



Midwest Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2010

MEMBER INFORMATION

Please visit the MOPACA.org website for updates on the following:

- Meeting Minutes
- Midwest Alpaca Farm Website
- Member Benefits
- Show Information

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2010 SLATE OF OFFICERS

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Mike Green
Brian Willsey

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Brian Willsey, President
Rockin' W Alpaca Ranch

Jim Carr, Vice President
Salem Hills Alpacas

Debbie Hoerl, Secretary
Alpacas of Moose Creek Ranch

Dave Binder, Treasurer
Mid-Missouri Alpacas

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Let's give a hearty "welcome" to the newest members of our MOPACA family:

Ralph & Connie Mueller
R.C. Mueller Alpacas
Linn, KS

Pamela Ray
Xanadu Farm Alpacas
Denver, CO

Mike & Dianne Six
Morning Moon Alpacas
Monett, MO

Dave, Debby & Jadra Parsons
A-Paca-Dreams
Jefferson City, MO

Brian & Debbie Shannon
Sweet Clover Alpaca
Conway, AR

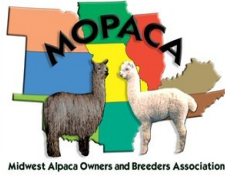
Tina Travis
Elkhorn Alpacas
Warrenton, MO



Calendar of Events

- **September 25-26**—National Alpaca Farm Days
- **October 16-17**—Midwest Alpaca Celebration, Guthrie, OK
- **October 23-24**—Kentucky Classic Alpaca Show, Frankfort, KY
- **October 23-24**—Northern Illinois Alpaca Extravaganza, Grayslake, IL
- **October 30-31**—7th Annual Mid America Alpaca Show, Topeka, KS
- **November 6-7**—National Elite Auction and Show, Oklahoma City, OK
- **November 13-14**—Springfield RiverSide Alpacafest, Springfield, IL
- **November 27-28**—Alpacas in the Ozarks Regional Show, Fayetteville, AR
- **January 22-23, 2011**—Alpaca Blast-Off, Shawnee, OK
- **March 5-6, 2011**—Southern Select Alpaca Show, Shelbyville, TN
- **March 25-27, 2011**—MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show, K.C., MO
- **July 9-10, 2011**—Fiber "U", Lebanon, MO

Please visit MOPACA.org/Calendar for further details!



Letter from the President:

September 3, 2010

Autumn...

Fall is just around the corner.... Cooler days, brisk evenings.... But until then – make sure that you are aware of the heat index, not just the outside temperatures! For those of us that shear early, those coats are thick enough to allow the pacas to overheat – make sure to continue to watch them until the cool weather hits!

As fall approaches, this is the time to get your pastures in order! If you don't already have a relationship with your county extension office – go meet them! Use their services! They can help you understand all that you need to know to get the right fertilizer and seed onto your pastures so that your fields are maximized at spring green-up. Just make sure that you let them know you are growing fiber-bearing animals and need to keep the protein levels down. They can also suggest ways of keeping the K31 (endophyte-infected fescue) to a minimum while providing cool and warm season grasses for the alpacas to enjoy.

Steps to a better pasture next spring:

Check your grass height – can you get 1 more cutting off this fall?

Have a soil sample done – it's easy and not very expensive.

Fertilize per the soil sample – you won't be wasting money putting down minerals that are unnecessary for your specific fields! Remember to put down lime!

Have a forage plan for your fields. Consider alternatives to orchard grass that may outperform in your specific area. Also, consider warm season grasses so that once the orchard and brome go dormant in the middle of next summer, your animals will have something to graze on. I have found that contrary to popular belief, alpacas actually like and will eat grass hay other than 2nd or 3rd cut orchard. I recently tried some nice first cut brome and I also ran a test pasture of Tiffany. The alpacas love it!

Overseed your fields at the appropriate time for your area. You may also consider seeding in some clover or other legumes to increase the nitrogen levels in your field. Talk to your extension office to determine what would work best for you.

