



Your Monthly Central Region Newsletter From The Alpaca Association New Zealand



As June rolled in, so did the unprecedented weather, with many alpaca owners facing damage or worse across the South Island. New Zealanders were quick to support those worst hit, with alarming but remarkable sights of alpacas being airlifted in slings by helicopter and taken to higher ground.

The willingness and speed with which the alpaca community responded is heartwarming and ensured the lives of so many alpacas were saved. Paddocks have been donated and alpacas temporarily located onto neighbouring properties. Food storage has been impacted and the long term cleanup is just beginning.

Across the central region we avoided the worst of the weather while being reminded that we can never be too prepared. As winter sets in our alpacas need our help to survive happily with the changing conditions including safe escape from rising and often freezing water.

This month we have an article to help you with preparing for winter and getting your alpaca through the harsh season safely and happily. A few simple steps can also make for happier owners by reducing the effort of paddock and alpaca maintenance.

Your June 2021 newsletter introduces the opportunity for advertising. This has the combined benefit of covering the costs of producing the newsletter while helping to boost the alpaca industry. There are many trades and services in addition to breeding, fleece and alpaca based products which all help the alpaca ecosystem to function. We encourage you to visit our advertisers and show them your support. A stronger alpaca industry benefits us all.

Finally I'll wrap up by sharing our new and dedicated email address. **[aanzcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:aanzcentralregion@gmail.com)** goes direct to your AANZ Central Region Committee. We will answer any questions and welcome your ideas and suggestions for new events, newsletter topics and issues you would like us to investigate and report on. We are committed to creating value for AANZ members and this is one of many steps we're taking to achieve that.

**John Malsher, AANZ Central Region President**  
[john@alpacamanager.com](mailto:john@alpacamanager.com)

Contact Your AANZ Central Region Committee - **[aanzcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:aanzcentralregion@gmail.com)**



## McKenzie Fields Farm Day

On Sunday 30th of May, Ros Scott hosted a Central Region Farm Day. The weather defied the forecast to provide a warm, dry day where we could get outside and enjoy walking around and engaging with the alpaca.

We had a great turnout from across the region with some members travelling two hours to be there. This demonstrates the value that we see in these events and the opportunity to learn and share ideas with other alpaca owners.

The home baking was a highlight and delicious as always.



### Discussion and Chat

We started the day with an open discussion with everyone contributing ideas and participating. This brought up some very interesting topics that we will cover in future newsletters.

Paddock management, feed supplements and becoming more comfortable around alpaca were all discussed in detail. With a large group and many long term breeders, we had plenty of experience in the group to answer and share ideas and tips established over the years.

We all came away feeling we had learnt something new.

### Halter Training and Leading

Ros demonstrated her calm approach to halter training and leading an alpaca. She chose one of her beautiful white male Huacaya, shown here, as he missed out on halter training while being weaned.

The approach was best described as being in slow motion, with gentle persuasion and working at a pace the alpaca wouldn't resist. This included approaching him to fit the halter, showing him the lead and slowly moving around in a small, then slightly larger enclosure. There was a lot of discussion and Ros was happy to give her advice and share ideas.



### Desensitising for Calm, Quiet and Happy Alpacas

One of the valuable take away lessons was seeing how Ros desensitises her alpacas to being handled in a way that is comforting for them and removes their anxiety. Once haltered, Ros will gently massage their neck and touch or press against areas that would likely cause them to jump or react. This can greatly help when administering medication, clipping nails or preparing them for going to shows. It is safer and less stressful for both the owner and the alpaca if they are calm and willing to be handled correctly.

We saw how slowly moving a hand down their front and back legs gets them used to the sensation for nail clipping. Likewise with touching their face and lips, which are key actions when showing alpaca. This became evident when Ros and Bob worked together to trim an alpaca topknot and guard hair. Despite the noise of the clippers, the alpaca stood calmly and trusted Ros not to hurt him. This was magical to see and aspire to.



### Alpacas and Winter

By Rachel Norman

Originally domesticated by the Incas, alpacas have adapted to the weather of the Andes, which includes extreme cold as well as extreme heat at high elevations. Alpacas may have adapted to handle temperatures below freezing but they still require assistance from us to help them thrive – covers, shelters and extra feed. This extra assistance is extremely important for cria, elderly alpacas or those unwell or underweight.

Alpacas will increase their feed intake during winter so it is important to be prepared with lots of good quality hay to see you through to Spring. Hay should be fed out daily, put out in multiple piles or hay feeders so that even the lowest ranked alpacas will get a good feed. You may be aware that the most rapidly metabolizable energy source is grain, with the “hottest” being corn, however be cautious how much is fed as it can cause the debilitating issue of acidosis of the C1 stomach.

Supplementing with oats, BetaBeet, Lucerne Chaff, and specially formulated alpaca pellets (without Zinc) are a better way to keep weight on your alpacas through the cold months. Remember to slowly introduce these over a two week period unless otherwise advised by your vet. Lastly, remember to check that their water hasn't frozen over on a frosty morning or during snowfall.

