



NEAOBA News

A Newsletter for New England Alpaca Owners and Breeders

Special NEAF Edition

Published for NEAOBA by NEAOBA

April 2002

Welcome to the New England AlpacaFest!

On behalf of the New England Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association, or as we call ourselves NEAOBA, I'd like to welcome you and your family to our annual NEW ENGLAND ALPACA FEST.

This is the 5th year for this event, and the second time we have held it in this venue. We hope you enjoy your time with us this weekend as much as we enjoy sharing our alpacas with you and yours.

While here, we invite you to ask as many questions as you like and speak with as many attending farms as possible. To help those of you with kids to focus, we have provided a kids play area.

Alpacas have only been in the US since the first ones arrived in 1984, but our members have been raising alpacas for years and have a wealth of knowledge available to share with you.

Some of the finest alpacas in the world are located right here in NEW ENGLAND and we encourage you to check out our member's farms and the quality of their animals for yourself!

Thank you for coming to our annual event. We look forward to seeing you all again here next year and on our farms.

NEAOBA news Editor, *Nicola Blake*



This is a quarterly newsletter intended to educate and proliferate the alpaca industry in the Northeast region of the U. S.

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Views, advertisements and article submissions are the opinions of the writers and providers and do not necessarily reflect NEAOBA's opinion as a whole nor members opinions individually

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Who buys alpacas?

Everyone! Alpacas are gentle natured, easily cared for animals who help pay for their keep in their renewable resource – their fiber. Folks looking for a retirement option or young families just starting out raise alpacas. They are suitable for many folks from many walks of life.

From your new editor

I would first like to say a big **Thank You** on behalf of all the NEAOBA members to Cindy and Tim Lavan of Chase Tavern Farm. They did a great job with the newsletter, but their current commitments (including two beautiful and active boys, not to mention a large farm and busy alpaca business, etc) have forced them to pass along the torch.

As for me, this is the first newsletter that I have edited, so I am looking forward to the challenge! I am very grateful for the generous help and support I have received from the many people who have contributed articles (keep it up!), also special thanks to Laura Busky (who assembled and mailed the newsletter) and Jack Dibb for proofreading help.

I have been in New England since August 1999 and in January 2000 I joined Jack's already established small alpaca farm in the woods of New Hampshire. It was a BIG lifestyle change for me – one that growing up in suburban London and living in S California and Seattle hadn't quite prepared me for! But it's a change that I'm thankful for EVERY DAY!

Without meaning to, Jack threw me in at the "deep end" that winter by promptly taking off to do field work after only about 2 weeks of farm life. I can't remember if I was most worried about looking after the alpacas or trying not to burn the house down with the woodstove! It all went well, however and helped me to gain confidence and to get acquainted with the wonderfully individual personalities of my alpaca charges

Jack also happened to be away in June 2000 when I saw my first cria being born – a first-time Mom herself it all went smoothly for Malary, her cria, and I. He was a gorgeous curly brown boy I named Kez. It was one of the biggest thrills I have ever had watching that long-necked leggy cria get right up within minutes and start running around within hours – if I wasn't hooked on alpacas before, I certainly was after that!

Have fun at NEAF!

Nicola Blake

Sallie's Fen Alpacas

NEAOBA INFO

NEAOBA was founded in February 1995 by New England members of the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association (AOBA).

NEAOBA is an official AOBA affiliate.

www.neoba.org

Current membership #s: 132 Farms

Officers:

President: **Jim Mullen** (pmm@southwindfarms.com)

Vice President: **Joan McCurry**, Phone: (203) 266-9002

Treasurer: **Laura Busky** (laura@northbrookalpacas.com)

Secretary: **Stephanie Pfeiffer** (info@hawkehillfarm.com)

Webmaster: **Al Maloney** (newaim@midcoast.com)

Advertising: **Dave Sanderson** Sandersons@PRAIpacas.com)

To request a copy of the NEAOBA by-laws, contact Laura Busky

Contribute to the NEAOBA Newsletter!

This newsletter is what WE the members make of it!

If you are interesting in contributing ideas, articles, news, tid-bits, funny stories and/or photos, etc to this newsletter please submit them to the editor Nicola Blake (nicola@sfallpacas.com).

NEAOBA NEWS AD RATES (*Send all payments directly to Laura Busky*)

Classifieds (45 words or less): \$15.

Business Card \$15.

1/2 Page \$30.

Full Page \$45.

Double Full Pg \$80.

Farm Flyers \$65.

A **farm flyer** is a full-page advertisement *completely* prepared by the member. The flyers can be double sided and in color if you choose. These will simply be added to the newsletter during assembly.

Message from NEAOBA President, Jim Mullen

As I write this letter, we are heading into the busiest season for alpaca owners in New England. Crias are due, NEAF is around the corner, and the AOBA National Conference is less than a month away.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the NEAOBA Officers, Laura Busky, Stephanie Pfeiffer and Joan McCurry for all the work they have done during this past year. As you know, in May, we elect officers for the coming year. These elections will take place at the meeting in Northampton.

I cannot say that the year went as smoothly as I would have liked; nonetheless, some major accomplishments were made. We continue to work on the Bylaws and we have our own show this fall at the Portland Civic Center, which is a first for NEAOBA.

With this newsletter, I believe we have successfully transitioned the newsletter from

Cindy Lavan's capable hands over to Nicola Blake. I would like to thank her for taking up this rather daunting task.

We had some minor problems with NEAF, primarily because of the lack of communication, but this too now seems to be under control and hopefully headed toward a successful conclusion.

I would like to convey to everyone that I have a new outlook on NEAF that I will express at the meeting in Northampton. I think that this program, offered in the right location, can be of major help to our new breeders, and I think in the future we should emphasize that it should indeed be for the new smaller breeders. It should be education oriented and designed specifically to get new people into the business successfully.

I look forward to a successful show at Northampton. See you there.

Yours very truly,

James B. Mullen, Jr.
President, NEAOBA

“So how did you get into alpacas?”

***By Erica Dwyer, Hampden Hills Alpacas,
Hampden, MA***

This is one of the first questions I most commonly hear. So what's my answer? Well, I have no direct answer... Let's just say grass doesn't grow under our feet. When we do something, we roll up our sleeves and dive in, DEEP! We just got our first animals on our small "gentleman's" farm in June of 2001. But how we got to that point was an interesting journey.

Our oldest son was interested in taking horse-riding lessons. So we were shopping around looking for riding coaches. My husband was driving through a neighboring town and took notice of a rather large sized alpaca farm. It's hard not to notice 50 or so calm, fuzzy critters grazing without a care in the world. When he came home he told me what he had seen. Now, I had recently read an article on alpacas somewhere, but now for the life of me, I can't remember where, and I had

said, "I know what alpacas are! They are so cute & gentle. I want one of those." I've been an animal lover all my life. In fact, I had recently given up my 10-year career as tailor, and my business I had built up over that 10-year period and got a job as a veterinary technician. However, what I hadn't read about was how expensive alpacas can be. So our family visited this farm that my husband had discovered and we took a look around. Once we saw the prices, we figured, "so much for that dream." But where there's a will...

Now to work on my dad and my husband. I did my homework, gave my husband (an accountant by trade) information on tax advantages of running a farm, the initial investments needed, and the plan for building a herd, and sales potentials down the line. My husband had never had animals growing up, so I wasn't sure how serious he was about this. Then, I would bring subject up to my

dad, and casually say " Wouldn't you like to invest in an over-sized teddy bear?"

Finally we took him for a visit to the farm. We actually picked one out, based on price alone. She was the best looking girl for the least amount of money. And after much convincing, Dad came through, and invested in half the cost of her. (I tell him he owns the back half!) We were now alpaca owners, but without a farm! Talk about putting the cart in front of the horse.

From here things went rather quickly. We put our house on the market, found a small farm where we are now. The prior owners had horses, so we had the barn already there. But no appropriate fencing, and not much pasture grass. Every weekend was dedicated to putting up fencing for about 6 weeks. Then seeding & lots of watering. Finally the end of May came around. Time to bring the animals to their new home.

It's really amazing what one can learn and do when one puts his mind to it. In a year we bought

the animals, found a new place to live in an entirely different town, fenced, and did LOTS of research on husbandry, fiber, crias, birthing, vaccines, wormings, trimming toe nails, just to name a few. Oh, and lets not forget learning to spin (in time for Christmas presents, of course) and pulling out those old dusty knitting needles. And our first cria on the farm was born back in August. She looks like a huge cotton ball, and what a spitfire! She was zipping around the field the next day, all day long.

Today, only a year later, we are up to 10 alpacas and one llama, and I'm finding myself getting very involved in the fiber end of the industry. I'm learning about the fiber pools, and hoping to get more involved with that, and hopefully more writing for periodicals like this. All inspired by a cute large fuzzy animal with large eyes, and fiber "to die for".

You Know You're Hooked on Alpacas When...

- ...you know exactly how many bales of hay you can pile in/on each of your vehicles.
- ...you're on first name terms with your local feedstore staff.
- ...you can attach the name of an animal to each of your sweaters/hats/scarves!
- ...you have a waiting list of people who want to come farm sit.
- ...you buy an expensive digital camera just to put more up-to-date photos on your alpaca "kids" on your website
- ...you're over 50, your children are grown and your friends are getting corvettes, and you get a MINIVAN!