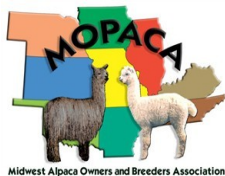
Remember – you are a farmer! Once you get to know your extension agent, they will know you are a farmer too!

Please remember to support National Alpaca Farm Day – if you are not having an event at your farm, support someone that is! Remember, we're all in this together and need to help each other out as much as we can!

Enjoy the cooler temperatures!

Thanks,

Brian Willsey, President MOPACA



CHECK OUT THE NEW LOOK FOR THE SHOW PAGES AT
www.MOPACA.org!

1. The 2011 Spin-Off competition of the MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show is now open for registration!
 - **NEW! Entry discount fee for MOPACA Members!!!**
 - Judge: Cathy Moore – Cathy was a Spin-Off judge for the 2009 and 2010 AOBA Nationals. She comes with lots of experience for this type of competition. Her bio is listed on the website!
 - Deadline for your entries is November 1st!!! With everyone's holiday schedule, including the judge's, your entries must be in by then!

Spin-Off Coordinator – DeAnn Baldwin of Fairview Farms Alpacas, Hays, Kansas. DeAnn will be accepting entries after registration is open. She will also be attending the Mid-America Alpaca Show, in Topeka, KS the weekend of October 29-31st, and will gladly accept entries while there! Visit www.MOPACA.org for details and where to register! DeAnn's contact information is: deann@fairviewfarmsalpacas.com or 785-628-6352.

2. Halter, Fleece, Fiber Arts and Education Classes' registration will open in November with more Early Bird discounts!
3. Photo Contest form is now online! Get the camera out and send in those photos! New categories!
4. Sponsorship discounts still available for members! Not a member...be one and get the discount! Details on the website!
5. PayPal Accepted!

**THE SHOW COMMITTEE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING ALL OF YOU AT
MIAS 2011**

Kim Baake,
MOPACA Invitational Event Coordinator
MIAS@mopaca.org or 816-720-3407

THE VET EXAM



Prevention of Disease Transmission at Shows and Fairs

By Dusty Nagy, DVM, PhD, DACVIM
University of Missouri

Biosecurity in its simplest terms is a set of preventative measures designed to decrease the risk of transmission of infectious diseases. A growing awareness of infectious disease has led to the implementation of basic biosecurity protocols on farms such as quarantine of new or visiting individuals, sick pens or hospital areas to segregate ill animals, and routine herd disease surveillance. Despite the growing awareness of infectious diseases present in camelids, the potential for disease transmission at shows and fairs is often overlooked.

Typically, animals that attend shows and fairs are required to have a certificate of veterinary inspection (health paper). This is simply a statement that at the time the veterinarian examined the animal there was no evidence of contagious or infectious disease. Health papers are generally considered valid if obtained within 30 days of the event, but some venues extend this time to 60 days. It is impossible on visual inspection and physical examination to ensure that animals are completely free from all infectious and contagious diseases. It is also possible for animals to become infected with a pathogen after the time of veterinary inspection. This makes owner due diligence important in prevention of disease transmission. It is the owner's responsibility to withhold animals from travel if they become sick after the inspection even if a health paper has already been obtained. Likewise, nonparticipating animals that are being observed or treated for illness should not be taken to the event for convenience, as they pose a risk for disease transmission.

Shows, fairs, and other venues where animals from different farms are comingled, even for short periods of time, are ideal settings for the transmission of pathogens. Direct contact with animals or their discharges are potential risks for disease transmission. Gastrointestinal parasites (*Haemonchus*, coccidia) and other enteric diarrheal pathogens (*Coronavirus*, *Cryptosporidium parvum*) can be transmitted by contact with fecal material while respiratory viruses and bacteria can be transmitted through ocular and nasal secretions. Limiting animal to animal contact is an obvious precaution in comingled settings. What is often forgotten is that pathogens can be carried on hands, boots, clothing, buckets, grooming equipment, or other items that come into contact with infected body secretions and excretions. While many diseases cause transient illness in one or a few individuals, others such as contagious ecthyma (orf), caseous lymphadenitis (abscesses, cheesy gland), and Johnes disease may become endemic on a farm causing intermittent illness for extended periods of time.

