

ALPACA BREED STANDARD

What makes a Champion?



- *Understanding the judging criteria when comparing animals*
- *Commonalities and differences of the Huacaya and Suri breeds*
- *Desired features of fleece and conformation across classes*
- *Attributes*



HUACAYA



SURI



Australian Alpaca
ASSOCIATION

JUDGING CRITERIA

ALPACA FLEECE 60%

HUACAYA

GENERAL DESCRIPTION – the Huacaya carries sheep-like fleece that stands at right angles to the body. The fleece should exhibit a strong wave or crimp across each fibre and have strong staple definition. The alpaca should be well covered with a rounded appearance. Coverage should extend down the legs and up to a bonnet on the head with a clean muzzle and ears.

DENSITY – a higher density means more fibres growing in a given area of skin. High density helps to increase the production of fleece from an animal and it also prevents dirt and moisture penetration. High fleece fibre density means the fibres are likely to be finer as well, which some processors like.

CHARACTER/CRIMP – is closely related to density, as strong crimp definition and staple formation is necessary to achieve heavy fleece weights.

STAPLE – the bundles of fibres (staples) should be thinner with a higher crimp amplitude. Well-aligned fibres are associated with lower fibre diameter and higher density. This results in lighter weight yarns and garments.

BRIGHTNESS/BLOOM – this is the amount of light reflected from the fibre, which enhances its appearance when processed into a garment.

LACK OF GUARD HAIR – fleece should not contain coarse guard hair, especially throughout the main blanket. Guard hairs contribute to a 'prickly' feel in the yarn and fabric. The aim is to eliminate it completely.

FINENESS & HANDLE – fineness sets the value of a fleece per unit weight. The finer the fleece the more per kilo it will make. Soft handle goes with fineness. The softer the handle the finer the micron.

UNIFORMITY OF MICRON – processors require fleece with minimum variation in fibre diameter. This also helps to eliminate fleece tenderness (fleece breakage).

UNIFORMITY OF COLOUR – an even colour is preferred by processors, but allowances need to be made for greys and fawns which can have colour variation.

UNIFORMITY OF LENGTH – the fleece should be of the same length for 12 months growth. The aim is to have the neck fibre match the main blanket in length, thus increasing the weight of the prime fleece.

SURI

GENERAL DESCRIPTION – the Suri carries a silky, soft-handling fleece that moves freely, yet hugs the body giving the animal a flat-sided appearance. The fleece hangs from a part along the spine from the neck through to the tail. It has well-defined locks forming close to the skin and twisting uniformly to the ends. The overall effect is similar to the drape of a curtain of silk tassels.

- Density is assessed by gauging the solidity of lock, the number of locks over a relative area as well as the weight of the fleece.

LOCK LENGTH – the lock of a Suri is relatively long and its fibre should grow one or two centimetres per year longer than a huacaya of similar age and micron, up until about 5 years old.

LOCK STRUCTURE – the lock structure may be twisted, curled or pencilled. They should be well defined (referred to as architecture), narrow, independent, uniform and form close to the skin. The most highly desirable architecture has a firm uniform twisted lock. The locks should be consistent across the body commencing from the forelock and continuing through to the hocks. When the fleece is opened, the inside locks should be uniformly well defined and hang in similarly well-formed layers.

LUSTRE – lustre is the sheen or pearliness of the fleece and contributes to Suri fabrics having a resultant sheen.

- The handle of the Suri should also have a silky, slippery feel and be evident throughout the body, ideally including the ears, forelock, muzzle, apron, belly, neck and legs

FLEECE FAULTS

- *Coarse guard hair*

- *Chalkiness or lack of lustre*

- *Coarse / Harsh handle*

- *Short staple length*

- *Tenderness*

- *Open fleece with no density*
- *Lack of overall coverage*

- *Flat, open fleece with no lock definition (architecture)*
- *Rounded appearance indicating fluffiness rather than density*
- *Crimp*