Please send contributions to "You know you've got alpacas when.." to Nicola at: nicola@sfallpacas.com

Show Report: North American Alpaca Show, Farm Exposition Center, Springfield, MA, April 4-7, 2002.

by Nicola Blake, Sallie's Fen Alpacas

Well, after all the controversy stirred up before the show regarding AOBA Certification, the North American Alpaca Show went very smoothly and with good humor and a positive competitive spirit.

Over 70 farms attended with alpacas, including those from the New England states, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, and New York. Approximately 520 alpacas competed in the halter show and 94 fleeces were entered in the fleece show. More than 150 different people came to seminars.

For those (like me) who are more familiar with the Expo. Center during the Big E it was great to be able to spread out and to use the Mallory arena (reserved for dog agility classes during the big E) to show off the very many beautiful alpacas who

competed in the show. Outside, it was almost eerily quiet compared to the Big E "proper" and some of us missed the "blooming onions". But I certainly didn't miss the Big E competition for parking plus the nightly traffic snarls just when I was ready to fall into my hotel room bed after a long day!

The seminars that were the foundation of this gathering were given by a wide variety of accomplished speakers and they attracted many people who are already committed to the alpaca business. Personally, I found that the two seminars I was able to attend (fleece showing by Australian judge Cameron Holt, and Marketing by Jerry Forstner of Magical Farms) were full of interesting tid-bits and I came away with new information and many useful tips.

NEAOBA Featured Farm:

Mark and Alisa Mierzejewski of Burgis Brook Alpacas are proud to be the first alpaca farm in the historic shoreline town of Guilford, Connecticut. Surrounded by llama, horse, sheep, and ostrich farms, Burgis Brook Alpacas has become an information source as well as ambassadors to the Guilford community about these wonderful, lovable creatures - adding yet another positive element to enrich visitors to this shoreline area.

Currently our business personalities range from creative services such as, graphic and web design, art reproduction, photography to most recently alpaca farming.

Being in our own creative services business for 18 years, we have diversified dramatically with fast-paced industry changes due to technology advances. In a balanced scheme, the love of art and exotic animals brings us to a place where we can enjoy working with area artists, reproducing limited edition prints and breeding alpacas and harvesting their beautiful, luxurious fiber for handspinners and fiber artists.

We were first introduced to alpacas through AOBA's magazine advertisements several years ago. Always wondering about that headline "The finest livestock investment....." One evening, while sitting with friends after dinner, sipping some great Australian Shiraz, a good friend mentioned that she would love for us to have sheep. Immediately responding NO, to that statement, there it was....plain as day....AOBA's ad in Country Living! It was a Saturday night, about 8:30pm, the phone call

More importantly the seminars attracted an impressive number of novice breeders, in addition to those who are still in the research phase of starting their own farms. Most of these folks stayed to watch the showing, to shop, and to chat with those of us who had brought animals.

The rich mix of seminars, animals, farms, and vendors, combined with the thrill of the show was certainly a great hit from the perspective of our small farm display tucked away in a relatively obscure aisle. It was very rewarding and stimulating to talk with to so many knowledgeable and enthusiastic beginning breeders in such a short time – the high excitement generated by such a wonderful human-alpaca mix was felt by all!

went out to AOBA's office number in the ad....and wouldn't you know, someone answered! We were able to get a list of area farms and the very next day we were at our first alpaca farm.

Instantly loving what we saw, we decided to visit more farms and talk to everyone we could about alpacas. We had just built our home, and alpacas were not in the original plan. Visiting smaller farms really gave us a good perspective on what we could do on our 5 acres. It could be quite overwhelming for start-ups to visit a large farm and not really picture themselves having to care for 100+ animals! So down went the trees, up went the barn, in went the grass, around went the fence...oh yeah, most importantly, then came the alpacas!

Our plan, right at this moment, is to breed Peruvian Huacayas, in a variety of color - staying small and breeding to those blue ribbon bloodlines. We want our alpacas to be desirable to established breeders as well as the start-up farmers. We love showing and winning those ribbons too!

Throughout our 2 years with alpacas, we have met the most interesting bunch of people in the alpaca industry. From the mega farmers to the starter farmers, all willing to share with us their experiences in breeding, farming husbandry, business practices, show tips and health issues. So we glean from everyone we meet and share our alpaca experiences with anyone who will have an ear to hear. Eventually, we will meet all of you in the New England area. In the meantime, show season and cria season is upon us and we want to wish you all a great year in the show ring and healthy crias in the pastures.

New England Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association

March 31, 2002

Summary of All Financial Activities

Balance Sheet	12/31/00	5/31/01	3/31/02
Assets:			
General Cash Fund	14,865	49,456	38,293
Portland Show Seed Money	0	0	5,870
Total Checking Account	14,865	49,456	44,163
NEAF Prepaid Expenses	500	0	500
NECC Prepaid Expenses	0	0	100
Certificate of Deposit	10,608	10,608	11,090
Total Assets	25,973	60,064	55,853
Liabilities and Equity:			
Accrued NEAF Expenses	0	31,003	0
Accrued NECC Expenses	0	0	0
Equity	25,973	29,061	55,853
Total Liabilities and Equity	25,973	60,064	55,853

Statement of Profit and Loss	Actual 1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	(A) Actual 6/1/01 thru 3/31/02	(B) Budget 6/1/01 thru 5/31/02	(B less A) Actual to Budget Variance
General Activities Income	6,330	10,417	14,175	3,758
General Activities Expense	2,221	2,979	12,010	9,031
Net Profit/(Loss) from Gen Activ	4,109	7,438	2,165	(5,273)
NEAF Income	55,563	19,561	32,200	12,639
NEAF Expense	56,584	1,178	31,950	30,772
Net Profit/(Loss) from NEAF	(1,020)	18,384	250	(18,134)
NECC Income	0	1,000	36,500	35,500
NECC Expense	0	30	41,760	41,730
Net Profit/(Loss) from NECC	0	970	(5,260)	(6,230)
Net Profit/(Loss) from all Activities	3,089	26,792	(2,845)	(29,637)

Statement of Cash Flow	1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	6/1/01 thru 3/31/02
General Activity Inflow	6,280	9,935
General Activity Outflow	2,221	2,979
Total Generated/(Used) by Gen Act	4,059	6,956
NEAF Inflow	51,230	24,228
NEAF Outflow	20,698	37,348
Total Generated/(Used) by NEAF	30,532	(13,119)
NECC Inflow	0	1,000
NECC Outflow	0	130
Total Generated/(Used) by NECC	0	870
Total Generated/(Used) for period	34,591	(5,293)
Beginning Cash Balance	14,865	49,456
Ending Cash Balance	49,456	44,163
Difference	34,591	(5,293)

NEAOBA
currently has
132 members

NEAOBA General Financial Activities

March 31, 2002

Statement of Profit and Loss	Actual 1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	(A) Actual 6/1/01 thru 3/31/02	(B) Budget 6/1/01 thru 5/31/02	(B less A) Actual to Budget Variance
General Activities				
Income:				
Interest on CD	0	482	0	(482)
Membership Dues	3,825	7,583	6,350	(1,233)
News Letter Ads	1,935	885	6,000	5,115
Scientific/Medical Research Fund	0	890	1,125	235
Website Listings	570	578	700	123
Total	6,330	10,417	14,175	3,758
Expense:				
Administrative Expenses	236	1,189	685	(504)
Gratuities	0	63	400	337
Marketing Expenses	0	0	5,000	5,000
Meeting Expense	0	735	1,000	265
Newsletter Expense	1,835	694	3,500	2,806
Scientific/Medical Research	0	0	1,125	1,125
Vendor Space	0	0	0	0
Website Expense	150	299	300	1
Total	2,221	2,979	12,010	9,031
Net Profit/(Loss) from Gen. Activ.	4,109	7,438	2,165	(5,273)

Statement of Cash Flow	1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	6/1/01 thru 3/31/02
General Inflow:		
Membership Dues	3,775	7,583
Newsletter Ads	1,935	885
Scientific/Medical Research Fund	0	890
Website Listings	570	578
Total	6,280	9,935
General Outflows:		
Administrative Expense	236	1,189
Gratuities	0	63
Meeting Expense	0	735
Newsletter Expense	1,835	694
Website Expense	150	299
Total	2,221	2,979
Total Generated/(Used) by Gen Act	4,059	6,956

New England Alpaca Festival 2002

March 31, 2002

	Actual 1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	(A) Actual 6/1/01 thru 3/31/02	(B) Budget 6/1/01 thru 5/31/02	(B less A) Actual to Budget Variance
Statement of Profit and Loss				
NEAF Income:				
Advertising	1,840	480	2,000	1,520
Auction	24,930	0	0	0
Caterer	4,040	1,351	4,000	2,649
Donations	0	0	4,500	4,500
Grants	1,500	0	1,500	1,500
Other	175	140	200	60
Panels	3,230	4,500	0	(4,500)
Pen Space	17,400	13,090	20,000	6,910
Store	2,448	0	0	0
Total	55,563	19,561	32,200	12,639
NEAF Expense:				
Advertising	13,394	499	12,000	11,501
Auction	19,600	0	0	0
Caterer	4,389	200	4,000	3,800
Entertainment	4,145	0	4,500	4,500
Facility	5,684	0	6,500	6,500
Other	30	0	750	750
Panels	3,480	0	0	0
Printing & Postage	3,415	479	4,200	3,721
Store	2,448	0	0	0
Total	56,584	1,178	31,950	30,772
Net Profit/(Loss) from NEAF	(1,020)	18,384	250	(18,134)

