

Queso Cabeza Farm Crier

Queso Cabeza Farm

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Farm Crier Highlights:

- **New Faces on the farm!**
- **Construction in the big barn**
- **New Llama / sheep "bumps" for sale on the website**
- **Lambs and Crias this spring**

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Bimonthly Vaccinations

Llamas are susceptible to the meningeal worm, *parelaphostrongylus*. This worm is transmitted by deer through their droppings. Llamas forage and eat grass that contain the larva of this worm. The worm lives in the llama and can seriously cripple or kill the animal.

By vaccinating our llamas every two months with a vet recommended wormer, we significantly reduce our exposure to the risk of being infected by meningeal worm.

Our worming medicine of choice is Dectomax. This injection is given just below the skin (subcutaneous) by one cc. / 50 lb. We have found that Dectomax tends

not sting the llama like other worming medications have. However, Dectomax® (Pfizer) is a little more difficult to find. Most vets, however, can order a bottle. We have had difficulty finding bottles smaller than 100 cc.

When ordering worming medicine through the mail, be sure to specify that you may need a long shelf-life. Too often suppliers give you the first bottle they come across.

The easiest way to weigh your llama is with a livestock scale. However, if you do not have a scale, a very inexpensive weight-tape can be purchased. A weight tape is used like a tape-measure. Wrap the weight-tape around

the ribs just behind the front legs, straight up to the top of the back but not into the withers. Pull the tape gently to press the extra fleece against the skin. The tape is marked to reveal a close estimation of the animal's weight.

When determining the dosage for your wormer, round up. This will make up for any differences in using your weight tape or livestock scale.

If you have any questions, please contact us.



Rotating wormers can expand the number of parasites you guard against.

The Show Team Meets

On Saturday, March 11, our show team officially met for the first time in 2006. We added another young person to our team this year from Marshall. It is always exciting to see new faces on the farm.

After we went over all the farm rules, show schedules and

such, we headed outside to meet the llamas. Kiko, Belle and Emmett all received a good workout.

Halter training started on March 16 and will continue throughout the spring show season.

Our first show was April 15

at Hillsdale, Michigan. There is quite a bit of work to do for the humans and llamas between now and the end of the season. However, everyone truly appeared excited and we are looking forward to seeing one and all at the shows.

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Sheep halters are simple in design but essential in use.

Sheep Halters

Llama halters and sheep halters are significantly different. Most sheep halters are made of nylon or some other type of rope. While you can buy sheep halters made of a nylon mesh, it is not as common. You can easily see llama halters and sheep halters differ in make-up and design.

A sheep halter has a piece that goes above and below the muzzle and a strap that fits around the back of the head. Except for the piece that goes over the muzzle, the entire halter is one piece of nylon rope.

Due to the simplicity of a sheep

halter, some people make their own and are just as good as any you would purchase from a livestock supply store or catalog.

Loops or brass rings connect pieces of a llama halter near the side of the llama's face. A sheep halter generally will not have any metal fasteners or pieces. The adjustment of a sheep halter is done by sliding the rope pieces through or around the main piece. For example, you could make the muzzle piece larger by sliding the lower jaw piece through

the nylon rope and allowing the opening to enlarge.

If you do plan on making your own sheep halter, there are many plans on the Internet. However, most are essentially all variations on the same design. Make sure to leave a 3 to 5 foot tail to allow for a comfortable distance from your sheep.



"We have placed two Icelandic Sheep / Llama roving blends for sale on our fiber page."

Website Update

We have updated several pages on our website. Most recently, we have added our Icelandic Sheep page. All our sheep are on one page for the moment. However, in the future, we will be splitting the rams, ewes and wethers onto separate pages.

There have been a few requests for raw and processed fiber. We have placed two Icelandic Sheep / Llama roving blends for

sale on our Fiber page. The rovings have a good hand, nice luster and rich color. All are 100% natural color.

We have also added a Newsletter page. This page is updated a few days after the newsletter is mailed. The Newsletter page will also allow you to join our e-mail distribution list.

The links page has been updated with a new fiber mill in Ohio. Feel free to let them know you found their link on our site.

There will be more updates to the website as 2006 progresses. Stop by often to see the pictures of the new lambs and crias.

www.QuesoCabezaFarm.com

Sheep Stall Goes Up

In January, we started to setup the big barn for the sheep. We allocated about one-fourth of the basement and built a wall to separate the llamas from the sheep. This proved to be quite challenging.

The barn was originally built in the early 1900s with timber probably cut from the property. Most joists are hand cut and rather uneven.

Each section of the wall was cut

to fit and then shimmed extensively. We placed a gate towards the front and made space for a water tank close to the back,

Nailing the wall to the concrete floor was done with a ram set. It was quite easy but a touch loud. We chose to screw all the boards together for a little more strength and rigidity. If a sheep decides to ram the wall, the wall should

stay put.

