



## NEWSLETTER: Summer 2008

### *Here Comes the Sun.....*

Bob's first two cria (*Imani* and *Cedella*) and a couple of dozen newly hatched chicks meant that we had all the right ingredients for a great Easter Open Day. The British weather though had other ideas and provided our visitors with a very different type of photo opportunity. As we stood shivering in the barn boiling kettles for hot chocolate to warm up the alpaca watchers we joked; "Oh well, at least it can't get any worse". A few seconds later the electricity went off.....



May brought with it warm weather and more importantly the Blue-Tongue vaccine. Suffolk was unfortunately the first county to suffer the effects of the virus in 2007, but as a consequence was one of the first to receive the vaccine. With the help of our vet (to ensure we were covered should the authorities alter any movement rules), we vaccinated a 20% sample of the herd the day after DEFRA released the vaccine. Vaccination was of course the only logical way forward, but given that we were probably the first alpaca herd to use the vaccine, both John (our vet) and we thought this was a sensible precaution just in case the animals suffered any adverse reactions. After the weekend the whole herd was inoculated and all received their second booster dose three weeks later. There were no negative side effects.

Birthing has gone well and so far it is yet another year for the girls. They are currently 8:5 up following on from last year's 11:6 win but, there is still a long way to go.

### *Lenny Beats 'All Blacks'*

Due to movement restrictions, the East of England show in Peterborough was the only show at which we were able to pitch our 2007 cria against animals from other breeders. We entered 6 animals into 6 different classes and won rosettes in every class.



Lenny, picked up a first in the Junior black class, which he later surpassed when Italian judge Gaia Dakalo awarded him the coveted Champion's ribbon.

He had been 'a bit difficult' all week, but as he approached the show ring, he suddenly stood tall & proud as if to say "It's OK - I'll take over from here!" We were delighted with his performance and his achievement felt even greater given he had to beat specially imported Supreme Champion opposition in order to take the top prize.

### *Boys are Back in Town*



Sales of companion animals have been buoyant this spring / summer with more and more people looking to employ alpacas to protect their chickens or lambs from foxes. The fact that alpacas now protect the Highgrove flock has probably had some effect. As a consequence we have brought forward the sales of our 2007 born males. We are currently offering these in groups of three: white, fawn, and brown/black and both *Huacaya* and *Suris* are available. Please call 01787 374142 or email [paul@melfordgreen.co.uk](mailto:paul@melfordgreen.co.uk) to reserve your choice.

## *Maude's Classic Timing*

A donation to Cavendish Primary School left them with the issue of what to buy for Class 2. Their Teacher, Mrs Large, wanted something fun, yet educational and hit upon the idea of adopting an alpaca. Maude was duly chosen. However, she had a special surprise of her own for when the pupils arrived on their Adoptive Parent's Day Tour of the farm at the end of May.



On the previous afternoon she had given birth to her first cria – *Cedella*, a lovely female sired by Bob our prize winning black *suri*.



From the excellent diary entries the class sent us we gather they were quite impressed. For details of adoptions or bespoke tours call Paul on 01787 374142 or see our website [www.melfordgreenalpacas.co.uk](http://www.melfordgreenalpacas.co.uk)

## *Alpaca Art*



Joanna Roberts is an international artist of great repute, and so we were delighted when she agreed to capture some of the Melford Green herd in her unique, stunning style.

In conjunction with Jo, are now able to offer our Open Day customers, a range of luxury greetings cards as well as limited edition prints and of course her truly spectacular originals.

## *Viki Joins the Melford Green Team*

Many of you will have met Viki during your visits to the farm. We are very pleased to announce that after completing her course in *Animal Management* in which she gained a distinction in alpaca husbandry; Viki accepted the position of *Herdsperson* and is now a full time member of the Melford Green team.



Viki has a great empathy with the animals and her dedication and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated by our customers, the herd and of course ourselves.

## *Felton by name.....*

Janette Felton from the Mid-Essex Spinners and Weavers Guild joined us for one of our Open Days in May and made the art of felting look easy. During the course of an afternoon she produced not only a very trendy handbag but a magnificent wall-hanging from just a couple of bags of Melford Green alpaca felting fleece.



See [www.spinandweave.org.uk](http://www.spinandweave.org.uk) for details on how to join the guild. Felting fleece can be purchased direct from ourselves or via the web from Becky Poynter of Yarnsmith at [www.yarnsmith.co.uk](http://www.yarnsmith.co.uk).