



LLAMA / ALPACA PROJECT GUIDEBOOK



Species-Chair:

Kathy Easter * ndalpacas@aol.com * 231-499-7434

Assistant Species-Chair:

Renee Hobbins * hobbins@centurytel.net * 231-835-0441

IMPORTANT DATES		IMPORTANT INFO	
Registration	May 4 th	Record Book	Required

General Requirements

- ◆ Participating youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Member Guidebook. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship requirements, etc.
- ◆ To participate in a 4-H llama/alpaca project, youth must attain the age of five (5) or older by January 1st of that calendar year.
 - Members that are 5-7 years of age will participate in the 4-H Cloverbud program and will have their own Cloverbud classes.
- ◆ Registration is due to the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council Auction Committee no later than the May council meeting.
- ◆ Youth are required to complete a project record book depicting their 4-H experience for the year.

Program Goals

- ◆ Develop knowledge and responsibility of the care, grooming, feeding, management, expenses, health concerns, and maintenance requirements of llamas/alpacas
- ◆ Establish or enhance a sense of leadership, team building, self-esteem and sportsmanship while performing and showing

Fair Week Requirements

- ◆ 4-H members are responsible for the care, feeding, and watering of their animal throughout the week
 - Grooms and attendants must be neatly and cleanly dressed at all times
 - Stalls, pens, and floors must be in neat and tidy condition by 9:00 a.m. daily
 - Tack must be kept out of walkways

Showmanship

- ◆ About:
 - Showmanship is about the handler
 - Demonstrates the 4-H youth's knowledge of their animal and general llama/alpaca facts, based on age categories, and the handler's ability to show his/her animal to its best advantage
 - Judged on basic skills in fitting, grooming, following directions, and style of presenting the llama/alpaca to the judge
- ◆ Handler:
 - Should be neat, clean, properly dressed, prompt, alert, confident, and courteous
 - Proper clothing:
 - Black or khaki pants or skirt
 - White top
 - Boots or solid shoes
 - No open-toes shoes or tennis shoes
 - Tips:
 - Be courteous of other showman
 - Listen and always keep your eyes and ears on the judge
 - Always know where the judge is in relation to you
 - Research the proper position of where you are supposed to be, relative to where the judge is in each quadrant
 - Never cross behind your animal
- ◆ Animal & Equipment:
 - Animal should be clean, brushed out, and in good condition with the toenails trimmed
 - Worming needs to be done one month before fair with Ivomec or Dectomax (dosage according to animal's weight)
 - Halter and lead should be properly fit, not distract from the animal, be in good repair and be safe
 - Tips:
 - Color coordinate your halter and lead or use a non-distracting color such as black
 - Avoid looping or wrapping leads around your hand
- ◆ Showing the Animal:
 - Following directions: Following what the judge or ringmaster instruct the handler to do
 - Leading: If asked to move out of line, move in a straight line forward, turn to the right, go back through your space in line clear of the line, then turn to the right and enter your new place in line
 - Changing pace: Demonstrate change of pace from walking to trotting
 - Backing: Backing and leading forward a requested number of steps
 - Posing: Lead your animal from the left side, hold lead in right hand at least 8 inches from the halter

- Positioning: When changing positions in line, or when lining up, stand or set your animal's legs squarely and position yourself at a 45 degree angle off your animal's left shoulder, using the quadrants to switch sides smoothly as the judge moves
- Showing to Advantage: Position or pose your animal to increase its positive qualities and decrease its faults
- Controlling the animal on the lead and in place with other handlers: Allow a safe distance between animals; do not crowd others
- Pay attention to the line-up
- Answer questions on general llama/alpaca knowledge or confirmation: Where animals originated from, animal classifications, animal parts, health risks to animal, uses of animals, etc
- Tips:
 - PRACTICE!!!
 - Frequent practice will help the animal feel less nervous and you can show it to the best of your ability
 - Practice backing and changing pace
 - Practice standing in one position with you by your animal's head, smoothly change sides in front of your animal
 - Be patient; Remember the animal may not like standing and waiting attached to the lead
 - Develop a relationship with the animal you are working with so that it learns to trust you
 - Handlers should encourage the animal to walk into the ring at a brisk pace and should never drag the animal into the ring
 - Be natural; over-fussing with your animal or continually moving and repositioning may be counted against you
 - Always allow the judge to have a clear view of your animal
 - Have fun! Your animal can sense if you are nervous and uptight
 - Learn from your mistakes
 - Do your best
 - Ask questions if you don't know

