



Introduction to the New Hampshire 4-H Alpaca and Llama Project Fact Sheet

Alpacas have coexisted with humankind for thousands of years. They are natives of South America and were first imported to the United States in 1984. They are valued for their luxurious, cashmere-like fiber. The life span of an alpaca is about 20 years and gestation is 11.5 months (350 days). They are about 5 feet tall and weigh between 100-180 pounds. Crias (babies) are about 1 ½ ft. tall and weigh between 15–20 pounds.

Llamas can be anywhere from 5-6 feet tall and can weigh between 250-500 pounds and live between 15–25 years.

Both llamas and alpacas are camelids, members of the camel family. They have padded feet rather than hoofs and two toenails on each foot. They have a split upper lip, eat grass, do chew a cud, and have one stomach divided into three parts. They are herd animals, quite intelligent, friendly, playful, and curious. They are earth friendly, eating grass but not pulling it up by the roots, and their padded feet leave the terrain undamaged.

4-Hers may participate in the New Hampshire Sheep & Wool Festival, some New Hampshire fairs (Hopkinton) and youth shows at Eastern States Exposition. Some 4-H families also travel to other New England fairs with their animals.

The Alpaca/Llama project lends itself to many sub-projects. For example, fiber related projects (spinning, weaving, and felting) and fair classes such as fit and show, packing, obstacle courses, public relation, and costume.

Required Participant Age: 8 -18 as of January 1 of the current year

Animal Vaccinations: Rabies vaccination – initial vaccination must be at least 30 days prior to shows or events and must be current (not more than 1 year). Animals must be healthy/free from signs of communicable disease prior to attending any show or event. Certificate of veterinary inspection may be required by some events and is required to bring an animal outside the state of NH.

Recommended Animal Vaccinations: Check with your veterinarian as vaccination and biosecurity recommendations change frequently.

Required Animal Identification: Microchip

Forms

4-H Animal Intent to Show Form/4HOnline Animal Registration: Must be complete with animal information and verification. **Due Date:** June 1st

Animal Borrowing Form (formerly Lease): Borrowing form must be complete with animal information and all signatures for ESE. **Due Date:** June 1st

Policies

Rabies Requirements for NH 4-H Animals: Upon the recommendation of the New Hampshire State Veterinarian, all mammals shown or exhibited at New Hampshire 4-H events including fairs, shows, clinics, 4-H club meetings, county activities day or any other event sponsored by 4-H, must have a current inoculation for rabies given at least 30 days prior to the event. A licensed veterinarian administered rabies vaccination is recommended.

Rabies vaccinations cannot be given to 4-H animals under three months of age AND vaccination must be given at least 30 days prior to exhibiting an animal. All 4-H project animals must be at least four months of age by show day to be shown, exhibited or brought to any 4-H event. Other health requirements vary by species and show. Individual shows and fairs may have additional vaccination and health requirements as recommended by the New Hampshire State Veterinarian's office. Always check the fair or show book for additional health requirements.

Resources

- Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association, www.alpacainfo.com
- UNHCE 4-H Alpaca/Llama Page <https://extension.unh.edu/resource/nh-4-h-llama-and-alpaca-project-resources>

Questions? Call Mary Davis, State 4-H Animal and Agricultural Science Program Coordinator at 603-862-2188 or Mary.Davis@unh.edu

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