Alpacas may handle sub-zero temperatures but this doesn't factor in wind chill, this is where a good draft proof shelter is important. Building a three-sided shelter – this could be with wood pallets and lined – can provide them with a place to escape the wind, just make sure the opening faces away from the coldest wind. It can also be a good idea to put a thick layer of straw or some rubber mats as flooring to block the cold moisture rising up from wet ground.

If you have elderly, underweight alpacas or cria it may pay to use specially made alpacas coats, dog coats or pony blankets to help keep them warm. An alpacas internal temperature needs to stay in a healthy range 37.5-38.8 degrees celsius to maintain its ability to process food to energy efficiently and absorb nutrients. It is good to become familiar with the Body Score Index and putting this into practice with your alpacas, their fluffy fleece can easily hide weight loss so going by sight alone will not always be indicative of their weight.

During Winter the possibility to produce Vitamin D is compromised since the amount of UV light is greatly reduced during this time. Vitamin D is made in the skin by the action of UV light, it can also be supplemented via feed or drench. Vitamin D is vital for their immunity, fetal growth and mammary development. It is also important for the prevention of rickets in growing animals.

Vitamin D is most commonly supplemented via an injection called Hideject available from your vet.

We hope this information will help you be prepared this winter with your alpacas!

#### Advertise Here

With a growing circulation of readers, please support the AANZ Central Region to produce, print and post these newsletters by advertising with us.

[aanzcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:aanzcentralregion@gmail.com)



Purely Alpacas is a mother daughter partnership of the two herds Acapella and Koroki. We have animals available for purchase and males available for stud. You can email us on [purelyalpacas.nz@gmail.com](mailto:purelyalpacas.nz@gmail.com) for more information.

#### Advertise Here

With a growing circulation of readers, please support the AANZ Central Region to produce, print and post these newsletters by advertising with us.

[aanzcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:aanzcentralregion@gmail.com)



# New MPI Regulations Regarding Cutting of Teeth

By Cheryl Hunter

The Ministry of Primary Industries has published new regulations regarding the cutting of teeth. We recommend reading the regulations carefully and fully if this is something relevant to you. Here are some key points from the new regulations.

A person must not cut a tooth of an animal unless the person is a veterinarian, or a veterinary student under the direct supervision of a veterinarian throughout the procedure. Or the tooth is a fighting tooth of a Llama or an alpaca. Or the tooth of the animal is cut under a standard operating procedure that has been approved by an animal ethics committee.

When cutting a fighting tooth you must use an obstetrical wire or a saw suitable for the purpose of dentistry. The person cutting the tooth must be experienced with, or have received training in the correct use of the method being used and be able to recognise early signs of significant distress or injury so that the person can take prompt remedial action or seek advice.

A person who fails to comply with subclause (1) or (2) of regulation 56(D) of the Animal Welfare Regulations 2018 is liable on conviction in the case of an individual, to a fine not exceeding \$3,000. Recommended best practice is that fighting teeth are cut by a veterinarian using pain relief.

A fighting tooth is a modified canine and incisor tooth that is found in the jaw between the incisors and the molars. Male alpacas use these teeth to disable another when fighting and have even been known to attempt to castrate the opposition.

## Upcoming Events

### 20th June - Wairarapa Cluster Group

Sue McAuley (sue@gallinfarmalpacas.co.nz) of Gallin Farm Alpacas and Farmstay has kindly offered to host the next Wairarapa cluster group on Sunday 20th June.

Cluster group starts at 10:30am at 143A Matapihi Rd (off Black Rock Road, Te Ore Ore) in Masterton. As usual please bring something to share for lunch.

John and Sue will have something to report back from the Central Region AGM and we're hopeful Bob Phillips, AANZ President, will be able to join us too.

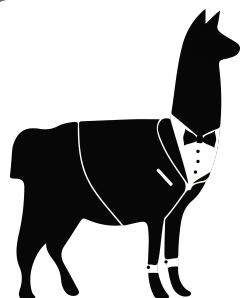
Rachel and Cherryl will talk about their open day held a few weeks ago to celebrate National Alpaca Day.

Sue needs a strong person to hold an alpaca who has learned that they can walk into you and push you when trying to hold them to inoculate. This will be an interesting, maybe entertaining, event.

### 26th June - AANZ Annual General Meeting

This event is being held at Russley Golf Club, just outside Christchurch airport, beginning at 11am.

The AGM will be followed by a workshop to discuss marketing and promotion within our industry and where we, the members, would like to take this.



*A Healthy Alpaca  
is a Happy Alpaca*

[www.alpacamanager.com](http://www.alpacamanager.com)

### Advertise Here

With a growing circulation of readers, please support the AANZ Central Region to produce, print and post these newsletters by advertising with us.

[aanzcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:aanzcentralregion@gmail.com)