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Lama glama gazette

UPDATES FROM THE NEW ZEALAND LLAMA ASSOCIATION (NZLA)
KEEPING YOU INFORMED OF YOUR COMMITTEES ACTIONS

Your 2018-19 Committee will be working hard this year to keep you up-to-date with where we are at, and what we are doing to help ensure we are achieving the [NZLA Objectives](#).

2018 AGM and gathering a success!

This year, we were hosted for our AGM at Judy Webby's (NZLA Secretary) home town of Manakau in the Horowhenua district. We had 10 of our members present on the day, which was an improvement on previous years, and great to see some enthusiasm growing. We started off the day by opening up the floor to a Q & A session to ensure those attending on the day were able to walk away with the information they wanted to gain from the day. With a range of knowledge in the room, we were able to cover off topics related to basic

husbandry, breeding (how-to's, know-hows and why's), genetics, common health concerns and management of internal parasites.

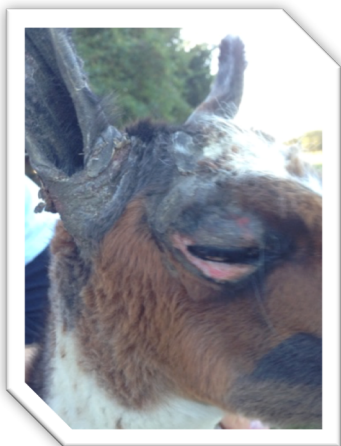
From there, we wandered up the road to Judy's herds with all of her cute cria from this year as well. We had a look at some good and some flawed conformational traits to help with breeding decisions, demonstrated toe nail trimming, and also some basics on halter training and restraint.

Finally, we wrapped up the day with the official portion of the AGM. Great Day!



PROMOTING THE NZ LLAMA

One of the clear messages that came out of the NZLA AGM this year, was that we were all on the same page to try and work hard this year to refocus our efforts to ensure that we are promoting the NZ Llama. As such, we are looking for opportunity to work with joint events all around NZ to have the opportunity to introduce the public to llamas, as well as their kind and loving natures we all love. Hopefully, we will be able to answer the question this year of 'why should I own a llama?' If you have any suggestions for events, please email info@llamas.org.nz to let us know of any opportunities you think we could get involved.



Quick synopsis about Facial Eczema in Llamas

Facial eczema can be either acute, chronic or sub-clinical in our llamas, and they are susceptible to this disease.

Facial eczema is the end condition that we see, like this poor girl above. But how does it get to this point? And why do the vets say there is nothing you can do once it gets to this point? Lets have a quick look at the pathogenesis, or process of this disease.

The causative agent is a fungus called *Pithomyces chartarum*. This fungus survives on dead matter and leaf litter in our pastures. When this fungus spreads, it does so by producing fungal spores. These spores look like small little hand grenades under the microscope. These spores contain a toxin called 'sporodesmin'.

When our animals consume this toxin, it damages the liver. This damage causes scar tissue to form in the liver, preventing the normal breakdown and excretion of the chlorophyll in the rest of the grasses they consume. This chlorophyll byproduct then circulates in their blood stream, and in areas with small vessels close to the skin, and surprisingly

the sun still reacts with it, causing marked inflammation and swelling, giving rise to the swollen and peeling skin that we are used to seeing. Once this happens, there is no going back, only helping them get through the clinical signs. This is done by providing shade, feeding hay, zinc creams and anti-inflammatories from the vet.

Year-on-year exposure will cause marked scarring of the liver, and ultimately results in liver failure, which is a life sentence from there.

So in that case, prevention is key!

As mentioned, this is a fungus causing the disease. Fungi like to grow in warm and wet conditions. When the weather is conducive to this type of environment (eg. Autumn, late Summer, and possibly even late Spring), we need to make sure that we are providing protection for our paddock pets.

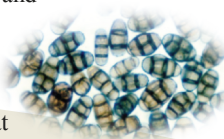
“The disease is additive, yet secretive; We need to be aware of the risks to best protect them.”

COREY D REGNERUS

'Spore Counting' is the easiest way to know what is going on in your region, as well as on your own property. You can use regional reports from your farm supply stores, or your local vets to gauge the risk period (>20,000 spores) to know when to start supplementing zinc to protect the liver from damage. You can then collect grass samples from your paddocks and take into your local vet for evaluation to then know what is going on specifically on your property.

It is best to collect grass samples first thing in the morning before the dew burns off, cut right to ground level, and a couple points across the paddock, enough to fill a bread bag.

Luckily we have alpaca/llama pellets plus zinc available from [Country Harvest](#). Only supplement zinc during the risk periods, as prolonged exposure to zinc can inhibit copper absorption and cause it's own problems. There was a small study done at Massey University last year seeing if sheep rumen capsules of zinc could be used



**Image of FE Spores from: <http://www.nzagrtrade.co.nz/The-Time-Capsule/Facts-on-Facial-Eczema>*

THE BIG QUESTION:

Why own a llama?



If you have a telling tale as to why you love owning llamas, please send us through a short story and a photo so that we can share it on our social media to answer this common question we all face.

Help us in promoting the NZ llama, as well as the NZLA

safely and effectively, and results are still pending.

There are additional preventatives like fungicides that could be practical on smaller blocks, but quickly becomes unaffordable on larger ones. There is a good document from [Beef and Lamb NZ](#) highlighting the disease and preventative measures that can be implemented the same for our beloved camelids.

Get in touch if you have any more questions:

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- Corey Regnerus – BVSc, BSc



New Zealand Llama Association

www.llamas.org.nz