

Feed trials update

As time goes on we are finding some more interesting results from our feed trials. In spring the grass took a long time to get going; then finally it did and there was lots; then in June the hot weather hit and everything dried up very quickly. (Fortunately we also got our haylage made.) However, in spite of the vagaries in the weather, our dams and crias are doing really well. We're seeing typical cria weight gains of 2 kilos per week! - Even in their first week crias are gaining one to two-plus kilos, compared with in previous years we might have found just a small weight gain in the first week. So what's happened? Well, as you know we have been trialling new feeds, and the dams came out of winter in much better condition than previously: not for want of trying in the past either!(See February '17 news). The dams also have plenty of milk.



The crias are quite varied in birth weights, as usual; and, for example, one small cria, birth weight 5.9 kilos on 7th June, weighed in at 11 kilos only three weeks later, and a 9 kilo cria born on 9th June weighed in at 15 kilos three weeks later. We normally do igg tests on any crias that have difficult births, low birth weights or difficulty feeding, and then give plasma when needed. We have done somewhat fewer igg tests this year, and have only needed to give about 6 plasma infusions in more than 200 births: a significant improvement.

The dams with crias groups are being given 70g Camelibra per head (as normal) plus 100g new Fibregest per head. Also, as and when a dam starts to lose condition, then she is put onto pasture with more lush grass. Our old girls (age 12+) go straight into our TLC group after their crias are born, simply because they are older, and get 70g Camelibra, 150g new Fibregest per head and 200g Aztec Silver per head daily.

Overall, the majority of our alpacas (males, non-pregnant females and youngsters) are now on a reduced amount of Camelibra plus some Aztec Silver, with a few groups just on Aztec Silver. We have found no re-occurrence of the skin problems we had some years ago, which were resolved by increasing the zinc level in the Camelibra at that time.

Interestingly our alpacas are still enjoying eating haylage as well as grass.

Non-pregnant females are each being given 200g daily, made up of 150g Aztec Silver and 50g Camelibra.

Non-stud males, including the 1 and 2-year-olds are just getting Aztec Silver. Later on the yearling boys will be compared with the yearling girls in regard to fleece length, as the yearling girls are being given just Camelibra. They are all on good grass. This experiment is to find out if there is any difference in the average fleece lengths between these two groups.

We are currently feeding a total of 110 kilos of feed per day, compared with 80 kilos Camelibra and 60 kilos Fibregest per day last year, with about the same number of alpacas on farm. And we have managed to reduce the overall cost of feed further by including some less expensive ingredients. We have also been very pleasantly surprised at the overall results.



Champion Black Studs sold

Congratulations to Ron MacIntosh of Reddens Alpacas, who has purchased two illustrious Bozedown Champion black Stud males: Bozedown Legend II, 2012 Futurity Champion; and Bozedown Falcon, a yearling: 1st in the Junior classes, and then Reserve Champion at 2017 BAS National Show, followed by Champion at the Heart of England Fiesta. yearling: 1st in the Junior classes, and then Reserve Champion at 2017 BAS National Show, followed by Champion at the Heart of England Fiesta.



Meanwhile, don't worry, we have another genetically impressive Champion black stud to offer our stud service clients: **Bozedown Code Breaker** has stonking conformation and a beautifully soft, dense, well organised fleece. Code Breaker has produced all solid coloured progeny, many blacks, along with a few coloureds.

Featured Stud Male:

Bozedown Utopia II won the White Male Championship at the 2017 British Alpaca Society National Show against the top genetics in the UK. Michael Henderson and Susan Myerscough of Legacy Alpacas liked the look of him and now own a half share. He has been working at Bozedown Alpacas this year, and we are already looking forward to seeing his crias in 2018; but he will henceforth mainly be standing at Stud at Legacy Alpacas in the North of England.

Utopia is a half brother to **Bozedown Frisbee** who has already produced many show winning progeny. Utopia is carrying an impressively dense fleece on a faultless frame; his fleece grows a fantastic length with brilliant brightness which just glows; it displays a high amplitude fleece style which is carried right the way across his body and well into his belly and right the way up his neck. Our sincere congratulations to Legacy Alpacas.



Stockperson position.

Ewan has been a stalwart member of the Bozedown team for the past few years, and has now decided it's time for him to see the world. We thank him for all his conscientious work, and wish him all the very best for his future.

However, this means we have a full-time vacancy (at least 4 days per week plus a weekend rota), with full training given; there is bed-sit accommodation available if required. This would be an ideal opportunity for any young person to gain valuable experience on a thriving alpaca farm; in this case we suggest that at least a full calendar year would be needed to experience all aspects.