

## Matings:

A female alpaca does not have a season or cycle as known in other livestock. Once they reach sexual maturity they are either receptive or non receptive. Alpacas are induced ovulators, which means that the act of copulation triggers ovulation.

Ovulation is believed to be triggered by both the penile penetration and the 'orgling'. Ovulation will usually occur 24-48 hours post mating and can usually be easily picked up in a spit off at 7 days. Once the female has ovulated she will be non receptive from days 3 – 10 and if not pregnant receptive again around 12-14 days.

A female alpaca is usually sexually mature between the age of 12-18 months and ready for mating, some larger well grown girls have been known to mature earlier (6 mths).

A male alpaca has a fibro elastic penis, which means that at birth it is attached to the sheath, and can take up to three years to become detached. Some males detach earlier than others, some animals have been known to be fully capable by 7 mths of age (hence importance of keeping weanling boys and girls separated.)

During the mating process, the alpaca males penis passes through the cervix and into the uterus, the sperm is placed directly into the uterus. The hooked tip of the penis scrapes the wall of the uterus, hence some matings will produce a small amount of blood stained discharge. Alpacas are trickle ejaculators, therefore the shortest of matings, could end up in a pregnancy.

A male alpaca is usually sexually mature at the age of 2 years and ready for work. (Male alpacas require Veterinary Certification & DNA testing before they commence work as a stud male)

From the time of first mating a spit off routine needs to be set.

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| Step 1 | = | Initial mating   |
| Step 2 | = | 14 days – spit female off with male (spitting = pregnant, sitting = receptive)                                       |
|        | = | A receptive female would be remated and then repeat spit off in 14 days  |
| Step 3 | = | Repeat 14 day spit offs until 60+ days (approx. 5 fortnightly spit offs)   |
| Step 4 | = | Ultrasound or Doppler Scan to confirm pregnancy.<br>(positive – this is when pmt would be made to stud service sire) |
| Step 5 | = | Continue to spit off monthly until approx. 200 days<br>(approx. 5 mthly spit offs)                                   |
| Step 6 | = | Move females to maternity paddock at approx. 320 days for closer observation.  |

After Birthing:

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| Step 1 | = | Would usually take place at approximately 14-21 days post partum. |
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