

Mid North Coast LAN Meeting 6th February 2011

Meeting opened 10.30

Attendance: Alastair Smedley, Maureen O'Grady and Helmut Meier, Kerrie and Lindsay Rapley, Lesley Russell, Dot & Phil Ware, Vince and Ann Henderson, Ron and Judy Austin, Lindy Brown, Mark and Kim Irving, Sandra and Charlie Vella.

Guests: Eileen Swain, Amanda Rapley, Louise & Colin Pearson, Lisa & Peter McCuddens

Apologies: Gary Russell, Linda Biddeau and Bob McKenzie, Karen Smedley, Linda Biddau & Bob Mc Kenzie, Leigh Carnsew & Stuart Johnson

Vince welcomed everyone to their farm and thanked all present for attending

Alastair opened the meeting and thanked Vince and Ann for hosting this LAN meeting.

1. Presidents Report

Things are still quiet at present. He reported that AAA is looking at doing a bit more for Alpaca Month and he is hoping to be able to report back after the board meeting re the exact plans.

2. National Alpaca Week 2011

There has been some talk from the board that they may support the regions advertising on a dollar for dollar basis to the value of \$1000. So far the region has been asked for a stock-take of last years' pamphlets.

Sherwood is to go ahead again this year but with a reduction in pens and only using the front section. Pens will be allocated on a first in basis. Alastair would like some ideas on how to promote alpaca month with the intent of getting the public back again. Charlie asked if it was possible to advertise earlier so last year's problems do not happen again. Vince suggests a Kempsey retailer be approached to take a possible free stand so that they will also be involved in getting people in. Other suggestions were letterbox drops and flyers as well as stories in local papers. Vince and Ann had great success both years with their own open farm using these methods. (Over 200 visits) they also had the fire brigade looking after the gate and they too put out the word of this event being on. Kerrie suggested that we should advertise in the Happenings. Vince suggested we get flyers to places like Norco and request that they be sent out with their accounts; he also thought having a chat to the Chamber of Commerce was a useful idea. Dot suggested we have a door prize that people would be entered into if they were willing to give us some details. Charlie suggested we make sure of the dates of Macksville and Kempsey Shows and don't clash with them. 21st May is looking like a good date. Alastair is thinking along the lines of mini workshops to be held throughout the day. These would need to be held in different pens as the insurance requires the animals penned before the public arrive and not removed till after closure. Vince feels we should hone in on fleece programs as this is after all what the industry is really all about. Sandra is to contact Nerida & Michelle re the use of the marquees again. A booking form will be coming out soon.

3. Mid North Coast Alpaca Show

Alastair reported that the Kempsey Show Ground has been booked for the 23rd July. We have an 18 x 24m shed available to us. We may need to have tarps of some kind for the south/eastern wall as this is the way bad weather will come. We will have the regions marquee available as well and in the chance of rain there should be enough room in either of these for the ring. Lindsay has offered a large tarp for the wall if necessary. There will be camping sites on the grounds if required and there are motels in the area for others as well. Security will be some of the members staying on site as usual.

Assistance will be required and a form for both sponsorship and show assistance were passed around. If you are able to assist please let Alastair know.

Dot can assist Alastair with bales of straw at a very reasonable rate.

4. General Business

Mark has had a problem with a couple of cria born on the same day, both with apparent defects and both with no apparent reason. Several things were considered by the vets but no true cause has returned. One virus that was looked at is Akabane Virus. This is a known problem in all species of ruminants and is known to be present in this area. Some information has been added to the 'articles' section of the regions website and further information can be found on line.

Lesley has been feeding a cria whose mother died at birth and she has been using a product called ProfelAC Shepherd. Alpacas are listed on the label and this cost \$63.18. Another product the Russell's have recently used with success is Revive. This is an energy booster for newborn and again alpacas are listed on the label. The only difference the Russell's found is the label recommends 15ml for alpaca but they only used the lamb, goat and kid dosage – with success. There are a lot of eye problems coming to light at present. The March Fly is a big cause of a virus that is presenting to be quite serious and if not treated quickly the animal is at risk of needing the eye removed. Eye ointments from the vet and Terramycin powder are all helpful. To keep the flies away in the first place or if you have an animal more susceptible the use of Stable Itch around the top knot and ears is helpful. Some other suggestions were Buzz Off (for animals) and Repelex.

More Plasma is to be ordered as there are only two members with any left. Mark is to organise another 4 to be shipped to members.

Alpaca Colostrum can be frozen and for approx. 3 months.

Meeting closed 12. md

NEXT MEETING 10th April

Lindy Brown
143 Beranghi Rd
Crescent Head