JUDGING CRITERIA

ALPACA CONFORMATION 40%

CONFORMATION ELEMENT	FAULTS
<p>HEAD The head has a strong appearance, is neatly formed, of medium length and with a square muzzle. The blue, brown or black eyes are oval, alert and set well apart. They protrude slightly from their sockets, giving the appearance of being large and round. The nose has two well-defined nostrils. The upper lip is divided and mobile. The ears are of medium length, covered with short soft hair, erect and bayonet-shaped, pointing forward in the alert stance. The jaws fit together well, with the lower incisors meeting the upper dental pad.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muffled face (fibre or hair impeding the animal's vision – particularly after first shearing) • Wry face • Head very narrow • Face hard and open • Roman nose • Lower jaw undershot or overshot
<p>NECK The neck is long and slender and continues directly from the line of the backbone, blending smoothly into the shoulder.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of neck disproportionate to body size (too long or too short) • Neck bent or U-neck
<p>FOREQUARTERS The chest is broad and deep, well sprung in the fore-rib. The wither is relatively wide where the shoulders meet, well fleshed and set well into the shoulders forming a straight line with the back.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow chest • Loose shoulder blades • In or out at the elbows • Prominent wither
<p>BODY The body is deep through the girth, with well-sprung ribs. The back is strong, and the top-line is slightly convex. The loins are broad, strong and flat, with the back barrel large and deep.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roach or sway back • Over-long straight back
<p>HINDQUARTER The rump is broad with a slightly convex top line. There is good space between the pin bones. The tail is straight, covered with quality fibre, set slightly lower than in other livestock and should cover the genitalia. The thighs are strong and well-muscled. The height of the pin-bones equals that of the shoulders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow hindquarters • Bent or kinked tail that cannot be manually straightened or where there are no signs of a break/calcification • Steeply sloping rump
<p>LEGS The forelegs are strong and straight. The hind legs are straight and parallel when viewed from behind. The pasterns are firm and upright. The feet are neat and well-formed and bear two forward pointing toes each carrying a long strong toenail. The sole of the foot is covered with a callused membrane.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak pasterns • Obvious carpal • Cow hocks • Sickie hocks
<p>UDDER The udder should show good capacity, with four working teats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less or more than four teats • Inverted teat(s) (irrespective of number and position)
<p>TESTICLES The scrotum is well attached, relatively small and carries two even sized testes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testes of uneven size • Testes too small (relative to age)
<p>HEIGHT AND WEIGHT A mature animal measures from approximately 90 cm at the wither and weighs from approximately 60 kg upwards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversized – particularly if llama – like characteristics present
<p>MOVEMENT Alpacas should exhibit an even stride length with two distinct tracks, the hind feet following the front ones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven stride length • Paddling on the front feet

ALPACA BREED STANDARD

Do you have a Show Champion?

For Alpaca Halter Classes the judges are looking for:

- Overall impression and presentation
- Quality fleece
- Correct conformation
- Relevant attributes
- Potential weaknesses

FLEECE		CONFORMATION
Fineness	Uniformity of Colour	Correct Frame Structure
Density	Huacaya – Character, Crimp & Style	Balance & Proportion
Handle	Suri – Style & Lock Formation	Growth for Age & Condition
Lustre/Brightness	Lack of Guard Hair	Head, Legs & Topline
Uniformity of Micron	Fleece Coverage	Reproductive Biology
Uniformity of Length		

HEAD

Strong & neat with a square muzzle. Eyes oval & alert. Upper lip divided & mobile. Jaws fit together well

NECK

Long & slender blending smoothly into the shoulder

FOREQUARTERS

Chest is broad & deep. Wither is wide & set well, forming a straight line with back

LEGS

Long, straight & parallel. Feet neat, well formed with two forward facing toes

BODY

Deep with well sprung ribs. Back strong & slightly convex. Loins broad, strong & flat.

HEIGHT & WEIGHT

Minimum 90cm at the wither & minimum 60kg for a mature animal

HINDQUARTERS

Height of pin bones equals that of shoulders. Tail is straight & covered with quality fibre. Thighs well muscled

TESTICLES

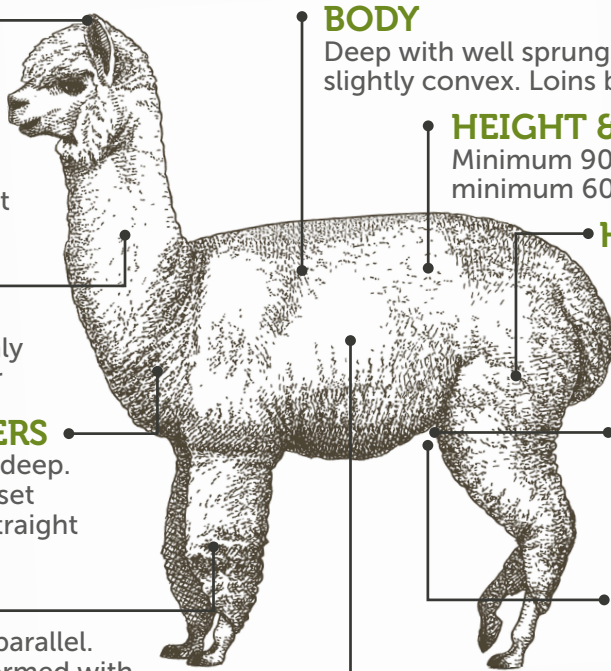
Scrotum well attached, relatively small & carries two even sized testes.

UDDER

Has good capacity with four working teats

MOVEMENT

Exhibits an even stride length with two distinct tracks



Attributes