

## The soft option

### First for fibre

The Natural Fibre Company pioneered small batch spinning and other fibre processes and is now 20 years old. It provides specialist support and advice to enable smallholders and breeders of sheep, angora goats and alpacas to add value to their fleeces. They scour and card, make batts and needle-felt, knitting and weaving yarns in both woollen and worsted formats and also have a dye plant. They can process organically with Soil Association accreditation. "We aim to use our experience and expertise to ensure that all customers get the most appropriate and highest quality outcome, whatever type of fleece they have," said a spokeswoman.

**MORE: 01566-777635**  
**Email: enquiries@thenaturalfibre.co.uk**  
**www.thenaturalfibre.co.uk**



### Get knitting!

The British Alpaca Story gift pack is ideal for any keen crafter, young and old. Knitters and crocheters, whether beginner or advanced, will love to find this modern pattern book in their stocking. It has more than 25 unique British knitting patterns, and a taster ball of 100% British baby alpaca yarn. This modern and beautiful book from The Toft Alpaca Shop also contains the full story behind alpacas, spinning fleece and knitting with the yarn and is accompanied by a YouTube knitting tip video series for the less advanced.

**MORE: To order or to view other British alpaca gifts from socks to slippers visit [www.thetoftalpacashop.co.uk](http://www.thetoftalpacashop.co.uk) or call 01788 810626.**



### Arks for your animals

Animal Arks supply a huge range of arks, huts and buildings to suit every animal, from a two bird poultry house to a 24ft x 12ft field shelter. They aim for really high quality and use full 3/4 inch plywood fronts and backs. They supply as much as they can to make assembly simple. All panels are pre-drilled and pre-marked, and there is even a drill bit for your drill. They can deliver single arks sized up to 8ft x 6ft with floor anywhere in England and Wales for just £65 inc VAT. They can quote for larger orders.

**MORE: email: [arks@animalarks.co.uk](mailto:arks@animalarks.co.uk)**  
**Tel: 01579382743 website: [www.animalarks.co.uk](http://www.animalarks.co.uk)**

### Build your own tractor

Save money and build your own tractor over Christmas! The Siromer flatpack range includes fully approved 20hp to 35hp models. Featuring folding roll bar, two speed PTO, power steering and 2 and 4 wheel drive, category 1 three-point linkage and a choice of turf or agricultural tyres. The Siromer flatpacks start life as fully-built tractors rolling off a modern production line in China. Your local Siromer dealer can supply your new tractor flatpacked or fully built and ready for action.

**MORE: call 01253 799029 or visit [www.siromer.net](http://www.siromer.net)**



### Time to RELAX

The RELAX range of stoves is a highly-economical and environmentally way to heat your workshop, industrial unit, greenhouse or shed. The ability to burn wood off-cuts, shavings and sawdust can result in the reduction of both heating bills and waste removal costs. What more, growing and burning wood is CO2 neutral – ensuring minimal impact on the environment. Now, The Hot Spot (the national Distributor for the RELAX range) has developed a range of boilers in conjunction with Woodwarm that can be used with the stoves to turn waste into hot water and central heating.

**MORE: call 01889 565411**



**ANSWERS TO OUR QUIZ ON PAGE 12 GROWING** 1: Beetroot 2: Central America 3: Onion 4: Espalier or cordon 5: High resistance to blight 6: Smooth seeded are harder and can be planted in colder soil 7: Carrot 8: Pear fruitlet **LIVESTOCK** 1: Eight adult teeth indicate four or more years old 2: Nine score = 180 pounds = About 81 kg 3: A young turkey 4: Golden Guernsey 5: Exactly eight weeks or after 12 weeks, to avoid the feather stubs that form between these ages 6: A young female bovine before calving 7:65 Kilometres (around 40 miles) 8: Hand shears which leave noticeably more wool on the animal than machine shears **RURAL SKILLS** 1: A hooked branch pointed like a stake and driven in to secure a layed stem 2: cutting side branches from the main trunk of a tree 3: Rowan 4: Cleft hazel rods fixed on the outside of thatch to secure it at ridge and eaves 5: Stone that readily splits with at least two parallel sides **MACHINERY** 1: 50 miles per hour unless a lower speed limit is in operation 2: Harry Ferguson, whose name lives on in the Massey Ferguson range 3: Rowing up hay for baling **HAND TOOLS** 1: A heavy wooden mallet 2: An axe with only one sharpening bevel, for cutting with the grain **LAND MANAGEMENT** 1: Temporary grassland that will eventually be ploughed 2: An outlet with sluice boards to control the water level of a pond 3: species of grass **WILDLIFE** 1: Small copper 2: Reedmace (not bullrush!)

**HOW DID YOU SCORE?**  
**25-31** You are a good life genius. Well done!  
**15-24** You know your onions.  
**5-14** In the Tom and Barbara category. Keep learning.  
**0-5** You must be like Margot and Gerry. Keep learning ... lots!