While it is impossible in these settings to eliminate disease transmission, it is certainly possible to decrease the risk. Limiting both animal to animal and indirect contact with infected material

(Continued)



THE VET EXAM—(Cont.)



will help decrease the potential for transmission. Below is a starter list for consideration as you think about how to keep your animals healthy at a show.

Limit animal to animal contact:

- Do not take non-participating animals to the venue;
- Limit animal time spent in community areas (wash stalls, show ring);
- Avoid walking animals through high traffic areas;
- Make sure stalls are far enough apart to eliminate nose to nose contact;
- Minimize spitting!

Limit indirect contact:

- Take animals off the trailer for check-ins to limit fecal contamination between trailers;
- Do not share equipment.

If equipment is shared disinfect prior to use:

- Limit animal handling by people from other farms;
- Limit stall entry to necessary personnel;
- Keep designated boots for your stall.

Quarantine all animals upon return home.

2010 Mid-America Alpaca Show

www.midamerica-alpacashow.com

Registration is now open!

Location:

Kansas Expocentre, Domer Livestock Arena, Topeka, KS

Dates:

October 30-31, 2010, with check-in on October 29

Size:

At least 425 alpacas are expected.

New this year ... if 400 huacayas and/or 150 suris are entered in the halter show, a Judge's Choice male and female ribbon will be given. This is similar to a Grand Champion Ribbon. Check the 2010 AOBA Show Rules for more information about the Judge's Choice Halter Ribbon.

Halter Certification:

AOBA Level III, Judges Jill MacLeod and Kathy Klay

Fleece Certification:

AOBA Level II, Judge Ruth Elvestad. The fleece judging will be done October 23-24, and displayed at the halter show on October 30-31.

Registration Deadlines:

Fleece--October 1st; Halter--October 12th.



Mid America Alpaca Foundation News

Its New, It's Free and Ready to Use

By Pete Caffrey

The Mid America Alpaca Foundation, in conjunction with Kansas State, has produced a new online education program. Several months ago, I spoke with Meredyth Jones, DVM at Kansas State, and requested an online program designed for beginners working with alpacas. This program has applications for new owners, farm sitters, farm workers, vet techs, and veterinarians new to alpacas.

The program is entitled “Basic Camelid Handling, Management and Monitoring”. There are a wide varieties of topics covered, all of which are designed to assist those with limited experience. You could easily make this part of your sales or worker orientation programs. You may find there are particular sections that have more impact for your needs, and you can easily guide people to view those sections specifically. How do you get there?

Pro.ksu.edu

User ID - mopaca@mopaca.org

Password- (Please contact Kim Baake @ mopaca@mopaca.org or newfenwick@wildblue.net for Password)

Click - Member Access

Click - File & Content

Click - Herd Health

Click - Basic Camelid (it is the last choice on this page)

All programs are free to MOPACA members, just another membership benefit!

EDITOR'S NOTE: At Pete's request, I followed the instructions above and watched the program. As a current alpaca owner, I knew a lot of the information but found that it was a great refresher and reminder. Personally, I think I would feel very comfortable using this program for anyone I would have come to our place as a farm sitter or farm worker. I would also strongly recommend purchasing this program for every single new alpaca owner who purchases an animal from us. I hope the Foundation continues to fund these programs, as they are beneficial for every single person that cares about alpacas! This is a member benefit – I think everyone should get on line and check it out! Debbie Hoerl, MOPACA Secretary, and Newsletter Editor

The Mid America Alpaca Foundation would like your feedback. Please contact Pete Caffrey (honeycreekalpacas@earthlink.net) and let him know your thoughts on this program. Your input will help the Foundation, and K-State, with future programs.

Fiber “U”- Fun, Fiber, & YOU!