	1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	6/1/01 thru 3/31/02
Statement of Cash Flow		
NEAF Inflows:		
Advertising	1,830	480
Auction	24,930	0
Caterer	3,415	1,351
Other	75	140
Panels	3,230	4,500
Pen Space	17,750	13,090
Transfer from Accrued Expense	0	4,667
Transfer from Prepaid Expense	0	0
Total	51,230	24,228
NEAF Outflows:		
Advertising	10,148	499
Auction	2,493	0
Caterer	4,278	200
Entertainment	755	0
Facility	454	0
Other	12	0
Panels	2,500	0
Printing & Postage	57	479
Pay Accrued NEAF Expenses	0	35,670
Prepay NEAF Expenses	0	500
Total	20,698	37,348
Total Generated/(Used) from NEAF	30,532	(13,119)

New England Coastal Classic 2002

March 31, 2002

	Actual 1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	(A) Actual 6/1/01 thru 3/31/02	(B) Budget** 6/1/01 thru 5/31/02	(B less A) Actual to Budget Variance
Statement of Profit and Loss				
NECC Income:				
Farm Displays	0	0	5,250	5,250
Stall Fees	0	0	13,500	13,500
Vendor Fees	0	0	3,500	3,500
Sponsorship/Program Ads	0	0	2,000	2,000
Admission Fees	0	0	4,000	4,000
Fleece Classes	0	0	1,500	1,500
Halter/Performance Classes	0	0	6,000	6,000
Educational Seminar Fees	0	0	750	750
Grants	0	1,000		(1,000)
Total	0	1,000	36,500	35,500
NECC Expense:				
Facility	0	0	2,500	2,500
Custodians	0	0	1,220	1,220
Security	0	0	240	240
Additional Labor (set up, etc.)	0	0	500	500
Sod & removal	0	0	4,000	4,000
Shipping Panels (MaPaca)	0	0	2,500	2,500
Insurance (in add'n to NEAOBA)	0	0	300	300
Straw	0	0	600	600
AOBA animal fees	0	0	1,000	1,000
AOBA fleece fees	0	0	300	300
AOBA exhibitor fees	0	0	750	750
Show Superintendent	0	0	2,000	2,000
Judges	0	0	3,500	3,500
Marketing (AOBA Mag, direct mail)	0	30	8,000	7,970
Program (printing, design, etc)	0	0	3,000	3,000
Sign, Banners, etc	0	0	1,500	1,500
Awards/Ribbons	0	0	1,250	1,250
Social (pizza, coffee, donuts)	0	0	1,000	1,000
Educational speakers	0	0	1,850	1,850
Phone	0	0	500	500
Postage and Office Supplies	0	0	2,000	2,000
Vet On Call Services	0	0	250	250
EMT	0	0	500	500
Misc	0	0	2,500	2,500
Total	0	30	41,760	41,730
Net Profit/(Loss) from NECC	0	970	(5,260)	(6,230)

****This show is actually a part of the 6/1/02 - 5/31/03 budget since the show will be held during 10/02**

	1/1/01 thru 5/31/01	6/1/01 thru 3/31/02
Statement of Cash Flow		
NECC Inflows:		
Grants		1,000
Transfer from Accrued Expense		0
Transfer from Prepaid Expense		0
Total	0	1,000
NECC Outflows:		
Marketing		30
Pay Accrued NECC Expenses		0
Prepay NECC Expenses		100
Total	0	130
Total Generated/(Used) from NECC	0	870

What do you do on your Farm?

This Edition's Questions:

1. What do you do with your "brown gold" alpaca manure?
2. How do you encourage your alpacas to poop in the "proper" place?
3. How do you cope with "mud season"?

Answers:

Erica Dwyer, Hampden Hills Alpacas, Hampden, MA:

1. Right now we are piling it in a fenced off area. As the pile gets bigger, we will turn it and hopefully it will compost. Then we will advertise it for sale. We have already given a good deal to a friend and some will go in our perennial flowers.
2. I really don't "encourage" them, however we do scoop the beans daily. This way their poop area does not get so heavily loaded that they feel it necessary to find another place to poop. (Roll that beautiful bean footage....)
3. Lots of old hay scattered around. Or ...Wait until it dries! Oh well.....

Ron and Terry Miller, Snowshoe Farm, LLC, Peacham, VT

1. We compost manure and will be spreading the finished product on the pasture.
2. So far, this has not been much of an issue for us. Our alpacas have one spot in the barn and two spots in the paddock. With our small herd, the piles have stayed fairly small and neat and keeping them cleaned up has been easy.
3. We live in northern Vermont - the term "mud season" can take on a whole new meaning up here! Getting stuck on our road is more of an issue than dealing with mud in the barn or pasture. For starters, we try to make sure drainage around the barn minimizes mud problems in the immediate area around the barn and in the paddock. If we have a low, wet spot, we'll try to keep ourselves and the alpacas away from that area until things dry up. Otherwise, we just wait for nature to take its own course and move onto the next season - black fly season!

Peter Rosengarten, Mountain Pond Farm, Weston, VT

1. We have a local green house/vegetable garden operation near us which takes most of our manure. Other gardeners keep coming by to harvest our manure pile. It is open 24 hours a day...all gatherers are welcome.
2. They chose the spots. We clean up.
3. It is not so much the mud season. During the winter when the stuff freezes on contact with the ground it a problem to get up. At times we find that we are hacking.

Nicola Blake and Jack Dibb, Sallie's Fen Alpacas, Barrington, NH

1. We grow great tomatoes! Over the winter we pile up a few loads on our vegetable garden and rototill it right when things thaw come spring. Does wonders for all our veggie's! But more importantly, we also make piles in weak areas of the pasture (of which there are many on our typically rocky just-cleared New England land!) and periodically rotill that in and seed the patch. Sometimes we put a temporary fence around it so that the alpacas don't add any more fresh berries. Once the grass is growing well, we let the alpacas back in. It often takes them a while to eat there while it still smells bad, so we may have to mow a couple of times. The better it has been mixed with soil, the better it works. However, by the end of the summer season, that green grass is looking better and better to them! They certainly find the grass palatable by the next spring.
2. We don't do any positive encouraging – but we do clean up twice a day, especially in high traffic areas, so that they don't "seed" too many of their own new piles, or spread the old ones.
3. We have a female alpaca who seems to be more prone to foot warts in the damp so we have been fighting our extended "mud season" for a while now. We also trap our animals in relatively small "sacrificial" areas during this time of year to give the pasture a chance to get established. The best thing we have done is to get a delivery or two of stone dust and use it to re-contour the area near the "girls" barn where the mud can get really bad. (In our area the stone dust cost < \$20/yrd.) The newly built up areas and drainage channels have worked very well so far this season!

Deb Wright, Wright Choice Alpacas, Castleton, VT

1. I pile that brown gold so that it has a chance to breakdown a bit. Long-term plans are to use it as soil supplementation, which is much needed here. I'll probably spread it late in the year to give it plenty of time to settle in after the alpacas are off the fields.
2. To encourage the right place I seed the spot that I want, and keep it cleaned up, and add pelleted lime as needed. It seems to help to have a degree of aroma, enough to keep the alpacas on the spot but not too much.
3. I'm coping with mud by making drainage ditches with a hoe. It really helps to dry the ground around the ditch. I also put used hay down in the muddy areas, it makes a mat that in time, resembles a carpet of felt. Our barn and surrounding area is new and I know, incomplete, we barely got it done enough for winter. I am planning the grading during this dry mud season. This will lead to some better planned landscape. It really takes some observations to get the ditches in the right places.

Jr. Farmer: Farmer Hampshire, where did all these rocks come from?

Farmer Hampshire: The glaciers brought 'em.

Jr. Farmer: Where did the glaciers go?

Farmer Hampshire: Back to get more rocks

Laura and Michael Busky, North Brook Farm Alpacas, Berlin, MA

1. We compost our brown gold and spread it over closed off sections of pasture that need reseeding. The composted beans make for great seed starter and before you know it we can open up that section again and close another one off so it can rest.
2. We use a variety of objects to encourage alpacas to poop in the right spot. Sometimes we use green show panels to constrict the area. Other times we use metal buckets tipped upside down to block a small area which they seem to be favoring. The metal buckets can be moved around quickly during morning barn chores. The green panels are saved for larger problem areas and are usually left up long enough for the alpacas to "forget" the old dung pile.
3. We let it be muddy! Fortunately, we live in an area that dries out pretty quickly, so mud doesn't stay around too long. When it does get muddy, everything and everyone is dirty, so we let it be dirty and clean it up when things have dried off.

