

News from the Maine Alpaca Association - managing heat stress,
who's open for Open Farm Day and more!

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It's almost time for Maine Open Farm Day on Sunday, July 24, 2016

The following MAA member farms will be open on Open Farm Day.

Visit www.mainealpacaassociation.com for contact information, directions, and open hours.

Bag End Suri Alpacas of Maine LLC, Pittsfield

Cape Newagen Alpacas, Southport

Carrageen Suri Alpacas, Gray

Justa Alpaca Farm, Farmington

Northern Solstice Alpaca Farm LLC, Unity

Pamelamas LLC, Arundel

Sea Hill Farm Alpacas LLC, Kittery Point

Coping with Heat Stress

The hot and humid days of summer in Maine can be a real challenge for alpacas and llamas. While a day or two of high temperatures generally don't pose a serious problem, heat stress is cumulative, and precautions should be taken when the forecast calls for an extended heat wave. Here are a few tips to

keep in mind.

Be aware of the Heat Stress Index (HSI). The HSI is the temperature (in Fahrenheit) plus the humidity percentage. A total greater than 150 is generally considered the danger zone for alpacas, for example, a temperature of 80° combined with 70% humidity, or a temperature of 90° with a humidity level of 60%. When the HSI exceeds 120, keep a close eye on your animals, as alpacas vary in their ability to cope with heat. Once the HSI breaks 150, proactive cooling measures should be considered.

In all cases, alpacas should be shorn annually before the summer heat arrives. Don't wait until spring to book your shearer - be sure you're on their schedule by the end of winter at the latest.

Shade and water should be available to alpacas at all times. Try to keep the water in the shade if possible, or consider adding frozen milk jugs to the troughs to keep the water cooler.

Fans can help a great deal to keep alpacas comfortable in the hot weather, and have the added benefit of keeping mosquitos and biting flies at bay.

Spraying water on alpaca legs and bellies is welcomed by most alpacas. Avoid hosing their whole body as the moisture traps heat against their body rather than cooling them. Shallow pools can be used but must be monitored carefully to keep the water clean, and to avoid loss of fleece on the alpacas. Pregnant females should not have access to wading pools to avoid cria death by drowning or the development of uterine infections. Soaking a patch of sand with a soaker hose or sprinkler is a safe alternative to a wading pool.

In March, a one-day Alpaca & Llama School was presented by University of Maine Cooperative Extension, with MAA sponsoring the lunch. This was the first time the Extension offered an event specifically geared to alpaca and llama owners, and MAA was proud to be a part of it. The event sold out, with both MAA members and non-members attending. Topics covered included pasture management, nutrition, and general business practices. We look forward to collaborating more with the Extension in the future!



The next Maine Alpaca Association meeting will be **October 16**, at Ginny Rebarç camp in Harmony. Watch the MAA website for time and directions. All members and non-members are welcome. www.mainealpacaassociation.com

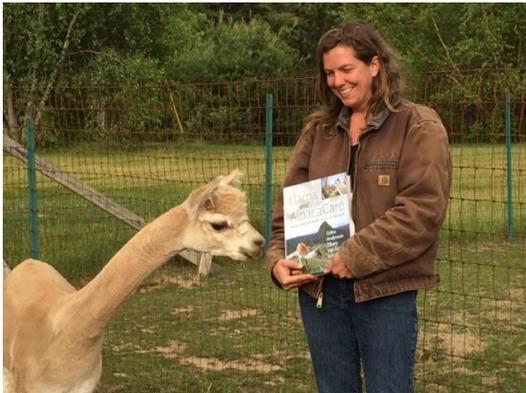
Newsflash - spread the word! The annual membership dues for the Maine Alpaca Association have been reduced to \$50 effective with the 2017 membership year.

Mike O'Brien of SuCaya Farm has kindly offered to collect and transport fiber to NEAFP in Fall River, MA.

- Mike will collect the fiber until he has a truck load. Deadline for the collection will be first week of August, or whenever the truck is full, whichever comes first.
- The collection will be first come, first served. Once the truck is full, he will have to stop collecting.
- Cost will be broken down among the contributors to cover gas and tolls.

- Each farm is responsible for including in each bag all of the info required by NEAFP. Go to www.neafp.com for details of NEAFP's requirements.
 - SuCaya Farm and/or Mike O'Brien will not be held responsible for any lost or damaged fiber.
 - Bags must be closed and secured, with as much air as possible removed. Extracting the air from bags and packing them in boxes takes up the least space.
 - Fiber can be dropped at SuCaya Farms in Smithfield, or Mike will meet you at a convenient location to pick up fiber. Please contact Mike directly to make drop off or pick up arrangements - [207-634-2189](tel:207-634-2189) or sucayafarms@gmail.com.
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MAA recently donated copies of *Llama and Alpaca Care* by Drs. Cebra, Anderson, Tibary, Van Saun, and Johnson to Branch Equine Veterinary Service LLC, Annabessacook Veterinary Clinic, and Hometown Veterinary Care, LLC. MAA was pleased to be able to provide this very comprehensive reference book to the veterinarians who take care of our members' alpacas. Shown below are Drs. Nicole Mailhot and Matthew Townsend with their new volumes.





Many thanks to the members who volunteered to staff the MAA booth at the Fiber Frolic this year. A number of folks stopped to chat about alpacas and about MAA and to sign up for the mailing list. Thanks also to all the volunteers who made the Fiber Frolic successful. It takes a tremendous effort by many, many people to put on the Frolic, and all of their hard work is greatly appreciated by the many attendees.

Upcoming Events in 2016

July 24 Maine Open Farm Day – statewide www.mainealpacaassociation.com
now thru Sept 3 Maine Fiberarts Exhibition, Topsham,

ME www.maineiberarts.org

Sept 7 thru 11 Fiber College of Maine, Searsport, ME www.fibercollege.org

Sept 23-25 Open Farm Days, Northern Solstice Alpaca Farm, Unity,

ME www.northernsolsticealpaca.com

Sept 23-25 Common Ground Country Fair, Unity, ME www.mofga.org/thefair

Sept 24-25 National Alpaca Farm Days - statewide www.alpacainfo.com/alpaca-farm-days

Oct 1-2 VT Sheep & Wool Festival, Trunbridge, VT www.vtsheepandwoolfest.com

Oct 2-9 Fryeburg Fair, Fryeburg, ME www.fryeburgfair.org/Fair-Info

Oct 9 Alpacas 101, Northern Solstice Alpaca Farm, Unity,

ME www.northernsolsticealpaca.com

Oct 15-16 NY State Sheep and Wool Festival, Rhinebeck,

NY www.sheepandwool.com

Oct 21-23 Showtacular presented by Empire Alpaca Association and NEAOBA,
Syracuse, NY <http://www.empirealpacaassociation.com/page/4356/empire-alpaca-extravaganza-show>

Nov 5-6 Fiber Festival of New England, West Springfield,

MA www.fiberfestival.org

Nov 19- 20 Maine Harvest Festival, Bangor, ME www.maineharvestfestival.com

Please visit www.maineairs.org for a full list of 2016 agricultural fairs.

Save the date – Maine Fiber Frolic June 3 & 4, 2017 www.fiberfrolic.com



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