



Maine Alpaca Association 2012 Focus Areas & Goals

Optimize & Update website-

Update: Open herd is currently working on the transition of our current website to a site located under the Open Herd banner. Farms will be able to update their individual farm information. All current services will be offered. Future focus group will need to work with new site to add all new agreed upon features.

- Once the site is done, it should be managed by a rotating webmaster – so Open Herd was selected as it's in a format that the general membership can work in.
- The existing site should be kept up in the interim. Site will need to have new features integrated once set up.
- Members need to set up their individual Open Herd accounts in order to link up with the new MAA Website.

New website should include:

- Paypal access for membership renewal and shopping
- MAA Branded Products for sale
- Health information
- Possible gateway for two levels of membership
- Calendar of events
- Farm Finder
- Information about raising alpacas
- Classifieds
- Vendor Market
- Educational information for general public
- Join our mailing list link
- Farm stories (snap shot)
- Members in the news
- Bylaws, minutes, financial info
- Newsletters

Fleece & Fiber

2012 Maine branded Alpaca Throw - Made in Maine /Grown in Maine

Update – In 2011, we shipped 990 lbs. of fiber to Woolrich in July - 4 bales. In the yarn production we had almost a 48% loss in fiber with a final delivery of 395 yds. of woven material. Although our retail pricing has come in right where it was anticipated, the high degree of fiber loss during production has raised the production cost to about \$75 a throw and we have about 200 throws for sale. We are working with Woolrich to address the issues and will be meeting with them the first of February - the loss was probably a combination of things from length of the fiber to trying to do 100% alpaca, etc. Rick Osborne, the Woolrich plant manager and Claudia spoke at the National Textile Association mtg. in New York last month and we are going to meet with both Rick and the quality control person before we do another run.

- Identify key factors in improving process and implement
- Capture quantity of sales and product feedback over 2012.
- Establish multiple fiber collection sites early in the year and get the word out.

Educating Membership on ways to introduce their fiber into the pipeline to create sales and a return on investment

- The Fiber Committee has created an extensive document listing fiber resources and much more that will be hosted on the website.
- Bob and Erin Weintraub are adding fiber processing equipment to their farm and will be producing worsted top here in Maine. Additional information is available directly from the Weintraubs.

Marketing & Branding

- Marketing
 - Social Media Outreach- get Facebook buzzing
 - Possible Opportunities through the Chamber of Commerce
 - Rack Cards/ Business Cards, Farm Guide
 - Advertise MAA in Newspapers, NEAOBA Magazine, AOBA Magazine, etc
- Branding – suggestions and ideas:
 - Bumper stickers
 - Exclusivity
 - Branded Products with stickers/slogans on website for sale

Use seasonal targeting – 4 seasons in Maine – anytime is a good time to visit a Maine Alpaca Farm

Learning & educational opportunities -

Increase our presence in schools and 4-H groups by developing curricula and educational activities geared to all age ranges.

- Adult Ed – business opportunities
 - Organizational Groups
 - Tie in with Big Brothers/Big Sisters
 - Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
 - YMCA groups
 - Special Olympics
 - Schools
 - Summer school – field trips
 - Field Trips or classroom visits/presentations
 - Tie in with 4H
 - Alpaca Show like the old fashioned sheep show
 - Obstacle course
 - AOBA has a 4H curriculum for ages 8-16
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- Provide schools with marketing materials telling about Alpacas and suggesting that they contact an area Alpaca Farm
 - Open Farm Days at various times when 2 or 3 area farms announce an open farm weekend – not just when the State or National events occur.
 - Tour bus – sell tickets for a bus tour to 3 or 4 area farms – providing information/education during the ride between farms. The farms will know when to expect the people and how many are coming so they can be more prepared.

Association Communication

Update: A survey monkey was completed by 8 members where they answered questions concerning websites and supplies list they recommend to future alpaca owners.

Creating a welcome kit for new members as well as coordinating business and rack cards for MAA. Additional goals include increased presence of the MAA booth at events as well as more targeted print and other advertising.

- Set dates for future meetings as well as organize location/logistics
- Create welcome process/tools for new members
- Identify process to get welcome kit into the hands of new members in a timely fashion and keep kits updated and available.