Dave Sanderson, Parker River Alpaca Farm, Byfield, MA

1. I actually think of the raking up and collection of the alpaca manure as a "daily harvest" although I'm certain I'm the only one here that thinks this way.
There are 3 methods we are currently using:
 - i. Over The Fence. This isn't anything like sweeping it under the rug. We planted American Arborvitae along the road frontage which will someday become a big green wall. The spring harvest, rich in straw as we cycle the barn straw through the poop piles, makes a great mulch. We eliminate potential fly problems by introducing the fly parasites (*Nasonia vitripennis*, *Muscidifurax zaraptor*) which work great.
 - ii. We have an organic garden conveniently located near the barn. On rainy days when I don't feel like getting wet tractor butt or when the tractor bucket is full, I add it to the garden. In the fall we form rows and deep valleys in the garden. We just fill in the valleys with the manure mix and by Spring it's ready for planting. After the Fall garden harvest, we turn it all under, harvest a nice batch of compost for new pasture, and turn the garden into rows again for the winter "brown gold" harvest. This works great. We even have pictures of it on our web site.
 - iii. The majority of the harvest gets moved to a compost pile by the tractor. This Winter we tried something new that also worked great. We covered the pile with a large vinyl coated tarp like the ones the trucker's use on their flat-beds. They are heavy enough that they don't need to be held or tied down even in heavy winds and are water proof. They hold in the moisture and heat, and the compost pile "cooked" all winter long. The tarp also holds in the Fume Plume of steam you can see in the Winter when the tarp is removed. I turned it in March with the tractor and it was almost done. I'll run it through a shredder and spread it on pastures this summer.
2. We installed some 1"X 8" boards placed on the barn floor on edge to separate the straw bedding from the designated poop pile the herd had established. This worked very well this year and has kept the pile contained and from migrating or spreading.
3. We cope with mud season by listening to the birds sing until things dry out. The Alpacas, especially the Spring show entries don't get to run as much until the pastures come in.

Understanding the NEAOBA Newsgroups

To aid communication and support among our membership, NEAOBA has created two newsgroups with YahooGroups. Both are completely free of charge.

1. **“NEAOBA INFO” newsgroup is where all NEAOBA related announcements are made.** Only the current Officers, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor and Committee Chairpersons will be allowed to post messages to this arena. All NEAOBA members who provide email addresses will automatically be subscribed to this newsgroup.
2. **We also offer the original “NEAOBA” newsgroup as a support forum.** All members are invited to join, but membership is completely voluntary. Rules and instructions for this newsgroup are listed below.

RULES (as of 2/15/02):

1. All forms of advertising are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, posting of sales lists, farm events, services (stud, fiber processing, etc.), products for sale (fiber, farm, etc.). Reasonable tag lines in signatures will be allowed provided they don't violate the above rules.
2. Communication that does not concern the entire membership is prohibited. If you have business with other NEAOBA members, which doesn't concern the entire membership, you should discuss your business with those members directly, not on the newsgroup.
3. All messages posted must be civil and respectful of other members. This is not a format for publicly airing grievances.
4. For support purposes, members may post questions and answers related to all aspects of raising alpacas.
5. Members may discuss current issues and events, provided the discussion is directed at the entire membership.
6. Chain mail and jokes are prohibited.
7. Members may post messages freely unless they break any of the above rules. Members will be given a warning after their first violation of the above rules. Members will be banned from the newsgroup after their second offense. All warnings will be made privately.

NOTE: Rules are subject to change without notification. Current rules will be posted on the members only page of the website.

Instructions for Joining and Participating

1. Receive invitation from newsgroup moderator. If you haven't received this invitation, please send an email to neaoba-owner@yahogroups.com.
2. Respond to invitation either by clicking “reply”, then “send” OR by clicking the direct link included in the invitation.
3. You are now signed up! To post a message, send it via email to neaoba@yahogroups.com.
4. Note that when you click “reply” to respond to a posted message, you are replying to the **entire group**.

Creating a Yahoo ID and Linking it to your NEAOBA Group Membership

Your basic subscription uses system defaults, but you have several options available for message delivery:

- a) Individual email (default) – each time a message is posted you will receive an email. NOTE: You do not need a Yahoo ID to select this option.
- b) Daily Digest—each night, Yahoo will combine any messages posted that day into one email and deliver it to you.
- c) Only Special Notices—only receive important updates from your group moderator. (This option doesn't apply to NEAOBA).
- d) No email—you can be a member of the newsgroup, but opt to view messages on the newsgroup's message board rather than receive emails directly.

Please note that you may subscribe to the NEAOBA Group without creating a Yahoo ID as long as you are satisfied with the default options. If you wish to change your options, however, you must first link the NEAOBA group to your Yahoo ID.

If you don't already have a Yahoo ID:

1. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups>.
2. Click the “Sign Up Now” button
3. Fill out the form following the on screen instructions. Click the “Submit Form” button when finished.
4. Click on “Continue to Yahoo” to proceed

You are now logged in with your new Yahoo ID. The next step is to link your NEAOBA group membership to this ID.

Once you have a Yahoo ID:

5. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups> and log in using your Yahoo ID. (If you've just completed steps 1-4, you're already logged in. Go directly to step 6).
6. Click on "Membership Wizard" and follow the on screen instructions for linking your NEAOBA group membership to your Yahoo ID.
7. If you've never used your email address with Yahoo before, you will be required to verify this address. Click the "verify" link and follow the instructions. If Yahoo has previously verified your email address, then simply make sure the correct address is checked and continue through the on line instructions.

When you've completed all steps of the Membership Wizard, you should see a message of congratulations. If you click on the "Go To the My Groups Page" button, you will find "neaoba" listed among the groups you're subscribed to.

Maintaining your Account and Changing your Options

Now you can visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/mygroups> any time you like using your Yahoo ID and password. Simply logon as before and click the "neaoba" link in your list of groups to enter the NEAOBA group. Once you've entered the NEAOBA group, you will be able to:

1. View recent messages directly on the message board
2. Search the archives for older messages
3. Use the "Edit my Membership" link to add profiles, change your email address, change your message delivery options and change the format of your messages.

Explore the YahooGroups site to see the many other features available to members.

STUD DE MONTH

Each Month we randomly choose a NEAOBA farm member to provide info on their favorite Herdsire

Maple Brook Elliot

Stats:

DOB 10/3/95

Sire: Peruvian Bueno

Dam: Peruvian Fernanda

Micron: MC 22.6, SD 3.1, CV 13.7

Color: white

Description:

"Has the fiber all breeders should be striving for" – 1997 MAPACA judge Susan Tellez.

Elliot is the male you are looking for if superior fiber is a main goal of your breeding program. He has repeatedly won regional and national awards for his tremendously dense, uniform, crimped fiber. (1998 First Place and Best Crimp MAPACA). He has sired 80% colored and 80% female offspring who are hitting the show circuit this year! They are spectacular!! He settles females with ease and is easily handled. Couple all of this with strong, solid conformation and a great bite...Elliot's sure to produce head-turners for you!

Stud fee: \$1,500.00.

Can possibly travel to farms who book multiple breedings.

Owners: Lou & Melissa Ferrara

New England Alpacas

Killingworth CT (860) 663-3482 neapaca@aol.com

New Advance for Camelid Reproductive Technology (or Kamilah the Cama)

ON FEBRUARY 27, the world's second cama, Kamilah - a hybrid between a dromedary camel and a llama - was born at the Camel Reproduction Centre in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. Rama the Cama, the first hybrid, was born on January 14, 1998 was a male, whereas Kamilah is female.

Dr Lulu Skidmore, Scientific Director at the Camel Reproduction Centre, said Kamilah's conception was made possible by the use of modern reproductive techniques. Follicle development in the ovaries of her mother was monitored by ultrasound and, when a mature follicle was detected, she was inseminated with camel semen.

Since all camelids are induced ovulators that require the stimulus of natural mating to release the egg from the follicle, she was injected with a gonadotrophin-releasing hormone, to induce ovulation when she was inseminated.

The genetic link between camels and llamas, broken 30 million years ago, has been re-established with the birth of the camas. Kamilah was born after 343 days, which is within the typical range for the llama (335-360 days), but is much shorter than the gestation period in the camel (385-395 days).

The fluffy, Bambi-like Kamilah weighed only 5kg at birth, which is less than a newborn llama at around 10kg and very much less than a newborn camel at 30kg. It is a striking illustration of how the size of the mother controls the size of the newborn, irrespective of the size of the father.

Rama, the male cama, has some of the characteristics of a camel - long tail and short ears but no hump - but walks on two toes like a llama rather than on a camel's single footpad.

Today, the camel family comprises two species of Old World Camelids, namely the Bactrian or two-humped camel and the dromedary or one-humped camel and four species of New World camelids, the llama, alpaca, guanaco and vicuna.

They all originated from one ancient camelid that inhabited the Rocky Mountain area of North America.

Around 30 million years ago some of these primitive camelids migrated north to Alaska, crossed the Bering Strait into Siberia and then migrated down into Mongolia where they evolved into the largest camelid, the two-humped Bactrian.

