

# **Presidents Report – Northern Region – Frith Latham**

08-05-2025

In 2024 the Northern Region Committee got off to a tentative start. At the NR AGM we faced the prospect of having no committee in place for the year ahead however, a few of us felt there was an opportunity to step up and secure our NR group for at least another year. So, a committee was formed at our first regional meeting.

Along with almost everyone else who volunteers, we are a busy bunch. We decided to take a relaxed approach and set ourselves some modest, achievable goals that we felt would benefit the region and not put too much of a burden on the committee members.

## **The Goals of Northern Region 2024/25 -**

- To organise a variety of activities for members including some with community involvement and/or alpaca promotion.
- To provide one or more educational opportunities.
- To provide one or more social events.
- To convene the NR Colourbration Show (fleece and breed maybe at different times).
- To have at least 4 committee meetings during the year.
- To organise the AGM in 2025.
- To effectively communicate with members via a regular newsletter.

We had some clear expectations for education – that it be structured in a way to up-skill our members. High quality learning opportunities seemed to be few and far between and we all felt that members deserved the chance to be better alpaca breeders, to really understand how to improve our herds and to see that improving our herds could lead to more saleable fleece.

We are very proud to have achieved this and thank Molly Gardner, Brenda Gainsford and Sue Richards for sharing their knowledge and passion for alpaca fleece.

The Northern Region also financially supported some events and shows. These funds come directly from members via capitation, and we are very pleased to have assisted with events for members that would not have happened otherwise.

The Christmas lunch was a genuinely lovely day; we kept it simple and that worked well for everyone.

The committee has been stable with only one member leaving and another joining, we've worked well together, and I would like to thank all committee members for their support and willingness to be involved.

At times the show calendar has been challenging for the region. While not directly a NR Committee endeavour, several from the committee plus other members from the region were involved in the planning for the 2024 National Show. Unfortunately, the number of showing members in the Northern Region was not enough to make the 2024 National Show financially viable, it requires solid support from members across the whole of New Zealand.

Hosting a successful National Show of the calibre expected is dependent upon a sizeable number of entries. In the 2024 year we did not get anywhere near enough support from elsewhere in the country and the AANZ National Council were not prepared to cover the projected financial loss. We were upset to disappoint those few members that were willing to travel to Hamilton, the commitment to travel from the far reaches of the South Island and around Canterbury was sincerely appreciated by the planning group.

On a more positive note: we were delighted to have a new show in the region, The Tauranga A&P Show. We had the Rotorua A&P Show in December, a new date that has proven to be tricky for Huacaya breeders. We've also had the Morrinsville Show, Kumeu Show and the Colourbration Fleece Show. The Waikato Show will return in 2025.

So, all in all it's been a vibrant year, the feeling around the shows has been super friendly and it's been very satisfying to see the interest in all things alpaca still going strong.



I would like to again thank the NR Committee members for their friendship and dedication to the members in our region.

I would also like to thank the National Council members who have worked tirelessly to provide a stable base for the AANZ's future.

I would also like to thank a few people who are integral to the functioning of the region and wider alpaca community.

Andi Ewen & Gene Rigney – are found frequently assisting shows as officials, providing MC duties and generally helping out.

Ivor and Brenda Gainsford – who have housed the regional equipment in their container at their property (and help with stocktake).

Brenda Lowen and Terri Cattell who are regularly selling alpaca product locally.

Big and small tourist operations. Dave and Sonja Blom in Gordonton and Leone and Neville Walker in Taumarunui are two big ventures and we salute you for showcasing alpaca and products.

The regional show convenors – Denise, Brenda, Alan, Mary-Ann, Grant and Heather, the shows wouldn't happen without you, so thank you on behalf of all Northern Region Members.

The Show Working Group and Registry office – thank you for all your hard work too.

Mark and Mary-Ann Pruden - for stepping up, across NZ as Chief Steward and Ring Stewards.

There are others, too many to name, who willingly assist with stewarding, sponsoring, setting up events and so on – Thank you to all these quiet helpers who do so much with very little fanfare.

The judges in New Zealand, Molly Gardner, Diane Marks, Lisa and Dean Ford. This group, who have direct contact with the most alpacas across NZ have a huge impact on the future of alpaca breeding in NZ.

The future of the Northern Region Committee is not yet certain and while this may bring changes to how members plan and deliver events going forward, I remain positive about the times ahead. Perhaps the AANZ can explore new, more flexible approaches to engagement with members that reflect their changing needs and can also promote the standing of alpaca fleece, develop markets and increase sales.

Frith Latham - NR President

And the other Committee Members....

Brenda Gainsford

Sue Richards

Brenda Lowen

Terri Cattell

Denise Taplin