

Bio Security - A Growing Concern

By Nancy Chlarson

Keeping animals healthy has to be the number one priority for all responsible animal owners. With the increase in showing, outside breeding and the movement of llamas and alpacas, bio-security has become a major concern for breeders. In simple terms, bio-security is informed common sense. Don't bring germs to your animals and don't bring your animals to germs. Germs are persistent, invisible killers that can survive in soil, droppings and debris, all waiting to hitch a ride into your backyard and into your herd.

The first step to bio-security is cleanliness. Thoroughly clean and scrub objects before applying disinfectants. Disinfectants cannot work on top of caked on dirt and manure. Apply disinfectants using brushes, sponges and spray units - always follow the manufacturers' instructions. Dispose of used disinfectant according to local regulations. Clean and disinfect all equipment that comes in contact with your animals or their droppings. That includes tools such as feed scoops, shovels, rakes, and brooms.

Keep all animals newly moved to your property, in a quarantine area for at least thirty days for observation. Keep the quarantine areas separated so NO fence lines are shared with non-quarantine areas. Test all animals on the farm for BVDV with a viral whole blood test.

Keep pens, food and water clean on a daily basis. Germs can be picked up on shoes and clothing and moved from one area to another. The use of bio-mats and/or disposable booties when moving between pens, will help to keep your animals "germ-free". Bio-Mats should certainly be used when entering or leaving quarantine areas. Mats should be disinfected with Virkon or Nolvasan S. and

the solution should be changed frequently.

Wash your hands often, keep waterless hand disinfectant in the barn and attach dispensers throughout the farm for easy access before moving between pens. Check animals daily for any signs of diarrhea, sneezing, gasping for air, nasal discharge, coughing, or lack of energy and appetite. Immediately isolate animals showing any signs of illness.

When traveling to shows, keep your animals protected from stress and disease. Use stall curtains between your pens and the pens of other farms to keep animals from kissing the neighbors. Use hand disinfectant frequently and especially after handling other animals. After taking the animals to the poop pile, walk them thru the bio-mat or spray their feet with disinfectant. Don't share tools with other farms without cleaning them with Virkon or Novasan S. Feed Immune booster for a least a week prior to attending shows and keep vaccination

and worming schedules current.

Every farm should also have regularly scheduled worming and vaccination programs and an isolated quarantine area for new or sick animals. For maximum bio-security farms should also have the following products on hand: Bio-mats, Virkon or Nolvasan S, disposable boots and gloves, immune booster, free choice mineral and vitamin



supplements, pump up disinfectant spray unit, waterless hand cleaner, and stall curtains.

All of these products, as well as other new products are available from Quality Llama Products, Inc at www.llamaproducts.com or by calling 800-638-4689.

The experts at Quality Llama Products have over 25 years of experience with llamas and alpacas and are happy to help you plan your bio-security for the health of your animals.

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