Others migrated further south-west to populate the Saudi Arabian peninsula, Iran, Pakistan and northern India, where they developed into the smaller one-humped dromedary camel.

Other primitive camelids migrated south into the South American Andes Mountains where some 5-10 thousand years ago the Incas domesticated the guanaco to produce the llama and the vicuna to produce the alpaca. All four kinds of these camelids can be made to hybridize with each other and all the camelids have the same diploid chromosome number of $2n=74$.

Dr Skidmore said, "It will be interesting to see if Kamilah's behavior is more llama-like and her vocalizations are more camel-like, as indeed are Rama's."

For full article see:

<http://www.gulfnews.com/Articles/news.asp?ArticleID=43065>

Fiber Pool News!

News from the New England Alpaca Fiber Pool- News Notes 4/10/02 (www.NEAFP.com)

This past pool was so successful in collecting over 9000 lb. of fiber that we have been consumed with pushing the items through the pipelines to product completion.

The new and very active wholesale section has been successful and hopefully we can continue to have stock. We are going to introduce our New England Alpaca Products under a new Name of **APONA** as there has been lots of suggestions for this. NEAFP is sort of hard to get out around the tongue and teeth. Alpaca Products of North America means more now as both pool members and manufacturers are from all around North America.

This year's pool is taking a little bit longer than last year's but NEAFP has commenced shipping socks, hats, scarves, blankets, rugs, and gloves; and will work up to sweaters and yarns shortly. Some yarns, capes, and the Tui fleece project should be ready after the 20th of April. Super fine yarns and sweaters won't be ready until late May, unless we shoot the guy who is doing the worsted yarn and then we won't have them at all! Just kidding, no one shoots the golden goose!

We have divided the orders into groups according to what our inventory is at a given time. If we have it, you get it, but we are trying to save you shipping by sending the entire order at one time. Also, when priority mail is way too pricey, we ship ground. If you want priority no matter what, let Lorrie know and she will key it into your order. All unpaid invoices have been reissued and sent to you by US Mail. As soon as these invoices are paid, they will be forwarded for shipping.

We are going to try to get the photos of all the NEW projects around the time the wisteria and lilacs bloom and then get them onto the web site with prices and with a new order form. We plan to have new sweaters, mittens, hats, and some other items. As usual, any suggestions are welcome. Same old wonderful socks, gloves, blankets, braided

rugs and yarns, etc., will be there. The big news is that these will all be made with **100% alpaca fiber**: NO more wool added and we have the grease problem settled so the time of delivery will be earlier than April! Thanks for everyone's patience.

We are going to **start collecting fiber** from the **15 th of June to August 15 th**. We will be collecting raw fleece at the AOBA National Meeting in Louisville, KY for anyone who wants to save shipping costs. Just drop it off at our booth. You will get an e-mail about details. Look for our NEAFP booth, tucked away in some corner. We will have our new styles and products there too, so drop by. New and old items to be made will be on the web site www.NEAFP.com by June 1. Thanks for everyone's patience.

Jan Hensle and Lorrie O'Connor

Looking for a way to get those “creative juices” going?

Erica Dwyer, Hampden Hills Alpacas, Hampden, MA

The answer to this problem can be quite simple - Get a couple of alpacas!!! Having been a professional tailor for 10 years, (I then decided to give it up for a career with animals, a vet tech) I am no stranger to working with my hands and “creating” things. Oddly enough, my 12-year old son is much the same way. He is always creating something out of whatever is around the house that he can cut up, tape, interlock, or any other way he can put it together. (He got a roll of duck tape in his Christmas stocking.)

Before we purchased our 1st alpacas, I had knitted one sweater out of cotton, and started a couple of other knitted projects, never having finished them. I've crocheted a couple of things, including an afghan for my mother-in-law. But I had never done any spinning, never *heard* of felting, and knitting a hat or mittens - well I was totally intimidated by this thought. But I'm always up for a good challenge.

We started with 2 alpacas, one white, and one dark fawn. It was July and I was thinking ahead for Christmas presents. I had to learn how to spin in time to make some decent skeins for Christmas. I found a good teacher and took a couple of lessons. First she started me out on the drop spindle (right) . Well, I hated that. I like machines that keep things moving. I had my eye on that wheel! So I purchased one that felt even & comfortable for me. Well now to go home and practice, practice, practice. Laundry, dishes & cooking be damned! I had a deadline. It took a little while, but then it just clicked. I was spinning, and it was even, uniform & actually looked like yarn! I knew those years of feeling with my hands would pay off. As it turned out, I had 6 large, beautiful skeins to send to my aunt, who loves to knit, on time for Christmas. Mission accomplished. NEXT!!!!

Time to dust off those knitting needles, not to mention buying the sizes I don't already have. I had one alpaca

who passed away at a young age due to some rare genetic problem. So I was determined to make something special for me from her fiber. I had spun it up into a beautiful Bay Black sport weight yarn, but what to make &... It took me months to wait for the right project. It turned out to be a knitted brimmed hat (not felted after knitting). I decided to take the challenge of working with circular needles & double pointed needles and, to coin a phrase - just do it! The hat came out very nice. A little small, full of mistakes, but no one can notice them but me. I have enough yarn from that alpaca to try one more hat a little larger and learn from my former mistakes.

What's next? Well, I now have 2 spinning wheels and have spun 5 complete fleeces since last spring. I have so many ideas in my head, and so little time. All the time, I am still trying to complete spinning last spring's fleeces hoping to have it all done for sale at local fiber fairs. I have some llama fiber to make a hooked rug as a wall hanging. I'm anxious to try some felting for hats, and then move on to felted detailed rugs. Crocheting seems to have come a long way. There are beautiful vests, hats, scarves that are hard to tell if they are knitted or crocheted, not to mention spinning the next shearing of fleeces. Oh, and let's not forget about weaving! I have a customer who is giving me a table loom. Yet another challenge learning to set that up. So it's time to make a list and prioritize, as shearing time is right around the corner once again. I am on the lookout again for that next perfect pattern for my handspun yarns. It can be for me, or display at fairs & shows, and of course Christmas is only about 7 months away. My real job & housework just are getting in the way! And who needs sleep anyway?

So you have a creative streak in you, and you don't know what to do about it? Just get yourself a couple of alpacas. The rest will take care of itself. Happy “criating”!

How not to be fleeced by an alpaca...

***by Les Foshay, Champlain Valley Alpacas,
Middlebury, VT***

Spring time in the New England States has long meant many special things for its inhabitants, such as sugaring, plowing and planting, lambing and calving and for many folks simply the end of the long oppressive winter season. As we gladly unpack summer clothes and store away the heavy winter garments for the next cool season, we alpaca owners should be reminded of the need to prepare our warmly dressed animals for the summer season ahead. One of the best things that we can do for our creatures is annual shearing.

Last year Champlain Valley Alpacas, near Middlebury, Vermont hosted the first ever alpaca shearing clinic for our region. Bill Watkins, who teaches the clinics at the National Conferences of AOBA instructed the exclusive class in several sessions. The earlier morning classroom sessions covered the hand and electric equipment related to shearing. Bill gave ample opportunity to learn the selection, care and correct adjustment of the gear, with hands on being an important element of all the sessions.

Breaks gave participants ample time to ask questions and interact with the instructor and other participants, while enjoying provided beverages and a catered lunch. Following lunch, Bill gave a live demonstration of his stroke technique for shearing an alpaca in a non-injurious restraint that he has perfected. Sheri Watkins, Bill's wife, is a long-time spinner and has worked with Bill developing a system to maximize the quality of the shorn fleece through preparation, good shearing and proper handling. She has often accompanied him on his many trips together shearing thousands of animals, beginning with sheep when their youngsters were involved in 4-H. We were impressed with the quality of this joint effort and method when Bill sheared one of our white boys, and we took the bag directly to the fleece/composite portion of the

AOBA national show, to place second overall --- without ever touching the fleece again!

The instruction ended up with the opportunity for students to try their hand at shearing. Like the AOBA National class, Bill supplied alpaca manikins to practice on. Unlike the Nationals, through the courtesy of local owners and Champlain Valley Alpacas, interested participants had the opportunity to work with and shear live animals. Students were encouraged to bring their own equipment, but plenty of equipment was available to everyone.

Even if you have a regular shearer lined up, it is always a good thing to know how to shear your animals yourself, in case of emergency or a change in plans by your regular shearer. It is neither hard nor dangerous to learn, especially under the watchful eyes of a skillful instructor and experienced shearer such as Bill Watkins. At the very least a participant will come away with a greater understanding and appreciation of the process, while learning how to maximize fleece quality, and all the participants felt they benefited greatly from the course and had a pretty good time doing it.

An anecdote: Several weeks later, my wife Jenny and I were at a farm helping with a late shearing that had been postponed for one reason or another. In the high humidity it was obvious that the animals were struggling to maintain. In the course of the afternoon, the outside temperature reached the 90's coupled with an 85 plus percent humidity throwing one of the remaining heavily fleeced yearling females into heat stress. We rapidly cut off her blanket with four or five quick strokes and carried her half limp body out to a cool pool where we held her sternum until she was able to hold herself up again...The owner appreciated it, and I'm sure that little female did too. Do yourself and your animals a favor-learn the basics of how to shear even if you never use it. Someday it might come in useful, and you will have a better understanding of the process, for yourself, your animals, your fleece--- and your shearer!