By Liz Mitchko

Special thanks and appreciation to everyone who attended the 2010 Fiber “U” at the Cowan Civic Center in Lebanon, Missouri on July 9-11. The facility (home to the first MOPACA Invitational Alpaca Show in 2004) was beautiful, clean and the staff amazing to work with. Friday move-in went well and the afternoon hospitality food was a huge hit with everyone. The folks attending were eager to learn, and based on the class evaluations, just about everyone went home with a great assortment of new talents and information, not to mention shopping bags. In keeping with MOPACA tradition of weather related events, we had one heck of a storm hit just as the vendors were packing up and trying to get on the road. We had to shut the doors as the 60+mph winds were causing havoc inside the building and at the request of the police, hold everyone inside (approx. 15 minutes) until the tornadic storm cell passed. No one can say MOPACA events are dull!



The storm aside, for those who did not get to attend, please mark **July 9-10, 2011** on your calendar for the next Fiber “U”. You certainly do not want to miss it, as it will be better than the

first one. This year we had 106 people register from nine different states, taking up to six of the 30 different fiber-related classes. There were 25 amazing vendors with something for everyone from eight different states and multiple demonstrations throughout the weekend. We had 18 different classrooms throughout the large exhibit hall and everyone was under the same roof in air-conditioned comfort (although the a/c worked too well on Saturday for some - so be prepared and bring a sweater next year). Those who pre-registered appreciated the wide assortment of classes, from marketing your fiber, to tying fishing flies with fiber to spinning lace weight and finger weaving. We are hoping to bring back the best classes and add some new ones next year. If you are a teacher of a fiber related craft, or know of one you would recommend, please let us know, as we begin accepting class options in September. Remember, they must be fiber related to qualify.



Instead of registration bags filled with items people may not want or need, and someone having to sort and fill them, we tried something new. We called it “The State Booths” where fiber producers and fiber resources were able to place a pin (with a number on it) in the map from their state and place the item in their designated square on the table. The stipulation was only one square, and items were to lay flat on the table and not exceed 8 ½” x 11” in size. They had to bring their items and pick them up at the end of the show. Quite a few people took advantage of this and one reported selling some items directly from the ad placed here at the show. We plan to do this again in 2011.

(Cont.)



Fiber “U”- Fun, Fiber, & YOU! (Cont.)

By Liz Mitchko

Through the hard work and effort of several volunteers, we put together the Midwest Fiber Resource Directory (covering Missouri & the eight surrounding states). It has 13 categories and a 50-word write up on each listing from shearers to fiber mills to retail outlets. Each paid MOPACA member farm will get a directory. They will be at the Mid-America Alpaca Show in Topeka in October. You may purchase additional copies for \$2 each, while supplies last. This is a great tool to provide to your new customers so they have those resources in one convenient location. Special thanks and appreciation to Bev Rasmussen for all her help in putting together the Midwest Fiber Resource Directory, move-in preparations and during the event - it would have been impossible without you!

Many attendees took advantage of saving on freight charges for their fiber. The AFCNA collected two large pallets of boxed fiber and several of the mills had fiber brought to Fiber “U” for processing. The Vacuum Packing and Fleece Storage class had the job of shrinking it all down for them. The Eco-Village in Missouri received hundreds of pounds of fiber, and Ann Mayes graciously transported it all to them. Thanks to all of these individuals and businesses for doing this!

Our vendors were thrilled with not only the venue, but also that, through careful planning; every vendor was able to drive right to their booths to unload and to load. This was great as everyone’s vehicle was inside and safe when the storm (complete with hail) passed over the Civic Center. In 2011, we are hoping to add several more fiber related vendors and to increase our advertising and pre-registrations. We will need the help of all MOPACA members to spread the word. So be prepared to not only attend, but to also bring customers, friends, family and neighbors too. Special thanks to my parents who stepped in and helped whenever I needed it from doing my chores to proofreading and for answering countless Fiber “U” related phone calls - you are both truly appreciated!

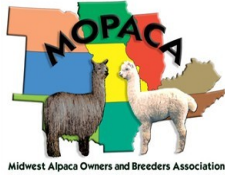
Save the Date: July 9-10, 2011 for the next Fiber “U”. If you would like to volunteer, teach, recommend a vendor or anything else, please contact Liz Mitchko at liz@whirlwindranch.com or 417-533-5280.



