritional diseases.

Most private laboratories and veterinarians will offer advice with the testing and is usually offered on a fee-for-service basis. Private veterinarians are required to prescribe off-label drenches, e.g. for goats.

[DAF extension officers](#) can provide free and independent advice or connect you to impartial advisors.

The WormBoss website has [drench decision guides](#), as well as resources on other strategies such as paddock management.

Links

DAF extension officers contacts <https://www.leadingsheep.com.au/about-us/>

Drench decision guides <https://tools.wormboss.com.au/sheep-goats/tests-tools/drench-decision-guide.php>

How to collect samples <https://wormboss.com.au/tests-tools/checking-a-mob-of-sheep-or-goats-for-worms-with-a-wormtest/>

Microscope/kit supplier options <https://wormboss.com.au/tests-tools/worm-egg-counting/>

Post-drench faecal WEC <https://wormboss.com.au/post-drench-faecal-worm-egg-counts/>

Regional control programs <https://wormboss.com.au/wormboss-worm-control-program/>

WEC quality assurance <https://paraboss.com.au/parasite-management/the-paraboss-wec-qa-program/>