

New Miniature "Exotics" Selling Like Hotcakes

Enthusiasm for miniature animals keeps growing, say breeders of exotics. FARM SHOW knows of at least three new miniature breeds - Zebu cattle, "Dalli" llamas, and "Baby Doll" sheep. They're some of the hottest selling exotic animals today. Here's information on each, along with who-to-contact addresses.

Zebus

Miniature Zebus are an old breed of cattle. They were imported from the southern part of India into the U.S. in the 1920's for zoological gardens. Very few were brought in, and even today there are probably less than 800 in the U.S. "We've tracked down all the known breeders in the U.S. and there are less than 60 of them," says Charles Wilson, Zebu breeder near Hernando, Miss. "These are fully formed animals, not dwarves. There has been some interest in developing the breed for use in tropical countries where farmers have small pastures. They're a multiple use breed (milk and meat) and can also be used as draft animals."

Also known as Nadudana Zebu, mini-Zebus are a humped animal, much like the Brahma. The hump is large on bulls, but not always highly developed on cows. It's just ahead of or directly above the shoulders. The hump is noticeable even on newborn animals. Mature cows stand no more than 42 in. high at the withers and weigh under 500 lbs. Bulls stand no more than 44 in. high and weigh less than 600 lbs. The ears are pointed and usually less than 9 in. long. The horns, up to 12 in. long, usually curve outward and upward although some curve down. Most mini Zebus come in shades of grey, white, and black, with black noses and switches on their tails. Spotted animals are seen but not common. Calves are usually born with a red or reddish brown color that changes to grey as they mature. Females have a light shade and eventually become white or nearly so with age. Bulls are usually darker than cows and are often black over the hump and front shoulders. They become darker with age and during the winter months and often have a dark ring around their eyes. Life expectancy is 20 to 25 years.

Mini Zebus are slow to mature. Males often aren't able to breed until they're almost



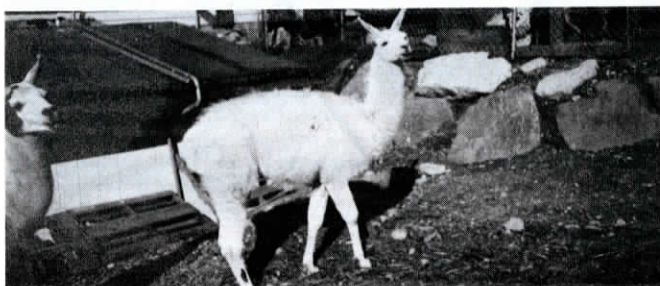
This 3-year-old mini Zebu bull stands only 33 in. high.

three years. Heifers can't breed until they're two to three years old. Miniature Zebus also don't breed back as quickly as other cattle, often waiting four to six months.

According to James Morgan of the International Miniature Zebu Association, miniature Zebus are a tropical animal and don't handle the cold well. "I keep mine in a well-insulated barn when the temperature is below freezing. They won't venture out, even if given the opportunity, when it's cold or windy. However, I've found that with proper housing they do fine."

Miniature Zebus are a hot commodity, with 1 to 3-year old bulls selling for as much as \$4,000 and heifers and young cows for as much as \$8,500.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James A. Morgan, International Miniature Zebu Association, 2560-17 Mile Rd., Kent City, Mich. 49330 (ph 616 678-5409).



Fully grown mini llamas stand no more than 40 in. high - 2/3 the normal size.

Llamas

Fully grown miniature llamas stand no more than 40 in. high with 36 to 38-in. or below preferred. They're genetically bred miniatures that breed true to type and size with no dwarfism, according to Robert Mock, breeder, who calls the mini breed "Dalli Llamas". "Their conformation is a perfect scaled-down version of the normal size llama. They have short to medium wool that fits all climates. We didn't want to breed a

heavy wool miniature because of the excessive grooming that's required to keep them looking good, and because we didn't want them to suffer in the heat of warmer climates. Mini llamas are much more friendly and affectionate than larger llamas."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert Mock, Hapsburg Kennel & Junglesong Cattery, 14043 24th Ave. S., Seattle, Wash. 98168 (ph 206 243-2160).



"Baby Doll" Southdown rams are no more than 26 in. high without wool and ewes no more than 24 in. high. There are less than 80 in the U.S.

Sheep

Baby Doll Southdown rams are no more than 26 in. high without wool and ewes no more than 24 in. high. Neither sex has horns.

Robert Mock, breeder, found the sheep mentioned in old English sheep literature. They were the ancestors of today's Large Southdown sheep breed. "Up through the Depression years Baby Dolls were a popular breed," says Mock. "In those years, before refrigeration, meat wouldn't stay fresh for more than a couple meals so small animals were in demand. The animals were extremely docile and easy for the housewife or children to care for, providing both meat and wool. When commercial refrigeration was introduced, demand grew for a larger meat carcass and the little sheep began to

disappear."

Mock started his search for the sheep five years ago. At first he thought they had become extinct but then he finally found two small remaining flocks. Both had been in the same families and on the same farms for over 50 years, maintained as a labor of love and because the owners could still easily care for them in their advanced years. There are less than 80 in the U.S. Mock's female lambs sell for \$1,500 and rams for \$1,000.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert Mock, Hapsburg Kennel & Junglesong Cattery, 14043 24th Ave. S., Seattle, Wash. 98168 (ph 206 243-2160).

LETS YOU WEIGH CALF WHILE IT'S STILL AROUND YOUR NECK

"No Hands" Carrier For Newborn Calves

After carrying four wet, slippery newborn calves into the barn on a cold and miserable February day, Gerald Funk decided he had to come up with a new way to handle the back-breaking chore.

The Dinsmore, Sask., cattleman patterned his "no hands" calf carrier after "papoose"-type infant carriers that have recently become popular with mothers. It's made of tough washable nylon and looks like a long apron when not in use. To load it up, the calf is placed on the skirt of the apron, which is then wrapped around the belly of the animal and fastened to shoulder straps.

"The straps that support the calf criss-cross between your shoulder blades, taking the weight off your arms. Extra straps can be fastened around a smaller calf's rump and just under the neck to keep it from sliding out forward or back," explains Funk.

One of the best features of the "Moo Glee" carrier, as he calls it, is that it makes it easy and quick to weigh calves without taking them out of the carrier. Two loops on top of the apron can be hooked to a scale so you don't have to take the carrier away from around your neck.

What's more, when you don't have calves



Funk patterned calf carrier after "papoose"-type infant carriers.

to carry the apron has 4 pockets to carry cartags, dehorning paste, vaccines, syringes, and other small items.

"I have carried and weighed calves of up to 130 lbs. with no problem. Being a livestock producer myself, I made it strong and durable. Straps adjust to fit any size," says Funk.

Sells for \$85.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gerald Funk, "Moo-Glee Calf Carrier", Box 475, Dinsmore, Sask. S0L 0T0 Canada (ph 306 846-4833).