



Island Alpaca Goes Green with Alpacas! St. Patty's Day Weekend Open Houses, March 12-13, and 19-20, 2011

*Island Alpaca Co. of Martha's Vineyard, 1 Head of the Pond Road, Vineyard Haven 508-693-5554
Bring the family and any loved ones to the farm for some fabulously, furry, fun. Self-guided walking
tour; meet and greet the friendly "GREEN" alpaca in our viewing area, and enjoy some hot cider.
Alpaca video presentation. Spinning demonstrations. 9 am to 5 pm rain or shine. Evening hours
available by appointment. Located on 1 Head of the Pond Road, Oak Bluffs, 508-693-5554.
www.islandalpaca.com. See you at the farm!*

Going Green with Alpacas:

Alpaca is as soft as wool, sleek as silk, light as a cloud and carbon neutral, eco-friendly. Alpaca- it is an eco-aware fiber.

"Agriculture is sustainable when it is ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, culturally appropriate and based on a holistic scientific approach." - NGO Sustainable Agriculture Treaty

Why waste yet more fossil fuels manufacturing petroleum-based synthetic fibers when the natural solution is in our own backyards? Alpaca fiber is:

- * Sustainable - an ever-growing American herd and source of fiber is on the horizon
 - * Natural - non synthetic; not petroleum based like polyesters, acetates, acrylics, nylon, rayon (a wood pulp product which required dry cleaning!) or Gortex. Cotton uses 25% of all insecticides applied to the crops. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deems seven of the top 15 pesticides used on US cotton crops to be potential or known human carcinogens.
 - * Renewable - unlike mink or baby seal, we do not kill the animal; we simply harvest the fleece
 - * Durable - archeologists have found remnants of Peruvian Inca alpaca textiles from centuries ago
There's more...
 - * Alpacas are the most agriculturally environmentally friendly of animals - they live lightly on the earth
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- * Their soft padded feet do not cut into the topsoil.
 1. Sheep and goats are much harder on the earth.
 2. Damage to topsoil decreases long-term soil fertility and in the process, the soil is eroded and weed invasion is encouraged.
 3. Alpacas are kinder to pasture, browsing on a variety of grasses and other plants without disrupting root systems, rather than overeating.
 4. This allows faster pasture recovery and minimizes soil erosion.

5. Where cattle (leather) pull up grass by the roots and compress the soil, alpacas do not.
 6. Alpacas can thrive in deserts and mountain plains, by doing something most other domesticated animals (and many humans) haven't been able to master: They stop eating when they are full. Alpacas consume roughly 1.5 - 2.0 % of their body weight daily. So for a 125 lb. alpaca at 2.0%, that is 2.5 lbs. per day. We eat more than that!
 7. Alpacas' fur, referred to as fleece, grows quickly and is lighter, warmer and softer than most sheep wool.
 8. Alpacas consume far less water than most other herds. Their efficient 3-stomach digestive system metabolizes most of what they eat.
 9. Their pellet-like droppings are Ph balanced and an excellent, natural, slow release, low odor fertilizer and even bio-fuel. ("Alpaca Gold" Fertilizer, Bio-fuel Fireplace Logs now available at Island Alpaca.)
 10. They lack upper, incisor teeth, so they do not chew and tear the native vegetation. Rather, they gently "cut" it against their palate, which encourages the plant's growth.
- * No Chemicals are employed during the industrial production of the fleece into fiber.
 1. Sheep fleece contains lanolin. A multi-step detergent wash is needed to remove most of the lanolin.
 2. No need for insecticides (cotton), herbicides and fertilizers which pollute the groundwater
 3. Alpacas come in nearly unlimited natural colors - offering a full array of choices with no chemical dyes required. But if desired, only 20% of a normal dye quantity is required.
 4. Manufacturing synthetic fibers is energy-intensive and can release lung-damaging pollutants such as nitrogen and sulfur oxides, particulates, carbon monoxide and heavy metals into the air, as well as climate-warming carbon dioxide.
 - * Alpaca Fleece adapted to naturally resist intense solar radiation in rarified mountainous atmosphere.
 - * Even the less desirable fleece (lower legs, britch, etc.) is being used as natural weed mats around trees. (yes, it is biodegradable)
 - * Alpaca clothing breaths naturally, unlike synthetics that cannot remove natural perspiration from next to the skin. Alpaca fiber naturally wicks moisture from your skin, keeping you warm and dry.
 - * Alpaca fiber is very strong (durable end products), does not require dehairing, it is easy to process