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Alpaca Breeding Coming to Huntingdon

*The Progress Fund helps bring fleece-producing
South Americans to Pennsylvania*

Calvin, PA – May 17, 2005 – The first members of a herd of exotic alpacas arrived in Huntingdon County on December 5, 2004. The fleece-producing relatives of the llama bring a new twist on both agriculture and tourism to the area, thanks to the efforts of the Baker family and The Progress Fund. The alpacas can be visited at the grand opening of the Baker's Farm Store, beginning on Saturday, May 21, at 12:00 PM.

Robert Baker, and his sons Daryl and Trevor, had land, able hands, and a background in animal agriculture thanks to Robert's experience growing up on a dairy farm. When they decided to turn those assets into a business, alpacas stood head and shoulders above other opportunities. The beautiful, gentle animals produce fleece, which is used in suits, coats, jackets, sweaters, gloves, socks, scarves, blankets and rugs. They can be bred and sold into a growing market, and Alpaca farms can also draw school field trips and interstate tourism alike.

"The biggest concern we had was money," says Daryl, the Business Manager of Terrace Mountain Alpacas. They had enough saved to build a new barn, but not to buy the animals. They prepared a detailed business plan with the help of the St. Francis University Small Business Development Center, but a bank still balked at making a loan backed by alpacas.

On a tip from Jessica Lattanza at the Saint Francis University Small Business Development Center, the Bakers called The Progress Fund, which was willing to structure the loan to accommodate the anticipated ramp-up of revenue. "They were wonderful," says Sandy, the self-described "designated grandma" of the alpacas. "I would recommend

them to anybody.” “The Progress Fund was willing to give us the necessary time to make a go of it,” adds Daryl. The Progress Fund is also providing marketing and public relations coaching to Terrace Mountain Alpacas, he adds.

The result is a true family enterprise. While Daryl manages the business, Robert provides his farming background, and Sandy adds tender loving care, Trevor will bring alpacas to breeders’ shows and agricultural fairs in an effort to build the Terrace Mountain brand. The family expects to eventually have 40 alpacas on site.

In addition to selling fleece and breeding, the family plans to market Terrace Mountain as a tourist destination. Located near Lake Raystown and the historic East Broadtop Railroad, Terrace Mountain will add agri-tourism to the mix of offerings, giving visitors another reason to come to the area, stay longer, and spend more. The family also expects to utilize local supplies and services in feeding and maintaining the herd.

Reporters are welcome to visit the farm. Call Daryl Baker at 814-643-2854 for appointments and directions. The farm can also be reached on the web at www.terracemountainalpacas.com. For information on The Progress Fund, call 724-529-0384, or visit www.progressfund.org.

The Progress Fund is a Community Development Financial Institution that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital. We serve Pennsylvania and West Virginia, where the resourceful people who forged this nation are exploring a new landscape of opportunities. An outgrowth of Congressman John Murtha's efforts, the Fund was founded in 1997, and has loaned more than \$10 million to more than 125 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 790 jobs. The Progress Fund is an Equal Opportunity Lender. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

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