



NEWSLETTER: Autumn 2007

Ain't No Sunshine....

In keeping with the musical themes to our newsletters, the Bill Withers song seems to sum up this summer better than most. I can't remember another year where we moved seamlessly from fields of wheat and barley in ear to stubbles and brown fields without any sun.



Now That's What I Call a Wet Harvest !

Mind you, with the amount of rain we've had it has meant that we've had plenty of grass this year, which, given the rise in grain and consequent feed prices, is no bad thing.

We have also been fortunate in managing to make some good hay and with the animals currently looking in good shape we are not too concerned about the nights pulling in. Talking of which, now is the time to start thinking about what vitamin AD&E supplements you may want to use to counter for the lack of sunlight in the months ahead. We use an AD& E paste from EggsPort Ltd at Hexham Mart in Northumberland, (01434 607917). It's important that all cria are given some extra vitamins, but for piece of mind we have a tendency to go through the herd.

Given last year's difficulties, we have taken a proactive approach this year and have recently injected all of our animals with *Ivermectin* in order to nip any mange mite activity in the bud before it takes hold.

They Never Cease to Amaze You...

Easter Bank Holiday weekend saw the opening of a new Nature trail at Jimmy's Farm; and if you saw that episode of the new series on the telly recently you will know that attracting a good crowd for the event was imperative. To help things along we were asked by the crew at the Essex Pig Company (www.essexpigcompany.com) to take the ever popular Bob & Bert along to help entertain the kids in their own inimitable fashion. As usual they behaved extremely well, but Bert surpassed himself with a display of compassion and later "good taste".



Jimmy, Bob & Paul

Mid afternoon, after the trail had been opened, a young lad with learning difficulties came across to see the animals and was clearly fascinated by them. He constantly shouted out their names and kept trying to climb over the hurdles in order to get closer and stroke them. I was concerned that his behaviour may elicit a short sharp spit, but in fact, it was quite the opposite. With quiet independence, Bert walked across the enclosure and sat down patiently next to the lad allowing him to stroke his head for as long as he wanted.

A little later, a rather uncouth young girl with a loud piercing voice exclaimed that there must be something wrong with Bert. "He don't even know how to eat!" she shrieked, after trying to 'tempt' him with a paper napkin that had once surrounded her rare-breeds ham burger. Once again Bert showed great style and saved me the trouble of having to explain, by awarding her lack of knowledge a "green star". Needless to say, she left rather quickly after that.

How did he differentiate between the two kids? I've no idea, but it's typical of the amazing behaviour of these animals. Makes you wonder....

BAS National

This year we entered animals for the first time at the BAS National in Newark. Bob rose to the occasion and was awarded 1st place in Adult Black Suri and, according to the judge was only a “gnats” away from taking Reserve Champion. Sean a promising white male huacaya was placed 6th in the intermediate class, which meant he was the highest placed of any 1st fleece boy. He had missed being in the Junior class by just 2 days, so we were very pleased with his performance in the “wrong class” and look forward with anticipation to the Futurity and next year’s National.



Difficult to tell who is the most proud.

Bond Girls Galore !

As you will know, Melford Green’s elite females are named after Bond Girls. This year we have had a really successful breeding season. Of the 13 cria raised here in Melford this year 10 were female so we have added girls “From Russia With Love” right through to “The Spy Who Loved Me”. Boy’s names are a little more tricky. Luckily a trip to Waitrose helped, when I saw a scotch “Baille, Nicol & Jarvie” on special offer....job sorted.



Theresa, Domino & Honor

New Website

Over the summer we have been busy working with Ansta Ltd (www.ansta.co.uk) on improving our website and are pleased to say that it is now up and running. The new site allows you to sort either Breeding or Companion animals into age, breed, colour, type, fleece quality or price order. Full details of each animal along with further photographs and fleece analysis can be found by clicking on the relevant photo and in turn these pages are designed to be easily printed for future reference.

We have also added a Diary or if you are up with these things “a Blog.” Newsletters, reference documents, and loads of other things will be added as we go. Log on at www.melfordgreenalpacas.co.uk and let us know what you think.

Walking with Alpacas

When young Madeline Smithers was asked what she wanted to do for her 14th Birthday she replied “I want to take an alpaca for a walk”. Her mother, Krystina phoned to see if we could help. We were of course pleased to do so and on July 22nd Madeline and 3 of her chums spent the morning learning all about alpacas as well as feeding and taking them for a walk. Her favourite was Douglas. Since then we have done a number of bespoke tours. *Please call 01787 374142 for further details.*

Foot & Mouth

It would be remiss of us not to mention this. Whilst Alpacas don’t develop full Foot & Mouth symptoms, they are included in the animal movement restriction orders. At the time of writing another case of F&M in sheep has just been confirmed, so whilst **we are open**, it is likely to be a few weeks yet before we can deliver animals. Although this may cause some heartache, it is important for the both the alpaca sector and the whole of the livestock industry that we **all** abide by the advice of the Chief Vet.

