



## 10<sup>th</sup> European Equine Health & Nutrition Congress: “Fiber First!”

Almost 300 delegates from 39 countries participated in the first two sessions of the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Equine Health & Nutrition Congress (EEHNC) on March 25 & 26 2021. The 10<sup>th</sup> EEHNC was the organisation's first online event and had the theme 'Fiber First!'. Internationally recognized specialists in nutrition, veterinary scientists, veterinarians, industry representatives and equine professionals attended this meeting. Participants could also follow informal small meetings (“coffee tables”) with the specialists or the event's sponsors, discussing topics closely related to the congress theme.

### What was discussed?

In the first session Prof. Pat Harris (WALTHAM Petcare Science Institute) listed definitions of various roughage types and provided answers to questions like “what do we mean by forage? how much forage should we feed? and nutritionally can we just feed forage to equines? Forage should be the foundation of all equine diets (for health and welfare reasons). However, it is important to match forage (type/intake provision/timings etc.) to individual needs wherever possible. Forage analysis is key for this but analytical variability should be recognized and labs with good in-house quality control systems should be used. In addition, appropriate digestible energy and digestible protein levels should be present especially for performance horses.

Prof Myriam Hesta of Ghent University pointed out that evaluating absolute roughage intake should be part of the standard clinical examination of the veterinarian as adequate roughage intake plays an important role in prevention of several disease but horse owners may need help in providing adequate amounts. Dr. Annette Longland (ELNS) highlighted the importance of some means controlling pasture intake of horses and ponies especially for those animals that are at risk for obesity.

After that, Prof Edwin Claerebout (Ghent University) highlighted that testing and monitoring key is key to monitor strongyle infections during the grazing season, which can reduce the number of anthelmintic treatments needed. In addition, Deborah van Doorn (Utrecht University) explained how in temperate climates monitoring of worms through faecal egg counts in order to keep pastures safe could be done using [parasietenwijzer.nl](https://parasietenwijzer.nl) (NL/ENG) a web based tool that encourages a selective anthelmintic treatment system (SAT), for strongyle worms mainly. Such strategies help slowing down resistance development against anthelmintics and less anthelmintic treatment will lower the amount of residues that burden the environment. Prof. Aránzazu Meana Mañes (University Complutense of Madrid) highlighted the challenges of parasite control in Southern European regions. These regions have climatic conditions that are characterized by high temperatures and low pluviosity. This impairs internal parasite development and survival and will therefore increase the risk for ectoparasites and related diseases.

Dr. Adolfo Paz-Silva (University of Santiago de Compostela) and Dr Wilbert Pellikaan (Wageningen University) put forward nutritional strategies for parasite control. Adolfo discussed the use of fungi as biological agents to prevent parasite infection. The periodical administration of parasiticide fungi spores is a potential strategy to prevent infection by helminths in horses under pasturing regimes. Dr. Wilbert Pellikaan (Wageningen University) explained the potential of feeding tannins containing legumes either as a fresh forage or as a silage or haylage as potential strategy to reduce gastro-intestinal parasite burden in horses and to decrease the use of anthelmintics.

### Can I order proceedings?

There are no full proceedings available for this congress edition. Alternatively, delegates received a dynamic digital take home messages booklet. A final version will become available for purchase after the last follow-up webinar. These take home messages will be available for delegates of the first two sessions and also for registrations to any of the follow-up sessions.

### Press

Please, contact us if you would like to address the 10th EEHNC in your magazine or would have any further questions.

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