



## Recommended Reading

### Books-

**The Complete Alpaca Book** by Eric Hoffman & Murray Fowler, DVM. We have been waiting for this new version to come off the presses for about three years now, and in late 2003, it finally did. This replaces the basic introductory book (referred to as The Alpaca Book) for all prospective breeders. Eric Hoffman, the author, is owner of Bonny Doon Alpacas. This new book is even more comprehensive. New breeders with little in the way of previous livestock experience will find the discussion of conformation an incredible aid. Briefly put, this is the alpaca bible for new breeders. I highly recommend it to those just starting out, as it covers medical conditions, alpaca care, alpaca behavior and communication, and the history of the alpaca as we know it.

**Alpacas – Synthesis of a Miracle** by Mike Safley. For the uninitiated, Mike Safley is one of the original alpaca breeders of North America as well as one of the most respected alpaca judges, both nationally and internationally. He is also one of the most knowledgeable breeders on the scene today, and his book is not to be missed. **Alpacas** will take you on a journey – Safley covers a vast territory in this book, from the story of the most famous alpaca breeder in the world, Don Julio de Barreda (owner of Estancia Accoyo in Peru) to the origins of the two Peruvian commercial alpaca fiber processors to Gregor Mendel's botanical experiments that gave rise to the field of genetics to a comprehensive treatise on animal breeding in general and alpaca breeding in particular. Perhaps the most readable treatment of alpaca breeding in print today, I cannot imagine any alpaca breeder passing this book up. With all the controversy surrounding breed standards, line breeding, artificial insemination and embryo transfer that alpaca breeders will be facing in the near future, this book will help one navigate the varied opinions on these important matters whether or not you fully agree or disagree with the point of view presented. The appendix in the back of the book is a vast storehouse on its own, and includes color genetics tables compiled from Australian breeding records.

I have not read Safley's latest book, **The Ideal Alpaca**, therefore I cannot comment on it in its entirety. The selections that I have read suggest this will also be worthwhile reading, particularly as the industry grapples with the thorny issues of establishment of breed standards.

**Caring for Llamas and Alpacas** by Clare Hoffman, DVM and Ingrid Asmus. Where **The Alpaca Book** gives an overview of alpaca care and management, this book provides the necessary information for day in and day out care. It begins with details on how to evaluate alpacas for purchase and continues through the specifics of transporting, restraint, nutrition, health evaluation, first aid, digestion, reproduction and basic techniques such as how to give injections, take a temperature and how to use a stomach tube. The appendix provides detailed lists of necessary supplies for adult and newborn alpacas, a list of toxic plants as well as charts of normal values (weight, heart rate etc.). This book is invaluable once you are caring for your alpacas on a daily basis.



**Llama and Alpaca Neonatal Care** by Brad Smith DVM, Karen Timm DVM and Patrick Long DVM. If you have bred females, buy this book early and read it several times- this is **the** handbook for pre and post birth care of the dam and cria. It begins with a thorough description of female anatomy and physiology of pregnancy. It continues with proper care of the dam prior to birth (vaccinations, deworming and feeding). The pre and post birth process is then discussed including dystocias (problem births). The final chapters provide detailed instructions on how to evaluate the newborn and dam and even use flow charts designed to be used in the barn on a step-by-step basis to determine if the newborn is at risk or not. Specific treatments and procedures are given in easy to understand language for every possible contingency that might occur. The appendix has an outstanding list of supplies for a birthing first aid kit. The entire book is written in terms that a non-livestock experienced person can understand.

**Alpaca Field Manual** by C. Norman Evans, DVM. I keep this book out on my coffee table, at the ready in case I have any questions about anything that arises during my various daily tours through the barn and pastures. It is divided into easy chapters covering basic information on camelid physiology and behavior, parasites in North America affecting camelids, immunizations, drug dosages, cria care, specifics on responding to a downed camelid, diagnostics and when to call in a veterinarian, and nutrition. Norm Evans is one of the principal camelid veterinary authorities in the United States and is well-known for his research into camelid nutrition, in particular. He remains a practicing large animal veterinarian to this day, juggling that with teaching and research activities. This book was updated in 2003 – the tab format enables one to easily find something when you are dealing with a problem, or just want to check on basic care issues, dosages, cria care, you name it.

**Medicine and Surgery of South American Camelids** by Murray Fowler DVM. Dr. Fowler is one of the 3 or 4 acknowledged camelid experts in the U.S. This is the second edition of this volume (released in April of 1998) used by all veterinary schools in the U.S. which offer camelid courses. It is not for everyone as it is truly a veterinary textbook. If you have a medical background or wish to make the effort to have a better understanding of the complete anatomy, physiology, diagnosis and treatment of alpacas, then this volume is well worth the investment. Although I have no medical background, I find this an excellent reference text. Moreover, it has a very user-friendly index.

**The Camelid Companion** by Marty McGee Bennett. Here is a true common sense “handbook” for all Camelid enthusiasts on how to interact with your alpaca or llama. Marty’s T-Team methods are widely extolled and she has brought them to bear in this volume. Her practical methods abound (how to use a 20cc syringe to make a “alpaca breast pump” and the best method to administer a subcutaneous shot are the ones that come to mind). If you love camelids and want to know more about how to have a true relationship with your animals, this is the book for you. When I sell gelding males, I give this book away – so I really believe in the tenets espoused within its pages.



Many of these books have limited distribution, but I would check on amazon.com – I found Safley's book there. They can be purchased from any of the specialized llama and alpaca suppliers listed below (call them for free catalogs- they also are the suppliers of specialized products ranging from halters to feed supplements):

Stevens Llama Tique- Rt.4, Box 39, Worthington , MN 56187. 1-800-469-5262

Useful Lama Items- 3540 76<sup>th</sup> St., Caledonia, MI 49316. 1-800-635-5262

Quality Llama Products- 33217 Bellinger Scale Road, Lebanon, OR 97355. 1-800-638-4689

Llamas' Store- 46 Main St., Jackson, CA 95642. 1-800-401-LAMA

In addition to the books listed above, there are several publications that are of value to the prospective breeder. The national association of alpaca owners and breeders (AOBA) publishes Alpacas magazine which can be ordered online. The magazine subscription is also included with either Farm (full membership with voting privileges) or Associate (non-voting) membership. Serious prospective breeders should consider Associate membership. Contact AOBA at [www.alpacainfo.com](http://www.alpacainfo.com) for details.

There are a variety of affiliate alpaca organizations throughout the U.S.- in New England, for example, it is NEAOBA (New England Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association)- each of which publishes at least a quarterly newsletter. Contact AOBA to reach the association for your area. The Greater Appalachian Llama and Alpaca Association is second in membership size only to AOBA and boasts membership ranging coast to coast. To a great degree it is because it publishes the best and most informative (including Alpacas magazine) newsletter for the hands on breeder. I highly recommend membership in this organization for the newsletter alone.