



WENSUM VALLEY VETS - ALPACA AND LLAMA NEWSLETTER

Routine Care

Vaccination

We recommend vaccinating all alpacas and llamas for Clostridial diseases. Please call if you would like to arrange this.

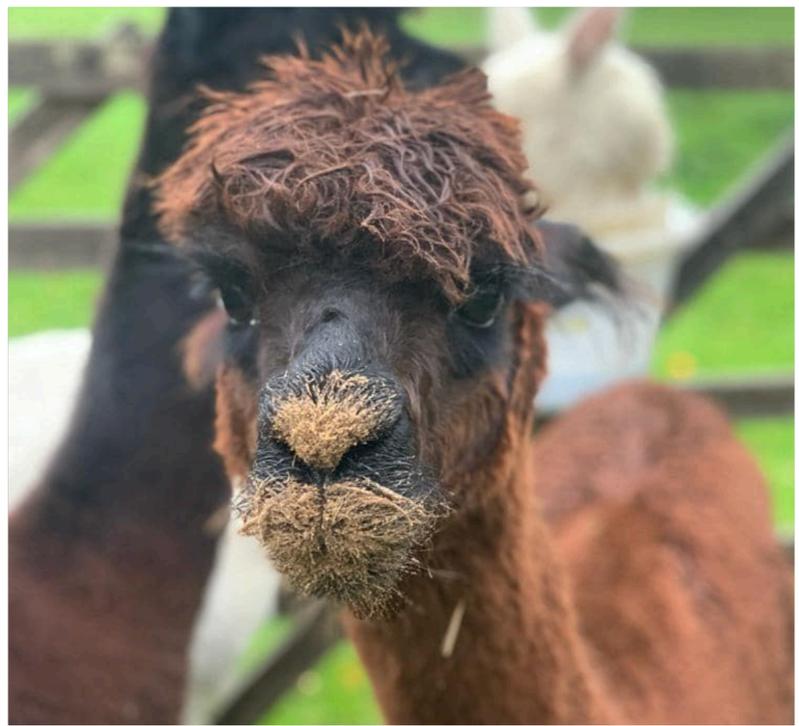
Foot Care

Toenail trimming is needed as often as every 3 months in the UK due to the soft soil. This can be done standing or lying and is something we can carry out if you would like.

Fun fact - white toenails grow faster than dark toenails!

Diet

Vitamin D supplementation via a 2monthly injection is highly recommended in the winter months in the UK. We also suggest feeding a camelid specific concentrate feed in a pellet format to fulfil their dietary needs, especially Zinc which contributes to skin health.



Here at Wensum Valley Vets we enjoy treating and caring for our alpaca and llama patients. Recently one of our vets, Lauren, went on an alpaca learning course to keep her knowledge up to date, discussing handling, common diseases and alpaca obstetrics with veterinary experts. Our team can cater to their routine and emergency care needs, regularly making herd health plans, vaccinating, advising on worming and castrating new world camelid patients.

Dentistry

Anatomy

New world camelids have 3 types of teeth, incisors for cutting



Worm Prevention Top Tips!

Alpacas and Llamas are highly susceptible to the worms found in the UK that usually infect sheep. They can cause serious illness and even death.

1. *Poo picking*

Removing droppings from pasture daily will prevent worm eggs from hatching and re-infecting animals grazing. This can be surprisingly easy in alpacas as they usually make a 'latrine' and all expel droppings at the same site.

2. *Avoid co-grazing sheep*

Alpacas are far more susceptible to worms, particularly *Haemonchus*, than sheep, so even a small number can cause clinical disease. Worms found in horses however, do not impact alpacas.

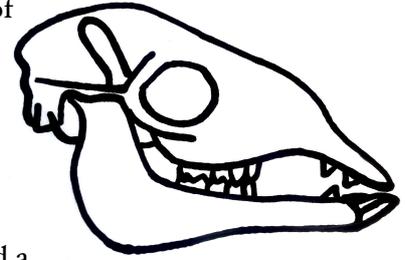
3. *Regular worm egg counts*

We recommend 3 monthly worm egg counts for each individual alpaca or llama. Egg shedding levels tend to be low so individual, instead of pooled, samples allow us to advise most accurately. Samples should be freshly collected.

4. *Monitor for signs*

- Weight loss
- Loose droppings
- Dull/quiet demeanour
- Pale skin or mouth

and picking up food at the front of the mouth, fighting teeth, and cheek teeth for chewing and grinding. Common problems included maligned incisors, and overgrown/sharp fighting teeth or molars. These can lead to pain and a number of secondary problems so are best examined and addressed quickly.



Signs of dental problems:

- Weight loss
- Reluctance to eat
- Reduced cud chewing
- Dropping food
- Undigested food in droppings
- Swelling of the face/head
- Dull demeanour
- Nasal discharge

Castration

When?

We recommend waiting until 18 months old to allow growth plates to close and reduce the risk of developmental limb abnormalities.

Why?

Adult males can become aggressive and dangerous if not castrated. Even after castration we would still recommend keep males and females separate as the process of repeated mating may still occur causing pain and trauma to females.



Handling

Restraint

Calm handling and restraint of alpacas is essential for allowing us to examine and treat them. Some procedures are best carried out with them 'in crush' or lying down, whereas others require them to stand still whilst being gently held around the neck. We may need to sedate or use anaesthesia for closer examination, or sometimes we will use an 'ear twitch', firmly gripping their ears.

