

2012 BVCS CONFERENCE

- Venue

Donnington Valley Hotel, Newbury

- Format

Two day session for vets with a separate one day session for owners

- Principal Guest Speaker

Dr Jane Vaughan, Cria Genesis, Australia who gave talks to both vets and owners on:

Reproductive physiology

Difficult Breeders

Artificial Breeding Methods

Practical Alpaca Nutrition

- Other presentations to vets

Approach to the sick camelid

Claire Whitehead

Selected topics from the 2012 international conference

Justine Shotton and
Rebecca Edwards

Owner's perspective on the camelid industry

Nick Harrington-Smith

Dental problems in camelids

Karin Mueller

Anti-parasitics and weaning performance in alpacas

Sue Thomas

Update then open table discussion on TB

Gina Bromage

- Other presentations to owners

Care of neonatal alpacas and llamas

Claire Whitehead

Care of geriatric camelids

Karin Mueller

Skin problems

Claire Whitehead

- Report

Over 70 delegates attended the 2012 BVCS Conference over the last weekend in October this year, split roughly half and half into vets (Saturday and Sunday) and owners (Sunday only). One of the attractions was the international reputation of principal guest speaker Dr Jane Vaughan from Australia (front row, 3rd from the right).



The veterinary contingent

Specialising in alpaca reproduction, particularly embryo collection and transfer, we were all captivated by Jane's sessions on these topics as well as her sensible and practical advice on nutrition. She covered the same areas when she spoke at the owners' conference the following day, emphasizing that optimal reproductive performance is dependant upon maintaining and monitoring steady growth at all life stages. The two extremes of life were covered by Claire Whitehead talking about neonatal care, then Karin Mueller discussing the elderly camelid and Claire concluded the owners' conference by talking about skin problems in camelids.

The vets had a more general view, with Claire covering approaches to the sick camelid, followed by Justine Shotton and Rebecca Edwards presenting a selection of topics from the many they heard about at the international conference in Ohio earlier in the year, where their attendance was sponsored by British Camelids Ltd. Sessions on Saturday were concluded by Nick Harrington-Smith with an owner's perspective on the camelid industry, including an overview of what was required of the veterinary profession.

Our very comfortable conference hotel was also the venue for a convivial dinner on Saturday night but fortunately, due to the autumn time change, we had an extra hour in bed before re-starting on Sunday with our AGM. This was followed by Karin giving an extremely informative talk on camelid dentistry, then Sue Thomas, a parasitologist from the Royal Veterinary College, gave an account of some unexpected results when she monitored the effects of anthelmintic and anti-coccidial treatments on her own weanling alpacas. After lunch we heard practitioner accounts of two clinical cases: Johnes disease and a nasolacrimal duct cyst. The weekend concluded with Gina Bromage updating us on the current situation regarding bovine TB in camelids, which led on to the now traditional general discussion.

Overall, an excellent conference for both vets and owners, with grateful thanks to our sponsors: British Camelids Ltd, Pie-Data (UK) Ltd, Armitage Livestock Insurance Agency Ltd, Woodley Equipment Company Ltd and GWF Nutrition.