Calendar of Events

May 4-5, 2002	New England Alpaca Fest! Three County Fair Grounds North Hampton, MA. <i>Alpaca Showcase, Free Mini Seminars & Demos, Obstacle Course, Auction and Alpaca Garments.</i> www.neaoba.org/calendar.htm
May 5, 2002, 8:30 am	NEAOBA Business Meeting at the New England Alpaca Fest. Three County Fairgrounds Northampton, Mass. Contact: info@hawkehillfarm.com for directions
May 11, 2002	4th Annual Customer Appreciation Sale Maple Brook Farm & Chase Tavern Farm <i>More than 60 alpacas available for sale from customers of these two proud sponsoring farms. Special packages. Educational seminars.</i> customerappreciationsale.com , (877)CTF-PACA, (413) 568-2655, cindyl@ctalpacos.com , mbfarm@javanet.com .
May 11-12, 2002 (Sat. and Sun. 9-4)	26th Annual New Hampshire Sheep & Wool Festival , Hopkinton State Fairgrounds, Contoocook, NH, <i>Sheep show, sheep shearing, sheepdog trials. Sheep, llamas, alpacas, angora goats, angora rabbits on display. Educational programs. Farm Museum. Children welcome. \$3.00, under 12 free. Rain or shine. No dogs. Ex. 7 off I-89N. Call (603) 635-8553, daowens@erols.com.</i>
May 17-19, 2002	The Breeder's Showcase Alpaca Show , Butler County Fairgrounds, Butler PA, <i>sponsored by the Pennsylvania Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association. AOBA CERTIFIED HALTER & FLEECE SHOWs.</i> Contact: Laurye Feller, (724) 586-2412 or email; laurye@sunsethillsalpacos.com .
May 18 – 19, 2002	Spa Alpacas' Fourth Annual "Everything's Coming Up Alpacas!" <i>Thinking about raising alpacas? Join Kelly and Paul Zanella and guest speakers. Sat - demonstrations and discussions on the alpaca industry, alpaca selection, herd health management, investment opportunities and tax advantages, marketing/sales and facility set-up and layout. Sun - open house with private treaty sales, fleece and fleece product sales.</i> www.spaalpacos.com or pjzanella@aol.com for invitation.
May 29 - June 2, 2002	Alpaca Owners & Breeders Association National Conference - AOBA 11th National Conference "Celebrating the New Vision," Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center, Louisville, KY. <i>AOBA's annual premier exhibition! AOBA-CERTIFIED HALTER & FLEECE SHOWS. Plus much more!</i> Visit www.alpacainfo.com
June 8-9, 2002 (10-4)	The Maine Fiber Frolic. Windsor Fairgrounds, Rt. 32, Windsor, Maine. <i>Alpaca, Goats, Llamas, Sheep Rabbits, Vendors Fleece/Fiber Demos, Food, KidsArea,</i> www.fiberfrolic.com
July 6, Aug 3, Sep 21, 2002	Alpaca Breeders of Vermont State-wide Open Farm Day. <i>The Alpaca Breeders of Vermont are hosting three state-wide open farm days in 2002. Tour the scenic Green Mountain State and visit farms featuring superior quality alpacas, on-farm stores and friendly, knowledgeable breeders</i> Contact Terry Miller at 802-592-3153 or www.alpacabreedersofvermont.com
July 12-13, 2002	Central NY Alpaca Classic , in Weedsport, NY. <i>LEVEL II AOBA CERTIFIED SHOW.</i> Show Superintendent: Christine Gilman (315-689-3550 riversideny@yahoo.com)
July 27 & 28, 2002	Vermont Llama & Alpaca Festival , Windsor County Fair, Springfield, VT. Eric Lorentzon (802) 436-3136
July 27-28, 2002	Alpaca Seminar Featuring Dr. David Pugh , French Hollow Alpacas, Bondville, VT. <i>Seminar incl. breeding; gestation; birthing; reproductive science and research; alpaca health and nutrition; building a partnership with your local veterinarian. Will appeal to experienced and new breeders alike.</i> Lou and Bob Eustance, (802) 297-9353 fhalpacas@aol.com
Aug. 3, 2002	Llama and Alpaca Day , New Hampshire Farm Museum, Milton, NH, Contact: Cherie Allen, (603) 652-7840, www.farmmuseum.org
Sept. 21-22, 2002 (Sat. 10-5 & Sun. 12-5)	Fall Foliage Alpaca Fest 2002. Multi Farm Open House & New Breeder Seminar, Vermont/New York border. <i>Sat, Tour 4 diverse farms all within a short drive - Free. Sun, Seminar - herd husbandry, farm set up, veterinarian & farm tax accounting lectures, breeders, panel, hand outs & lunch. Reservations - Fee.</i> Linda & Bill Ley (802) 325-2000, Alpacas@ParrisHillFarm.com
Sept. 23-25, 2002	The Big "E" , Springfield, MA, <i>AOBA CERTIFIED ALPACA SHOW.</i> www.BigE.com , Kevin O'Leary rvalpacas@aol.com or Mike Tierney mail@maplebrookfarm.com
Oct. 4-5-6, 2002	New England Coastal Classic Alpaca Show , Cumberland County Civic Center, Portland, Maine, <i>Sponsored by NEAOBA, AOBA CERTIFIED ALPACA SHOW,</i> www.necoastalclassic.com
Oct. 18-20, 2002	Empire Alpaca Extravaganza 2002 Syracuse, NY, <i>AOBA CERTIFIED ALPACA SHOW,</i> www.alpacasofpleasantvalley.com/empire/

Criations!!! Criations!!! Criations!!! Criations!!! Criations!!! Criations!!!

Parris Hill Farm Alpacas, Pawlet, VT

AML Carlotta (F) 10/02/01, Light Fawn/Beige, Sire: Vyrtual Reality (Light Fawn), Dam: SA Grandessence (Medium Fawn)

Hawke Hill Farm, Wrentham, MA

Kichona (F) 7/14/01, light fawn sire: Wilpaca's Juan Carlos dam: Megami

Ojo-chan (F) 7/14/01, black w/white markings Sire: Shogun Dam: Inca Princess

Hoshi (F) 7/15/01, white Sire: Goliath, Dam: Ester

Michiko (F) 9/11/01, dk.fawn w/white markings Sire: Shogun Dam: MA Tenshi

Kiseki (F) 9/23/01, dk. fawn Sire: Goliath Dam: Momo

Genki (F) 10/4/01, true black Sire: Shogun Dam: BD Chairou

Mountain Pond Farm, Weston, VT

Scheelite (F) 06/01, pinto, Sire: MA Huascarán, Dam: Mountain Pond Farm Jade

Tanzanite (F) 06/01, pinto, Sire: MA Huascarán, Dam: Mountain Pond Farm Amber.

Galena (F) 9/02, very dark brown, Sire: MA Huascarán, Dam: Mountain Pond Farm Amethyst.

Alexandrite (F) 9/01, dark brown/black, Sire: MA Huascarán, Dam: Penfrydd's Babette.

North Brook Farm Alpacas, Berlin, MA:

North Brook's Liberty (M, Huacaya) 10/4/01, 17 lbs, Beige/Light Fawn, Sire: Peruvian Pizarro (Fawn), Dam: Skyview's Kona (Dark Fawn).

Sallie's Fen Alpacas, Barrington, NH

Jed's Sebastian (M) 8/07/01, Med Silver Grey, Sire: Sallie's Fen Jed (MSG), Dam: SS Dynasty (DSG)

Jed's Mycroft (M) 10/10/01, Bay Black/white face, Sire: Sallie's Fen Jed (MSG), Dam: MVF Oreo (BB/W)

Parker River Alpaca Farm, Byfield, MA

Mika (F) Huacaya 05/19/2001, Dam: Chocolate Lace, Sire: Pperuvian Eliser

PRAF Gustavo (M) Suri, 05/29/2001, Dam: PVF Marionette, Sire: Guererro

PRAF Cheyenne (F) Suri, 06/11/2001, Dam: PVF Crumpet, Sire: Guererro

PRAF Macintosh (M) Huacaya, 06/16/2001, Dam: MVF Molly Stark, Sire: Gandalf The Wizard

PRAF Sambo Grandé (M) Huacaya, 06/28/2001, Dam: MVF Miss Liberty, Sire: El Cuba

PRAF Maxwell, (M) Huacaya, 09/11/2001, Dam: EveningStars Sire: Gandalf The Wizard

PRAF Hope (F) Huacaya, 09/17/2001, Dam: Oriana's Inca Gold, Sire: Gandalf The Wizard

PRAF Cirrus (M) Huacaya, 10/28/2001, Dam: Oriana, Sire: Gandalf The Wizard

NEAOBA Business Meeting

Sunday, Feb. 10, 2002

Tufts Univ. Veterinary Campus

N. Grafton, MA

Officers Present: Jim Mullen, President
Laura Busky, Treasurer
Stephanie Pfeiffer, Secretary

1. Call to Order 11:03 am
2. MOTION to approve minutes of the previous meeting on Sept. 29, 2001. Seconded and APPROVED
3. Review of NEAOBA BOD Meeting 11/29/01. Jim shared some the topics that had been discussed: NEAF, ByLaws, etc.
4. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Financial Report - an up-to-date report was handed out to members present. NEAOBA has \$25,000 in the bank with \$5,000 allotted for the Portland Show. Laura reminded members to verify their web listing on the NEAOBA site so that she could print a member list for 2002. There are presently 121 members in good standing. The new voluntary donation that was approved by members last year has collected \$861 for medical research.
 - b. Financial Policy - will be printed in the upcoming newsletter. Laura read some highlights and asked that committee members pay close attention to the policy with regard to submitting invoices for payment when organizing an event.