It took most of a weekend to build the wall that extends across the barn. The studs, header and footer were 2"x4"x8's. The horizontal rails are 1"x9"x17' laminated boards. We spaced them at the ground, 12 inches and 30 inches. Both llamas and sheep should not be able to go over, under or through the stall wall.



Importance of Cria check 24 hours after birth

Camelids, like all ruminants, are dependant upon colostral ("first milk") immunity. Within 12 to 24 hours after birth, the bowel of the neonate stops uptake of immunoglobulin. This transfer of passive immunity is essential to protect the newborn from disease. Ruminants transfer predominantly the IgG subclass of immunoglobulin, and an inadequate volume of colostrums ingested can lead to failure of passive transfer (FPT).

With the availability of llama plasma, transfusion can be performed to bolster immunity in FPT cases. It is important during

the first 12 hours after birth that the cria be strong enough to rise, and nurse as much as possible. Be sure that the mother has milk, and that the teats are open to allow milk to flow. Also, first time, nervous mothers may not hold still long enough for crias to nurse adequately.

A veterinarian can check the cria for congenital defects, and draw blood for IgG check, but can also examine the mother for milk production and let-down, as well as check for postpartum complications such

as tares and retained placenta.

Dave Bezek, DVM, Ph. D.



Farewell Everesta

On March 23, we said good-bye to our gentle giant, Everesta.

We noticed she was having difficulty walking one evening during chores. Knowing that she seemed to colic occasionally, we gave her a banamine shot. Everesta did start to perk up. However, she did not want to stand for any length of time.

We transported Everesta to the



large animal hospital at Michigan State University (MSU) in East Lansing. She was eating and drinking normally. When grain was presented, Everesta was very alert.

Unfortunately, after a day of observation at MSU, Everesta decided to leave us. The vets and vet students were incredibly patient and kind during our

experience. We are fortunate we encountered such compassionate veterinary professionals at MSU caring for our llama.

Everesta leaves behind Emmett and many friends who will miss her deeply. Everesta and Emmett were pictured on our 2004 Christmas card.

Farewell old friend.

"We are fortunate we encountered such compassionate veterinary professionals at MSU"

Spring Is Here!

Indeed, it is spring. Our pastures and hills are very muddy. To help prevent the llama paths from getting too muddy, we have fenced around some of the llama paths. This helps prevent the llamas from walking or running over the same area of ground.

We took the tank heaters out a little early this year. Harley had a large amount of ice in his water tank the day after we removed his tank heater. After

chopping away the ice, the tank heater has continued to keep the water clear. Now, we just need to teach Harley how to stop dropping hay into his water.

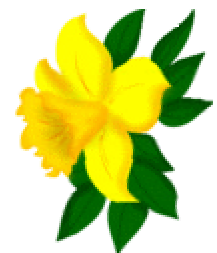
Sassy is our only llama scheduled to give birth this spring. She is bred to Bonfire for a May cria.

Penny gave birth to twin rams and Susie is to give birth towards the end of May. Susie is

quite wide and we are hoping for twins from both of them.

We have also started burning the shrubs and weeds away from the fence rows. The vegetation is dry but the ground is very moist. This makes it ideal for a controlled burning environment.

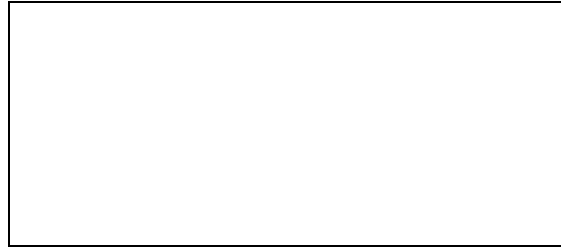
Show season has just begun and already we're quite busy!



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.QUESOCABEZAFARM.COM

Coming soon—Lambs and Crias!

Sassy is looking very uncomfortable lately and is due with a May cria. She is enjoying the mild temperatures recently.

Penny gave us the first lambs born on the farm. she appears to come from solid Icelandic Sheep stock.

Sassy is bred to Bonfire. Sassy has extremely large bone and has a good luster to her fiber. Bonfire has suri fiber. In llamas, color and markings are mostly unpredictable as compared to sheep or other animals. However, Bonfire is red and white and Sassy is black and white. So, the cross should be very interesting.

Due this fall are Moonstone,

Lunetta and Teapot. Each has there unique personalities and we are excited about adding their crias to our herd.

Teapot has given us two big appaloosa male crias. She is bred to Harley and we are expecting another large cria. Graty and Kiko both have very fine, white fiber and gentle personalities.

Moonstone has extremely dense fleece. Her stud has very dense, heavy wool as well. Moonstone produces the most wool per animal on our farm.

Around the time fall crias arrive, our lambs should be about weaned and some may find new homes. This is always the

good and bad of having critters. We love to see them find such wonderful new homes and caring families. But, we are always sad to see them leave the farm.

As Sassy and Penny have their respective cria and lamb, we will be certain to post their pictures on the website. I am sure they will be glad not to be so pregnant throughout the hot summer months.



Sassy shortly after she was born.