

Where There's



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This page: Adult Alpaca

Since 2002, people from all walks of life and as far away as California have made the journey to Columbia Creek Farms to tour the farm and purchase apparel and gifts. A typical tour consists of a brief history about the alpaca, some pen time with the alpacas and of course a visit to our farm store where alpaca apparel and gifts are available for purchase.

The year was 1997 when the decision was made to purchase two pregnant Peruvian alpacas from an Oregon breeder. Columbia Creek Farms was formed that year with the intent to use the luxurious alpaca fiber carefully shorn from their bodies to produce designer yarns and products. As the alpacas bore their crias (baby alpacas), the herd size grew helping to populate the farm's pastures. Five years later, an alpaca specialty apparel and gift store opened on the farm. The question asked by many was: "How will you get people to come to a rural farm store?"

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The answer was simple. The alpacas themselves would bring customers to the farm. The Columbia Creek Farms alpaca tour business was born.

Alpacas have been domesticated for thousands of years. They have always been highly valued for the warm, soft, and durable natural fiber they produce. Warmer than wool yet lightweight this soft durable fiber produces delectable yarns and textiles with heirloom qualities. Although thought to be exotic when first imported into North America in 1984, over 4 million reside in three South American countries: Peru, Bolivia and Chile. Typically less than 5'2" at full head height and weighing between 130 to 160 pounds for females and 160 to 200 pounds for males at maturity, alpacas are not large animals. Females mature around 2 years of age and males between 3 and 3 1/2 years. Normally only one cria is born per pregnancy with a gestation of approximately 245 days. Alpacas are easy on pastures, clipping the grass with their teeth without ripping up roots. Their soft footpads are gentle on soil and grass alike. Alpacas need minimal maintenance. Basically, if

they have access to pasture, water, free-choice minerals/vitamins and hay little else is necessary. Properly cared for, alpacas can live into their twenties. All these qualities make alpacas an easy livestock choice for many people with farms or small acreage.

However, what the farm's guests find to be the most important and endearing quality of alpacas is their message to slow our lives down and enjoy the moment. This is the truly tangible gift they provide us.

Just as tourism allows many different people to mix in a new setting, Columbia Creek Farm's alpacas in their own way teach people new and exotic ideas that can refresh and replenish the soul. Please come see them and enjoy the serenity they can bring to your lives.



Baby Alpaca



Jeff Carleton and visitor. Photo provided.

Did you know . . .

- The Bloomsburg Fair is one of the largest agricultural fairs on the East Coast?
- Rohrbach's Farm Market creates a 5-acre Corn Maze each fall!
- Broken Wheel Bison Ranch not only offers tours, but also sells meat from free-range, grain-fed bison?
- Red Deer at Rolling Hills Farm has over 217 acres of land with over 400 majestic Red Deer?
- Ecology III Christmas Tree Farm is over 15 acres, with 15,000 trees in production?
- Stoney Acres Winery hand crafts not only wines, but also hard ciders?
- Shade Mountain Winery uses grapes, as well as locally grown fruit to produce a diverse line of fruit wines?
- We produce a "Homegrown in the Valleys" agritourism map that features farmers markets, pick-your-own farms, farm stays and more?