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Corner



2010 MID-AMERICA ALPACA SHOW NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

We have several positions yet to be filled. Below is a listing of the position descriptions. If you feel you would be able to spare some time and help make this the best show of the season, please contact Debbie Hoerl: info@alpacasofmoosecreekranch.com to volunteer your time.

Parking/Traffic Control: **Need 2 people Friday Noon to 4:00 PM; Need 2 people Friday 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM** - Greet people as they arrive with animals; give instructions for vet check, explain flow of check-in procedure, provide parking direction. Great first time job for someone.

Vet Check: **Need 2 people Friday Noon to 4:00 PM; Need 2 people Friday 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM** - Arrange for onsite veterinarian for day of check-in; coordinate vet students from Kansas State to assist vet with check-in.

Compliance/Color Check: **Need 6 people Friday Noon to 4:00 PM; Need 2 people Friday 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM** - This person insures that the animal is in the correct color/age class. They verify the sex, age, and re-growth of the animal. They match the animals fleece color to that of the ARI color chart.

Ring Stewards: **Need 2 people Saturday all day; need 2 people Sunday all day (OR 2 people Saturday AM; 2 people Saturday PM; 2 people Sunday AM; 2 people Sunday PM)** - This person directs the exhibitor on where to walk showing their animal in front of the Judge. They assist the judge as needed. Help control animals as needed so the judge can examine the animal. Clean up messes in the show ring.

Gate Stewards: **Need 2 people Saturday AM; Need 1 person Sunday AM; Need 1 person Sunday PM (Of if you wish, you can make this an all day position)-** The Gate Steward's job is to places the animals in the correct order to enter the show ring. Keeps track of what class is in the ring. Talks to the announcer to get missing people to the ring so they do not miss their class.

Ribbon Presenters: **Need 2 people Saturday AM; Need 2 people Saturday PM; Need 2 people Sunday AM; Need 2 people Sunday PM (Of if you wish, you can make this an all day position)** - Sort and organize and collect ribbons to hand to each Ring Steward for each group in the ring. You will need to also sort and organize all ribbons for the specialty categories, i.e., Get of Sire, Produce of Dam, etc.

*Just remember, we can't have a show without our wonderful
volunteers—it simply would not happen!*



MID AMERICA ALPACA FOUNDATION NEWS!

Kristina and Jo Ann Flegel, of Dos Doñas Alpaca Farm in St. Louis, Missouri, voluntarily donated a breeding to raise funds for the Mid America Alpaca Foundation. MOPACA members, Eric & Nina Morti, of Wisdom of the Fox Alpacas, bid \$2,500.00 for the breeding. That is the equivalent of two and a half scholarships! The Foundation wants to extend a really big “thank you” to everyone involved!

Did Ya Hear?

By Pete Caffrey

There are several things that have happened this summer that you may find interesting:

1. Kansas State Veterinary College is now offering an elective course on camelids to vet students. There are about 100 second-year students in the veterinary program; 50 of them have signed up for the course! The course filled up fast and many students were turned away.
2. Dr. Dusty Nagy, of the University of Missouri, presented several lectures at the 4th Annual Conference on Care of Alpacas and Llamas at Kansas State University. Six veterinary students from MU accompanied her to the Conference. Also in attendance, from Oklahoma State, were Dr. Boileau and four veterinary students. There was one student from Colorado State, and numerous Kansas State students. Veterinary students attend for free; the Conference is sponsored by The Mid America Alpaca Foundation and Kansas State University. The lectures presented will be made available later this year on the on-line education site.
3. The on-line programs, mentioned above, are free to MOPACA members! Think about it, the cost to attend just one conference is \$165, plus travel time, fuel, meals and maybe a motel room. Your total annual MOPACA dues are \$120. You can do the math ... MOPACA is a great deal.
4. As a fundraiser for the Mid America Alpaca Foundation, the Mid America Alpaca Show is offering sealed bidding for a breeding to a pair of exceptional ribbon-winning herdsires. You can mail in your bid, or fill out a bid form when you attend the show. The breedings are to Mile High Alpacas, El Niño's Golden Legend, and/or Hobby Horse Farm Alpacas, Peruvian Black Epic. These two alpacas could bring game-changing genetics to any breeding program. All proceeds are donated to The Mid America Alpaca Foundation. For instructions please see www.midamerica-alpacashow.com.



