

For optimal horse health, it is generally recommended to have 2-4 acres of pasture per horse, depending on the quality of the forage and management practices.

## Poo picking and worm control

Proper management of your horse's paddock is crucial, and regularly clearing away droppings is a key aspect of maintaining the field. Since worm eggs are present in manure and can lead to re-infection if eaten, removing droppings daily is ideal for effective worm control; however, cleaning twice a week still significantly reduces larvae levels. Don't forget to keep field shelters clean as well.

Regular poo picking benefits the grass too, if droppings are left for too long, the grass beneath them can die off, resulting in rough patches and lower-quality grazing.



## Weed control

Inspecting paddocks regularly for weeds and poisonous plants is essential. Weeds can spread quickly and, like droppings, greatly reduce grazing quality. Some weeds, including ragwort, foxglove, and hemlock, are toxic to horses and must be removed to prevent ingestion and potential harm.

No weeds should be allowed to grow in fields where horses graze, and removal methods will vary depending on the amount present. Ragwort is the most common hazardous weed for horses. The most effective way to manage it is by pulling up the plant with its roots, then disposing of and burning it. Staying ahead of ragwort control is especially important during the summer months.



Ragwort plant and flowered

## Daily care for your pasture



**Daily:** Walk around your paddock to check the fencing and gates. Check for any harmful plants / objects that may have entered the paddock, poo pick and check the water drinker / top up water supply.

**Weekly:** Check fencing is safe, especially around any hedges etc, to ensure no damage when trees die back, check gates are secure, clean the water drinker / supply, check for litter, monitor for any holes in the ground / areas of concerns, and check for any poisonous plants or tree branches etc.

**Monthly:** Fence off any damaged pasture such as boggy land, bare land, oak or sycamore trees in autumn & spring and again check for any damaged or falling branches.

## Seasonal care for your pasture

For good pasture management, there are always jobs to be done, some dependent on the time of the year and environmental conditions. Alongside tasks such as harrowing and re-seeding, be sure to include resting and rotating in your paddock management plan. Pastures all vary depending on many factors and it is important to ensure you seek appropriate pasture management advice from a professional in this area as you may not be able to complete these requirements alone.

**Spring** – Carry out soil analysis, remove weeds, harrow, fertilise, reseed and roll boggy areas from winter.



**Summer** – Remove weeds, harrow and roll.



**Autumn** – Carry out soil analysis, monitor acorn and sycamore seeds if necessary.



**Winter** – Rest paddocks as much as possible, and consider fertilisers for Spring.



Sycamore seeds