- c. New Member Packet - information that is included: Welcome letter; information about the newsgroup; member directory; and most recent newsletter.
- d. IRS Tax exempt status - an extension was filed with the IRS, once accepted, NEAOBA will apply for 501c3 status.

MOTION to approve the Financial Report as presented was Seconded and APPROVED.

5. Marketing Committee. Report by Dave Sanderson, Chairman. The committee has designed a new poster for NEAF 2002, which is downloadable for members. The 8.5x11 size makes it easier to place and distribute. Samples of the poster were available for members. The committee has also formulated a list of corrections for the NEAOBA web site, which they feel, is the most effective means for advertising. The goal is to develop a content-rich site that will benefit members and people interested in alpacas. The committee is working on an "Alpaca Essentials" kit: a how-to packet for reaching the media. And would also like to recruit AOBAs members in our area who are not presently members of NEAOBA.

6. NEAF Report. NEAF 2002 will be May 3-5 at the Three County Fairgrounds, Northampton, MA. Speakers this year: Dr. Norm Evans of Kentucky and Mary Reed of Ohio. There will be no auction this year. Members expressed an interest in having Mary Reed conduct a "How to show your alpacas" class at NEAF. Friday night we'll have pizza delivered and on Saturday, members decided to have a catered dinner together. Children's booth will be available, as well as a clown for general entertainment.

7. New England Coastal Classic. Report from Walter VanBuskirk: Please note new date for the event is October 4,5,and 6, 2002 in Portland, Maine. This will be an AOBAs Certified Show. Judge: Anthony Stachowski. Show Superintendent: Peg Stevens. There will be a fleece show and fiber demonstrations. VOLUNTEERS are needed! Please contact the Van Buskirks of Lightfoot Farms.

8. Bylaw Change Discussion. Jim is concerned that our bylaws need fine-tuning and presented the members with a copy of proposed changes. It was agreed that this would take several discussions and changes would have to be phased in over a few years. Some proposals discussed included members selecting officers a year in advance to have officers-elect as well as creating 2-year terms for officers. It was decided to set up a poll on the NEAOBA web site for member feedback so that a draft can be prepared for the next meeting at NEAF in May.

9. Other Business

e. North American Alpaca Show, April 4-7, 2002, Eastern States Expo., W.Springfield, MA. Judges will be Julio Sumar and Amanda Vandenbosch. Superintendent: Peg Stevens. Fleece Judge: Cameron Holt. Report from Kevin O'Leary: This will be an AOBAs Certified Show with seminars and clinics planned. A professional crew has been hired to clerk, steward, and handle other misc. duties. Organizers of this show are Acorn Alpaca Ranch, Cas-Cad-Nac Farm, Indian Summer Alpacas, and Riverview Alpacas. For more info: www.alpacatours.com

f. NEAOBA Newsgroup: Less than 50% of members have signed up to use the NEAOBA newsgroup. In order to expedite official NEAOBA information, Laura has offered to set up two groups: one for official use that members will receive automatically, and the other for information sharing among members that will remain optional.

g. Newsletter - After preparing many issues of the newsletter, Cindy Lavan will be resigning as editor after the present issue is finished. Discussion about what type of format NEAOBA should use for future issues was discussed. Suggestions: One printed newsletter per year, or a newsletter that is posted as a PDF file on the web site. For the time being, we will use the official newsgroup that Laura will set up for all members.

h. Web site: Members are invited to visit the NEAOBA web site to view the new improvements that have been made for members, benefit such as searchable database, etc. Members present agreed that web master, Al Maloney, should receive free ad space on the site for the many hours he has put into maintaining the web site.

i. Big E 2002 September 23-25 (Monday through Wednesday). Report from Kevin O'Leary: Judges will be Kristen Berman and Shannon O'Connell. Pen Panels will be part of entry fee this year, and there will be a limit to 140 pens due to space restrictions. Kevin O'Leary will be the Alpaca Show Mgr. and Mike Tierney is Assistant Show Mgr. For more information: www.BigE.com

j. New England Alpaca Fiber Pool (NEAFP) Report from Jan Hensle that yarns are finished and the grease problem has been conquered so next year should see a 100% alpaca yarn product. Fleece collection 2002 will take place at the summer meeting

Motion to Adjourn 1:15 Seconded and APPROVED

Remember! Fiber Pool collection dates 15 th of June to August 15 th
www.NEAFP.com

Big Help From A Little Daisy

by Dave Sanderson
www.pralpacas.com

Parker River Alpaca Farm is sandwiched between a large state forest and the Parker River tidal salt marsh in the town of Byfield, Massachusetts. It is unimaginable to us how in 1635 the first European settlers to this area could have survived the bugs alone. Even today, mosquitoes, black flies, midges, the dreaded *greenheads* and other nasties of the insecta persuasion are a serious force to be reckoned with and to make matters even worse, Olivia claims to be The Mosquito Magnet! Needless to say, we have been motivated to seek out safe and effective means to make outdoor life more enjoyable while protecting ourselves and our alpacas from insect borne disease. Our discovery and use of Pyrethrum has been a major breakthrough.

Whether you know it or not, chances are you are a user of this interesting and truly amazing substance. It has unique properties that lend itself to use around the alpaca farm but even if you are already a big Pyrethrum fan, understanding it's various forms and terminology can be confusing at best.

Pyrethrum is a powerful insecticide derived from the flower of the daisy, *Chrysanthemum* that is deadly to virtually all insect pests but harmless to humans and other animals, including alpacas when used appropriately. The insecticide breaks down quickly on exposure to light and air, so it is non-polluting. It has been used as an insecticide for over 100 years and even today remains the most unique and widely used Biopesticide in existence.

Common products that contain Pyrethrum include:

- household insect foggers and sprays
- flea dips and sprays for cats and dogs
- repellent/insecticide for clothing
- mosquito abatement products
- stable spray, sore & wound ointment
- lice shampoos and body lotions

It is important to understand that Pyrethrum is an insecticide and *not* a repellent. Pests that come in contact with it soon become paralyzed and die within minutes. Pyrethrum is effectively used as an airborne spray but it is most effective when used to treat *textiles...*

The application of Pyrethrum directly on the skin isn't recommended because it is generally not effective. If applied to skin, it is rapidly broken down and metabolized making it ineffective and there is no evidence that Pyrethrum accumulates in animal tissues. Solutions containing up to 5% Pyrethrum, which is more than five to ten times the concentration generally used on the farm is approved by FDA for direct application to the scalp and hair as a head lice treatment.

What makes Pyrethrum so interesting as it relates to Alpacas is its effectiveness when applied to *fiber*. Once dry it is undetectable, i.e. it is odorless, non-staining even on silk and does not change the natural feel of fiber. Tests with Pyrethrum on ticks conducted in Massachusetts concluded that 100% protection using Pyrethrum treated clothing was provided against the Deer Tick and other tick species throughout the United States. It was found **that ticks crawling as little as 10 inches on treated fabric** dropped off and in that limited time nearly all received a sufficient exposure to be killed.

Pyrethrum treated clothing is the standard personal protection system used by the U.S. military deployed in areas of the world where insect-borne disease is a threat. Military field studies have shown that the use of both Pyrethrum (insecticide) and DEET (repellent) provided 99.9% protection against mosquito bites, in an environment where unprotected persons previously received an average of 1,188 bites per hour! Mosquitoes that were undeterred by the DEET were quickly eliminated by the Pyrethrum. These studies in fact proved to become problematic as the soldiers were forced to continuously relocate in search of new mosquito infested areas.

Terminology: Even if you are familiar with this insecticide and are an avid label reader, understanding what you are dealing with can be confusing since the active ingredient may be listed as **Pyrethrum, Pyrethrin, Permethrin** and sometimes **Pyrethroids...**dang

The term **Pyrethrum** refers to a powder made from the dried flowers of the Chrysanthemum plant. At present, the Dalmatian Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum cinerariaefolium*) is commercially cultivated mostly in the mountainous regions of Kenya, Tanzania, and or, less frequently, from Persian Chrysanthemums (*Chrysanthemum coccineum*), plants that originated in Eastern Europe.

The term **Pyrethrin** refers to six different insecticide compounds that occur naturally in the Pyrethrum powder. The six different pyrethrins are **Pyrethrin I and II, Cinevin I and II** and **Jasmolin I and II**. All six may be found in insecticide products, but generally the label only reads "**Pyrethrin,**" regardless of which of the six types is actually present.