Performance Classes

- ◆ Obstacle Class:
 - Llama/alpaca is required to follow and complete a trail or course, possibly including bridges, ramps, jumps, stairs, walking in water or on other types of ground material, loading and unloading from a trailer, weaving, going under or over obstacles, change of pace, going through a gate or doorway, backing, flexibility and maneuvering, picking up animal's foot, showing teeth, meeting other people and/or animals, tolerating touching or having something touch the animal, unexpected noises or distractions, narrow passages, etc
 - Handlers are judged on their ability to work with their animal as well as the animal completing the obstacle

- Novice and Advanced classes:
 - Novice consists of an animal shown in no more than 3 shows without taking a 1st place
 - Novice will have fewer obstacles
- Tips:
 - Practice performing various obstacles so the animal is less likely to balk or refuse
 - Wear neat, clean clothes and sturdy shoes or boots
 - Not having appropriate footwear will be a disqualification
 - Pay attention; The judge will do a run-through of the obstacle requirements and the order of obstacles
 - Listen to the judge, always know where the judge is, and what the judge is saying
 - Your animal may try or refuse an obstacle 3 times, then you are required to move on to the next obstacle
 - A llama/alpaca will not be allowed to be in both novice and advanced obstacle class
 - Do your best and have fun!
- ◆ Pack Class:
 - Pack has all the same possibilities as Obstacle, but requires your animal to perform while wearing a pack which may or may not contain items
 - Course will usually vary slightly from Obstacle and will generally be obstacles that your animal might encounter in actual packing experiences
 - Consists of 2 classes, novice and advanced
 - Novice is for animals trying a pack course for the first time or shown in no more than 3 shows without taking a 1st place
 - Tips:
 - All of the tips for Obstacle are equally true for Pack classes
 - Practice applying and removing a pack from your animal
 - This can be challenging if your animal has never felt anything on its back before
 - Start training by laying a towel across your animal's back and gradually move into laying a pack across their back before you actually strap it on
- ◆ Costume Class:
 - A performance class
 - Entertaining for the public and the handler
 - Involves dressing the handler and the animal in a costume, having a written story which you make up, and is judged first on coverage of the animal and how much it is asked to tolerate, how well it tolerates it, and originality
- ◆ Halter Class:
 - Llama Halter Class:
 - Animal is judged on its conformation only; How well it is put together and moves
 - Divided according to wool coverage:
 - Light Wool: Minimum body wool, short neck wool with smooth head, ears, and legs

- Medium Wool: Moderate to long body wool, minimum to moderate neck wool, smooth to moderate head and leg wool
- Heavy Wool: Abundant body and neck wool with minimal to abundant head and leg wool; Leg wool at least to knee and hock
- In a division of sexes (females, males, non-breeders), competition is against other animals in their age group
 - Juvenile: 5-12 months
 - Yearling: 13-23 months
 - Two Year Olds: 24-36 months
 - Adults: 37 months and older
 - NOTE: 24 month or older llama/alpaca males are not allowed in the program
- Alpaca Halter Class:
 - Classes are Haucaya or Suri
 - May be judged on wool if enough animals are entered
 - Wool usually constitutes 50% of the score
- Tips:
 - Groom your llama/alpaca to the best of your ability as these classes are judged on their conformation, movement, and possibly wool.
 - Condition and placement of the wool can enhance or detract from their overall presentation
 - Enter each llama/alpaca into the class for which they are most appropriate
 - Animals must be shown in the wool division in which they would have been shown prior to shearing