



Farm Veterinary Solutions

# ALPACA CARE GUIDE

Alpacas need a little extra consideration to help them thrive and live a healthy life. Especially those with chronic health conditions. Regular health checks, faecal exams and weigh-ins may uncover diseases before they become chronic and debilitating.

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

**Camelids are not evolutionarily adapted to deal with high levels of gastrointestinal parasites.**

Parasites can be a problem in both crias and older camelids without appropriate monitoring. In general, camelids are susceptible to the same gastrointestinal parasites as sheep such as *Haemonchus* and *Ostertagia*, *Nematodirus*, and tapeworm less commonly.

They are also susceptible to coccidiosis. Coccidiosis may occur in adult camelids and usually always with the most pathogenic species of coccidia. Therefore, any coccidial oocyst detected need to be considered in light of clinical signs.

Parasitic gastroenteritis may result in a variable number of clinical signs including ill-thrift, weight loss, colic, anaemia, lethargy and anorexia. Diarrhoea is often not seen until advanced stages of disease.

The current approach for a correct worming control is to selectively test and treat only animals with high parasite load, low body condition score and pale mucous membranes.



As a minimum, 10% of the animals or at least 10 animals should be tested 2 to 3 times (or more) per year.

Stocking density is also an important consideration.

### Vaccination

There are varying vaccines available for clostridial diseases and generally require regular boosters.

The needs of each flock will vary on different farms.

You should discuss with your vet the best option for vaccinations in your alpacas.

Vaccine that is not used appropriately will not work.

**Faecal samples must be taken individually - pooling samples is not recommended.**