



HIDDEN GEM NEWS

June 2009

An informational newsletter published by Hidden Gem Ranch

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Interesting items

Alpaca fleece is considered by many to be hypo-allergenic.

Alpaca fleece can be found in high-end clothing such as Armani suits.

Even Government officials are buying alpacas:

www.wsaw.com/home/headlines/40644647.html

See a short video (6 minutes) about alpacas on Pet TV:

<http://www.es.tv/2009/02/03/petstv-alpacas%20/>

Visit us on our website:

www.hiddengemranch.com

Sort & Skirt



Now that shearing time is over for most of us in the South, what do you do with all of that fleece? You can have it processed into yarn, turn it into felt, prepare it for show, donate it to a cooperative, or sell it raw. Unless you just want bags of fleece lying around, you are going to have to do some sorting and skirting. These tasks can be done during shearing, at a later date, or sent to a professional who does it for you.

So, you've had your alpacas shorn, what next?

Skirting! Simply put, skirting means removing the unwanted fleece from the blanket. Fiber that should be removed is shorter, of a different quality (looks or feels different), an unwanted color, or any other "contaminated" area. It sounds easy enough, right? Trust me, take a class or find an experienced mentor to help you the first time or two. You'll do better in the fleece shows and you'll definitely have better yarn if you skirt properly. It's not hard, but you will get better with experience.

What about sorting? Sorting is the process of separating your fleeces by grade, length and color so that they can be utilized as an end product most efficiently and effectively. You may take a class to learn sorting techniques and how sorting your fleeces increases profitability. There are certified sorters available if you feel you would benefit from their services. Apprentice sorters often sort fleeces for only the cost of supplies (I've seen as low as \$1.50 per fleece!). Whatever you do with your fleeces, **DO SOMETHING** with your fleeces! If you're not going to use it, sell it. If you don't want to sell it, give it to someone who will use it. Get it out there. America needs more people to experience alpaca fleece.

Alpacas and the summer heat

Upcoming activities

SeAA Dr. Walter Bravo Seminar
July 25th @ UT Knoxville

National alpaca farm weekend
September 26-27 everywhere

Next issue

Updates/photos of crias

Meet us

Contact Us

www.hiddengemranch.com

Once the temperature reaches 80, it is time to begin providing additional cooling to your alpacas. Even when shorn, alpacas are prone to overheating. The general guideline is to add the temperature in Fahrenheit to the relative humidity in percent. If the sum is equal to 130 or more, you should monitor your animals for heat stress. Ensure that the animals have access to shade or well ventilated shelter. Providing fans, water pools, & hosing down the animals helps. Providing plenty of cool water with electrolytes is always a good idea. Fill 2 liter bottles with water and freeze them. Place these bottles in the water to keep the water cool is a cheap and easy way to keep the water cool. Some large farms have "cool rooms" that they will keep the animals in.

Happening at the Ranch

We sure have been busy at the ranch. With shearing in May and the late issue of April's newsletter, we didn't have time to publish one in May. Since the last issue at the end of April, -we have shorn all of our animals, (thanks to all of you who helped), we put up more pastures, had 4 crias born, and bought 6 more alpacas. We were planning on going to the National alpaca show in Cleveland, OH – but life got in the way.

-Our shearing was done on May 16-17 where we had 51 animals shorn (including Rain Dancer Alpacas, our former customers, and local farms).

-Bella finally had her cria on May 3rd. A female rose-grey? cria sired by our own Romeo. We named her Romeo's Juliet. Hopefully she will turn out to be another "hidden gem" like her mother and father. -Sky had an appy grey girl born on May 7th (no name yet), -Amber had a true black male (Ember) born on May 19th, and Madia's (a bay black girl named Willow) was born on May

20th.

Pictured below are Willow, Juliet and Ember.



(Did you see that red "hidden gem" in the paragraph above? This one is worth 20% off of any item we sell **including animals**, breeding, boarding, and fleece if bought or booked prior to September 1, 2009.) You must mention that you saw it in our newsletter. No refunds on prior sales.

Featured alpaca(s)

This month's feature is Maddie and her latest cria Angelia. Maddie was the first female that we purchased and now she has given us 3 girls in a row

(Stardust, Joy, & Angelia). She has always been an easy breeder and a great mom. Last year's medium brown cria, Joy, won first place and champion in her first show in Alabama and placed 4th in the Southern Select show last month in Tennessee. We hope to obtain similar awards from Angelia. Her 3/4 Accoyo roots are strong, she looks and acts like a champion already. Buy Maddie, Angelia, or both of them for an additional 5% discount thru July 15th when you mention our newsletter! Call today for more info!



Thanks!

Our heartfelt thanks go out to some of our most recent customers...
Jim in McMinnville who purchased LoraLou and LuLu;
Kevin and Wendy of Flintstone, GA for purchasing Blizzard and Smore.
Congratulations on purchasing your first alpacas!
Kim from McMinnville purchased Lacy and Rizado the llamas. Enjoy!
Also, thank you to Tammie for your purchase of Rocky and Waldo to add to your herd. We hope they bring you plenty of girl crias.

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