Announcing the Formation of The Cottage Industry Alpaca Association

Written by: Robin Alpert, Val Newell, and Rose Mogerman

Have you heard about a newly formed non profit organization? If you haven't we hope this introduction will peak your interest. If you have heard of **CIABA**, but are wondering what it is all about, please read further.

CIABA has a directed aim --- a clear mission and code of ethics.

Mission Statement:

To honor and promote those North American alpacas that do not fit the typical show ring criteria: silky, fine uniform fiber or fiber that is variegated or unique. To educate the public about fiber, fiber arts, end products and animal husbandry.

CIABA would like to demonstrate that as a group we honor, accept and show appreciation for the use of alpaca fiber and all other natural fibers well suited to blend with alpaca.

To promote the growth of the alpaca fiber industry and educate the consumer why alpaca fiber, once called "Fiber of the Gods," is unique.

To promote the alpaca industry as a viable and sustainable fiber and farming endeavor for all economic levels and have all who hold to these high standards prosper.

Code of Ethics:

1 - To honor both the North American commercial and cottage markets of alpacas and alpaca products;

2 - To treat alpacas with respect and care for them in a manner that is happy, healthy and stress free;

3 - To utilize alpacas only for fiber or breeding stock - not for a terminal market of meat and/or pelts (CIABA's founders do not oppose pelting animals that die of natural causes, illness or old age.);

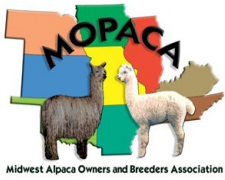
4 - To treat any breeding program, regardless of size, breeding direction, commercial or cottage with respect, honor and a sense of community;

5 - To respect other Alpaca Organizations - International, National, and Local Affiliates; and

6 - To cooperate with other breeders on knowledge, health care, fiber science and events for the betterment of all alpacas.

The statements above are the theme to the foundation upon which CIABA is building. Simply acknowledging or sponsoring alpacas as fleece animals isn't enough. Members believe that if the industry does not focus most of its efforts to promote alpacas as a livestock fiber production and product industry, we have missed the point. **CIABA believes acknowledging the cottage**

(Cont.)



Announcing the Formation of The Cottage Industry Alpaca Association— (Cont.)

industry as the International Alpaca Organization does is the correct approach we currently need to re-invigorate our industry. Honoring a cottage industry in effect brings to each farm and farmer a new focus. We want to clearly demonstrate that raising alpacas is a sustainable resource for the North American farmer. Alpacas should be included along with other natural and natural animal fibers with FDA inclusion. We do not dismiss other fiber production animals for their value, but promote alpaca fiber for its intrinsic value, not in *comparison* to other animal fibers. It is not our intention to relegate other fibers to a lesser status. Alpaca should be promoted as different and not necessarily better. We would like to change the negative stigma of elitism some alpaca breeders have inadvertently created.

It is CIABA's intention to focus on, promote, and hold events such as Fiber Arts Festivals and local fairs as well as participation in fiber trade shows. At events which include animals, we will honor those alpacas who demonstrate qualities within the fleece that will enhance a fiber end product. The length of noses and leg coverage will not be a part of the evaluation of an animal. We intend to hold a different standard and criteria than the current show system for halter events.

We believe open communication and a transparent agenda unites our membership. There is something to be learned from everyone. This includes breeders and growers of other natural fibers. A goal of CIABA is to investigate, cooperate, and collaborate on all information, studies, and data that have been researched to date and find what types of information we still need to gather to improve and validate our fiber industry. We respect the dedication and tireless efforts of many who have tried to forge ahead with alpaca fiber studies, and we would like to support and honor these efforts. CIABA will always be open to learning and adjusting the association to adapt new knowledge concerning all aspects of the fiber production industry as it becomes available. We hope to establish that there are fleece types within the Huacaya breed, just as in the Suri breed. CIABA believes that if we work together we will certainly strengthen the fiber industry. We will promote cooperation with all those who raise animals for their natural fibers.

