

Dr. Gregg Adams' June 22nd 2016 email

Hi Bev,

I have procrastinated in responding for a number of reasons. Frankly, this is an old and tiresome issue that I'd hoped would disappear with the proof that time and data have provided about the health and safety of llamas. Secondly, although I have much experience with camelids, I am a specialist in animal fertility and reproduction - not infectious disease. Lastly, I am in a non-clinical department at the WCVM and do not see clinical cases in the teaching hospital - I am a researcher. None of this, however, excuses my lack of response, and for that I'm sorry.

As LaRue mentioned, it is inappropriate to lump llamas with sheep and goats with respect to infectious disease - this reflects a basic ignorance of the tylopod family. Camelids are not new nor exotic to North America - they originated in North America. The diseases listed as a risk posed by llamas are no different than a list that could be made up for any species entering the back country, not least, humans. For example, every mammalian species harbours mycoplasma. Contagious ecthema, chlamydiosis and MAP in camelids are rare - far less than in humans.

In any risk assessment, the objective is to determine the probability of an event happening and the consequences of such an event. There is no such thing as zero risk, and a zero-risk policy is not a legitimate argument to "strongly support a precautionary approach", if for no other reason than this approach is not being applied to all equally.

If the BC Wildlife Branch does not prohibit horses, dogs and humans in the BC back country, the onus is on the Ministry to provide documentation for their decision to prohibit llamas. Perhaps they know something we don't. If so, fine - let's see the evidence. If not, then the prohibition must be rescinded.

For specific expertise with camelid infectious disease, I refer you to others at the WCVM:

Dr. Chris Clark crc556@mail.usask.ca

Dr. Trish Dowling trisha.dowling@usask.ca

Dr. Trent Bollinger tkb913@mail.usask.ca

Dr. Murray Woodbury murray.woodbury@usask.ca

Sincerely (and apologetically),
Gregg

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