



• **Peru** •  
[www.nunoaproject.org](http://www.nunoaproject.org)

## Nunoa Project Works Directly with Alpaca Farmers in Peru

The Nunoa Project was developed by a group of alpaca owners, veterinarians, anthropologists, and others connected with alpacas who saw a need to help the alpaca farmers in Peru. The support we give is to establish sustainable programs in farming communities in the southern altiplano where alpaca farming is the primary way of life. Over the past five years we have been working with local farmers and the local government to identify the needs of the farmers, and to determine how we can help them meet those needs.



A few of our pilot programs have been adopted by the local government and others are in progress. After we introduced and used a Peruvian vaccine to eradicate cria deaths from enterotoxemia on one farm in Nunoa district the municipality started a widespread vaccination program for farmers there. We identified the need for farmers there to introduce new genetics to improve wool and meat production. They do not have the financial resources to purchase

outside males and the males they have in use are overworked resulting in low pregnancy rates of 30 to 40%. We purchased 14 superior males locally and are loaning them to farmers for the current breeding season. A pilot project on one farm increased the pregnancy rate from 35 to 95% in 2012. The goal to develop a select herd of breeding animals from these males which will then be selected for use in the farmers' herds when males reach 3 years of age and females reach 2 years of age. If birthing rates are increased then farmers have more animals from which to select breeding stock and they can sell more poor producing animals for meat. Another critical need is to teach farmers to track animal production using identification and record keeping systems. These are currently not being used on the great majority of farms due to costs and illiteracy. We are working with the local government to get these systems in place and currently provide ongoing training in animal selection and breeding management.



We have a veterinary team of two American and two Peruvian students working directly with Nunoa farmers. The progress is steady in Peru. Many people want to take part but their difficult life gets in the way at times. Families suffer from poor diet, inconsistent crops, and sporadic income from wool and meat sales. The team has already made a huge impact in Nunoa this year. Other projects include observing breeding behavior and collecting semen samples for analysis. So far they show a variety of male behaviors in herd breeding situations and also variation in semen analyses among males and sequentially in those males. Other current projects include identifying causes of cria mortality in conjunction with CONOPA ([www.conopa.org](http://www.conopa.org)) in Lima Peru. The goal of course is to minimize cria deaths. CONOPA is working on a pneumonia vaccine at the present time. The data the students are collecting will be used to identify the causative organisms so that the vaccine components will be determined and it can be put into use. Other current projects include a cria growth rate study and a gastrointestinal parasite study. It is particularly noteworthy that Peruvian veterinary students are involved and we look forward to continued collaboration with Peruvian veterinarians and researchers. We hope to be able to fund exchange programs for them to receive training with us in the US soon.

We feel that this work is vital to the financial prospects for Peruvian farmers and also feel strongly that North American farmers should give financial support to improving the lives of Peruvian farmers and their families for the gift of having these beautiful animals here. Please consider a tax deductible contribution to Nunoa Project. Please contact Dr. Steve Purdy at [srpurdy@nunoaproject.org](mailto:srpurdy@nunoaproject.org) to discuss any aspect of your interest in helping.



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