Permethrin refers to the man made or synthetically produced version of Pyrethrum and the term **Perethroids** refers to the synthetic equivalent of the six natural Pyrethrins. The synthetics are thought to last longer than the natural ones and may include

agents that slow ultraviolet breakdown. Pyrethrum(natural) treated fiber can be expected to be effective for two weeks and two launderings. Permethrin(synthetic) treated fiber has been reported to be effective for up to six months and many more washings.

Permethrins are available in various concentrations. Permethrin concentrate is typically 13.3 % active ingredient. Ready to use sprays and liquids vary in concentration but .5%(.005) to .9%(.009) is a typical dose that will paralyze and kill most evil doer bugs. Insects that are exposed to low concentrations may become temporarily paralyzed and then recover, but probably with a wicked hangover.

Technique for Impregnating Clothing or Mosquito Netting with Permethrin Solution:

1. Pour 4 oz. of 13.3% permethrin solution (PermaKill or Perm-X) into a plastic bag or small basin.
2. Add 2 quarts of water and mix to make an .83 % solution. Solution will turn milky white.
3. Place mosquito net or 1 to 2 garments in bag or basin. (Tie bag shut.)
4. Submerge fabric in solution to impregnate. Let rest 10 minutes.
5. Remove items from solution. Wring out excess solution.
6. Hang up clothing or netting for 2 to 3 hours to dry. You can also lie out fabric to dry on a clean surface.

Note: Permethrin is toxic to fish and other aquatic life. Do not flush leftover permethrin solution into streams or waterways -- use any unused solution as a spray.

Spray Preparation:

At Parker River Alpacas, we mix 2 oz. Permethrin 13.3% concentrate into a one-quart hand sprayer to get an .83% solution. We use this as an airborne knock down spray, spray the dung piles as a contact insecticide to kill flies and even lightly spray the alpacas during the height of mosquitoes, fly and tick season knowing that in moments it is undetectable and will be completely gone by shearing time. This has been working very well for us for several years now without any adverse effects and has made life on the farm safer and more enjoyable for the humans and alpacas alike.

DISCLAIMER. The author strongly urges everyone to consult their veterinarian before applying or administering any unfamiliar substance on or around livestock. Information in this article is based upon the author's personal experience and research, and is offered for information purposes only. Some information was obtained from both vetted and unvetted sources including the Internet.

What do Alpaca Breeders Need to Know?

The AOBA Education Committee is beginning the process of developing a breeder education program. The very first question in this involved and probably lengthy process is:

- *what topics do new breeders most need to know?*

In other words, what do you know now that you wish you'd known then...

The Education Committee would appreciate hearing your thoughts on this subject. Please feel free to tell us all the topics that you think are important - there is no limit to the number you can suggest!

Please email your comments to: Deb Hill at clouddancer@infomagic.net or Cindy Cruz at wetmtn@aol.com

Thanks in advance!

-Deb, Cloud Dancer Alpacas

New Breeder Featured Farm:

THIS IS IT!! SHE'S IN LABOR!!! - NOT!!

(A New Alpaca Owner's Story...)

Two years ago, we purchased our first two Alpacas, Jasmen, a burgundy Chilean, and Sophia, a jet black Chilean (sisters by herdsire). Before bringing them home, our girls were "field bred" with the stud on the farm as part of our purchase price. A veterinarian (no names mentioned) came to our farm in March of last year and confirmed pregnancies on both my girls. Well, October came and went nights were spent with me sleeping in the barn because Jasmen "hummed" loudly, or Sophia was laying down. "This is it!!!" I'd tell my very patient husband, Charlie. "I can't leave them now. They're going into labor. They NEED me!" As the days passed, I began using the excuse "They're just delivering "late" because it's their first pregnancy." Or "I've counted the days wrong." Then reality began to set in, as well as the large veins on the sides of Charlie's neck – no crias were coming this year. The same vet came back and performed another ultrasound to confirm (he has since been replaced!)

After calling and crying on a few of your shoulders (special thanks to Skyevew & Boulderfont Farm), I came to the realization that late Fall was turning into Winter, and if I wanted offspring in the year 2002, I had to get myself together and take action. I wiped away my tears and called Mike Tierney at Maple Brook. Within the week our girls were being transported to his farm for breeding with Darth Vader, a jet black Chilean who is sure to provide us with a black cria from Sophia, and with Jasmen, it's anyone's guess. Hey, as long as she produces a baby cria, I don't care if it's

purple! So here we are at Mike & Robin's, touring their beautiful farm. On one side breeding is in progress, and on the other a baby cria being born. All around us are adorable crias of varying ages and colors. I turn to Charlie and say, "Geez, we can't even get *one!*" I've never been one to have beginners luck – but I never thought of myself as the Murphy's Law type either. So again, we wait. In another month or so we'll be shearing the girls and scheduling an ultra-sound w/ our new vet. (Please, *please* be pregnant!!!) So I ask all of you to say a small prayer on our behalf in the hopes that we'll have additions to our herd by Halloween. Otherwise, Sophia, Jasmen and I may be knocking on your doors for a place to stay after I break the news to Charlie (only kidding!!!)

Now don't get me wrong, we LOVE our girls! They're delightful to watch and a treat for the kids in the neighborhood who love to stop and visit. We enjoy taking them for walks and seeing the expression on people's faces as they drive by. And Sophia, who we believe is part duck, is just a riot to watch in the summer as she runs through the sprinklers. And to see Jasmen and our cat Deanna playing chase is a bizarre sight indeed. They are truly delightful creatures and whatever happens, we feel very fortunate to have been able to experience all of this.

See you all May 4th and 5th at the New England Alpaca Fest. Maybe next year Enchanted Hill Alpacas will be showing their crias in the Alpaca Showcase!

Kristi Drake
Enchanted Hill Alpacas
Bedford, NH

Alpacas in the land of “no winter”

By Nicola Blake, Sallie’s Fen Alpacas

Early March is the perfect time to take a break from the long New England winter before show season starts in earnest and to head south – in our case we went WAY south – all the way to Auckland, New Zealand! There in the Southern Hemisphere they were enjoying the last flings of summer and looking forward to the very mild winter typical of the northern part of that beautiful country. Everything looked very lush and green, especially to our eyes so accustomed to melting snow and brown mud!

We were visiting for a week to help our friends Stuart and Cathie celebrate their wedding. He hails from Denver and she is a wonderful “kiwi” lady (as New Zealanders often like to call themselves). There were plenty of activities planned to entertain us “out-of-town” guests, including walks in the bush, sailing, and caving. However, the first thing we wanted to do was to check out the local alpacas – of course!

Even though there are only around 2,000-3,000 alpacas in NZ we were lucky that the bride personally knew 2 small alpaca farms that were within fairly easy reach. The first one we visited, “Kauri View Alpacas” is located “in picturesque Kaukapakapa” (we had problems with some of the wonderful Maori names too!) owned by Warren and Pat Slater. They had a total of 6 alpacas in a wide variety of different colors (though white and fawn seemed very popular in NZ), and obviously doted on them all!

The second farm was “Kentroa Alpacas”, owned by “Uncle” Murray and his wife Jennifer, overlooking the spectacular Northland sports-fishing harbor of Wangaparoa. When we first arrived, their 8 alpacas, plus a visiting fawn stud named “Hi Flyer”, were dotted about the steep hillsides peacefully munching on grass and their favorite treat – the native “hangehange” shrub. The alpacas soon came over to say hello and we got to meet the friendly bunch, including the cute 2-

week old cria named Fergus (in photos) and his Mom, Honey.

Murray and Pat find the alpacas are very hardy and good at clearing areas of bush well enough that Murray can get in to work clearing more pasture. However, the next morning Jennifer did seem rather irked because the alpacas had recently taken a liking to her banana trees, especially as her banana crop is currently in high demand by the local organic food market!

We learned about the local problem in this moist Northern part of New Zealand of “facial exema”, a fungal disease that can be fatal to alpacas. Zinc is given as a preventative, but too much can also be toxic.

New Zealand is a country very well endowed with home-grown fiber animals (including 46 million sheep versus 3.6 million people!) and natural fibers are a popular commodity and tourist draw. However, NZ alpaca fiber seems to have a recent rival in garments made from the well marketed Possum/Merino natural fiber blend “Possumdown” that we noticed was being promoted in many stores. The Possum was introduced in 1837 from Australia, and in the absence of its natural enemies, has adapted all too well to the diets and habitats in New Zealand. They have consequently become a major problem to the environment, to people and to agriculture. Thus, harvesting Possum fur, which is very fine micron, has been encouraged. It is then carded together with some fine NZ Merino wool to produce yarn.

NOW, if you think I may be pushing this possum thing TOO far, well – I was really just interested by the marketing techniques being employed to introduce this soft but unfamiliar fiber to the NZ (and tourist) buying public. Possums may be cute (if you happen to like large rodent-like marsupials), but I know what I would rather have grazing on my pastures!

While the New Zealand alpaca industry seems to be growing, we felt very lucky to have the support of other North American alpaca breeders (and our many knowledgeable vets), also our Alpaca Products of North America co-operative!