

ALPACA INFORMATION FOR NEW OWNERS

1. On purchase – drench with a milbemycin drench eg Ivomec, at sheep dose, eg 1 ml per 10 kg. Make sure do not spit out. Drench whenever drenching sheep. Keep to the milbemycin group. Will pick up sheep and cattle worms from pasture. Will do their droppings in piles.
2. Every June – administer Vit D injection (most important for females & youngsters). Alpacas/cria under 12 months of age, will need 2 Vitamin D injections; May and July.
3. 5-in-1 twice per year, if not 4 times per year if rich feed/irrigated pastures. Do not use Cheesy gland vaccine. Always make sure roughage available eg mature paddock feed or hay available.
4. Neuter after puberty so don't grow over tall and straight in the back legs, and cause stifle arthritis problems later in life.
5. Shear once per year. Local shearer available Ian Zippel. Shear pre-grass seed season (September or October). Take off legs, belly & shoulder/neck first (throw away or put on garden), then do saddle area & keep separately & sell to craft people, or ask your breeder re; selling in with their fleece. Shearing is done with animals tied down in special way.
6. At shearing check teeth – grind similarly to sheep but not right down, just cut off tips so meet dental pad ie do not overshoot.
7. At shearing trim toes. Teeth and toes usually need attention if animals on soft country or old.
8. Can get phalaris toxicity and phalaris staggers. Foliar spray paddock with cobalt. At risk times, eg post autumn break, yard and feed hay at night, then put out late morning, and don't put out on phalaris at all after a frost.
9. Won't herd with a dog. Use long white rope between 2 people to help get them through a fence.
10. Do not administer trace element bullets or capsules or even trace element concentrates. Alpacas have only a three compartment stomach with the first one being absorptive, easily traumatised and able to absorb things very quickly. Alpacas are therefore unlike true ruminants which have a four compartment stomach with the first one being non absorptive, and the bullets being able to be retained in the first stomach.