

2012 Annual Report

Spring has come to the Peruvian altiplano. As rains return and dry puna grasses become green, the rock hard soils soften enough to be foot plowed. Here two men with long narrow spades working side by side plunge them into the ground in unison. A woman follows lifting the clods of dug up earth first to the left, next to the right, in time making a ridge. Alpaca, llama, and sheep dung is then spread over the ridge and seed potatoes planted. This completed, the alpacas and llamas will be corralled and hand shorn producing huge piles of fiber. Finally in December and January, when the rains are most intense, the crias and lambs are born in the open pastures. This is a stressful period for they are susceptible to hypothermia that can lead to pneumonia and death. Hopefully the exceptionally low temperatures and excessive precipitation linked with climate change will be gentler this year and newborn mortality will be diminished.



2012 has been another busy year with hundreds of emails going back and forth between board members and our associates in Peru. Our veterinary assistance program has expanded from dispensing life saving vaccines to improving herd health and production in three rural communities through improved breeding. We have forged



a solid working relationship with town authorities and community leaders, and provided seminars on herd management techniques as well as on human infant resuscitation. Our alpaca herd improvement program is in progress with money from donors being used to purchase males with better wool and fertility to improve genetics in the local herds.

We found that addressing the lack of genetic diversity and the lack of evaluation of reproductive performance of males and females were the two most important areas where we could be of help. An international team of veterinarians (Argentina, Peru, and North America) and vet and animal science students (Peru and North America) are working to help the farmers solve these problems.

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Our intention to build a children's home has gone through a series of modifications as the bureaucratic and ethical realities of this venture became apparent. Having turned down the plans of two architects we sought, without success, to buy a suitable building. As of this year we have entered into a partnership with the town to identify a location that would serve as a soup kitchen for disadvantaged children and the elderly. Simultaneously we are exploring working with the Catholic Church on re-opening the old orphanage, and perhaps addressing both problems in the same location. We are committed to finding a solution that is consistent with our mission and one that will truly meet the town's needs.

To that end we are acting as facilitators in assisting the town in projects where our expertise or contacts can help. We have brought in a public health team to explore how the needs of community groups, like the Mother's Club, can be better integrated with local health services. The first dental team from the Quechua Project was enthusiastically received in Nunoa in September and eyeglasses have been distributed. In addressing the degree of undernutrition, anthropometric measures were taken on a large sample of infants and older children. We are also helping the town to analyze an extensive sample of household production data.

There are a number of elderly poor in town whose families have moved away and live on meager means. Many of these seniors have arthritis and rheumatism that compromises their mobility. We have been asked to find inexpensive sources of crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs and this should be solved soon.

A shelter to protect newborn crias from hypothermia has been built, and two small houses are being built for and by shepherd families on the ranch that serves as our management and training facility. The project has provided construction materials. We are working closely with microbiologists and pathologists at Veterinary School at the University of San Marcos in Lima on identifying the causes of cria mortality from pneumonia and digestive system disease. A Nunoa Project team will be working on this in January through April 2013. The town has decided to expand the enterotoxemia vaccination program to communities in the district after the success of our vaccination trials in the area. Finally, fecal analyses have determined that the use of costly medicines to control gastrointestinal parasites is not needed since the load level is inconsequential in most cases. Our veterinary team will teach the local technicians in Nunoa how to perform these analyses along with analyses of semen from breeding males in early 2013. Finally we have brought in expert archaeological advice to protect a pre-Inca site that the town intends to develop into a tourist attraction.

We very much appreciate your support which is essential for moving forward with our mission: "Helping people and animals of the Peruvian altiplano." Rather than being separate programs these are closely interdependent. Clearly people's wellbeing is dependent on the health of their herds which in turn affects their productivity and ability eat properly, send their children to school, afford health care, fix the roof, and enjoy the incredible world they live in. Given the rich pastures of this land, so well suited for alpaca pastoralism, there is no reason why a third of the population should be so

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compromised. Our intention is to continue to contribute to changes that will give them a better life.

Thank you!