We want to make it clear that everyone has the right to breed for what ever qualities they deem valuable. It is a breeder's right and prerogative to breed for the present commercial criteria if that is what they choose. Every aspect of the fiber industry needs to be honored in order to thrive. Every person's breeding program deserves common respect. No matter what we do as breeders, we want to share our successes and failures as a community caring for one another and unified to put energy and effort into making our alpaca industry thrive.

It is the opinion of CIABA that the present system of judging creates a sense of division within the industry. We would like to unite all alpaca owners and breeders at the same level of recognition. In order to include all the alpacas with qualities that are important to the fiber industry today we need to "open up" to a system that includes different, additional criteria for judging like the International Alpaca system as it relates to the cottage industry. We will respectfully submit our requests to AOBA for these additions. We will also ask for Affiliate Status, just as did The Suri Network. Our intention is **not** to divide the industry further, but to unite the alpaca owners and breeders by honoring different views equally. Many breeders across the country would treasure this opportunity and are already breeding for a different standard. We will be there for them. This will only serve to strengthen and propel our entire industry forward.

Thank you for this opportunity to introduce The Cottage Industry Alpaca Breeders Association!

ciaba.org



Camelid Community 2010 Report Pulling Together in Fragile Times

July 30-Aug. 1, 2010
Radisson Hotel, Kansas City, MO
By Sheila Fugina and Barb Baker

Background

Because it is the only national forum that offers the opportunity for dialog among representatives of national, regional and local camelid organizations, as well as interested individuals and owners, Camelid Community provides a unique occasion to assess the “state of the union” of the camelid world. Camelid Community does not have a board of directors, officers or great funds at its disposal. The gathering brings together concerned llama and alpaca enthusiasts to discuss issues, suggest solutions and work toward common goals that are critical to the existence of our industry. The overall focus has been to concentrate on areas where the llama and alpaca communities can cooperate and collaborate. Participants attend because they care about their animals and about the future of our industry. Unlike most conferences, Camelid Community’s agenda is set by participants. It is a “move forward and get things accomplished” group and not simply a weekend gathering to wring hands and rehash old problems.

Building on Previous Years

Last year’s Camelid Community produced *Customize to Maximize*, a packet of ideas for having a successful llama or alpaca business, and previous gatherings created *The Basics of Alpaca & Llama Care* brochure as well as a press packet that includes a llama and alpaca fact sheet, poster, sample press release and tips on how to use the various publicity pieces. After listing a number of areas of common concern to both llama and alpaca industries, Camelid Community 2010 participants felt that the critical need for basic fiber education in the camelid community at large should be the focus for this year’s gathering.

By the end of the weekend, the group had created *The Basics of Alpaca & Llama Fiber*—a simple, easy to reproduce, inexpensive brochure that allows organizations and individual farms or businesses to add their contact information before distribution. Details were finalized via e-mail in the weeks following Camelid Community so the brochure would be ready for its debut distribution at the camelid display at the National FFA Convention October 20-22 in Indianapolis where fiber is an important part of the exhibit. Both the fiber brochure and the basic care brochure will be included in the camelid education packets handed out to advisors and agriculture teachers during the career fair at the convention.

Looking Ahead

Camelid Community 2010 participants decided to continue to produce a series of basic brochures similar to the care and fiber brochures in other areas of common concern—such as youth activities and involvement, client relations and management, therapy work and others. Work already has begun on Camelid Community 2011. For information on how you or your organization can be involved, contact Sheila Fugina (bsfugina@pressenter.com) or Barb Baker (bebaker@hughes.net). Input and participation is welcomed from all quarters of the alpaca and llama communities in the U.S. and beyond. All publications and reports presented at or created by Camelid Community are available for downloading at www.icinfo.org, the web site for the International Camelid Institute. Those produced at the 2010 gathering will be posted shortly.