

*World of*  
**ALPACAS**

EDITION 24 | SUMMER 2021



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**WHISPERING GUMS**



**ROYAL VIEW**



**FIBRE NATURALLY**



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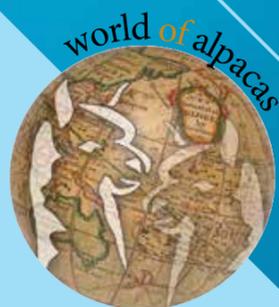
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## World of **ALPACAS**



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# **YOUR INDUSTRY MAGAZINE 20 YEARS YOUNG**

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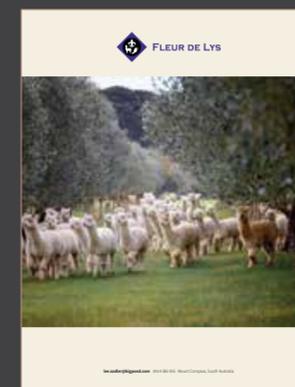
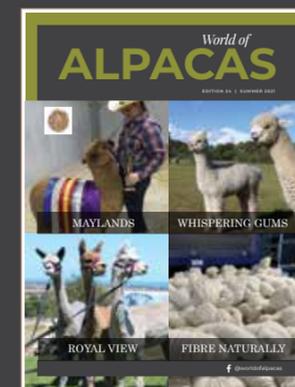
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## PRINTED BY

Kingswood Print & Signage



**FRONT COVER** Maylands, Whispering Gums, Royal View & Fibre Naturally.  
**INSIDE FRONT COVER** Wattle Grove.  
**INSIDE BACK COVER** Maylands.  
**OUTSIDE BACK COVER** Fleur de Lys.

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Hi to all,  
 To say it has been a "crazy" 12 months would be an understatement, I wish everyone a Happy New Year and most importantly a safe one.



I have spoken to many of our members and others over this past year and shared your thoughts you have for the future of the Alpaca Industry, and not surprisingly there is a positive attitude by many of you.

World of Alpacas has over the past 21 years sought to be relevant and value add to the Alpaca Industry, judging by the response to our 24th Edition and the positive comments made, World of Alpacas will continue to grow with you.

I am personally looking forward to some "normality" and meeting with friends at the National, hoping this will be 2021.

During my search to find Owners and Breeders who have a journey to share, I was very fortunate to speak with Roger Clarke the first Irish Alpaca Judge, his journey is in this edition, also the American Alpaca Association with an article re EPDs by Shauna Brummet PHD.

When looking through this Edition of World of Alpacas please don't just turn the page because it is an advertorial, read it, I am sure you will appreciate their involvement and commitment to your Industry.

To all who have had the courage and commitment to be part of our latest edition, I say thank you.

To Scott Hutton our design engineer I also say thank you, TWENTY20 GRAPHICS. www.t20.com.au.

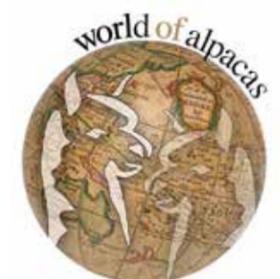
Oh, one more thing if you are able to have a holiday soon, **HAVE IT HERE IN AUSTRALIA, HOWEVER IF YOU HAVE THE NEED TO FLY OVER WATER, HOW ABOUT "TASMANIA or NEW ZEALAND"**

## OWNERS & BREEDERS

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# FIBRE NATURALLY

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# Presidents Message



By Brett Fallon | **AAA President**

It is now a common theme that people are looking forward to a fresh start with 2021 around the corner.

I'm not only looking forward to 2021, but in fact the next decade. Some exciting developments are on the horizon for those of us with alpacas. Most of the progress I consider will be driven by private enterprise, but there is the opportunity for the Australian Alpaca Association to support our members through this process.

I am conscious that the alpaca industry is very diverse, and this understandably, is reflected in our membership. Some are involved due to the significant lifestyle value of the alpaca industry. There are many operating profitable enterprises with a focus on marketing raw fibre or finished products, or the ever-expanding tourism feature of an alpaca experience. In general, we are all focused on the same end goals and aspire for great things for our alpaca industry in Australia.

Although there are many different paths we can take, it is with this belief that we fundamentally agree on the same destination that I nominated for President of the AAA. My first priority has been to make clear to all facets of our industry that we are far more effective working together. I am happy to lead the AAA down multiple paths at once, accommodating for the all, as long as we acknowledge that we actually do need all the diverse aspects of our industry to achieve this outcome.

I don't envisage this role to be easy, but I expect it to be rewarding. With all our members ongoing positive contribution, it could also be fun.

The longer-term plans for our organisation do not change with a new President. They are best articulated with reference to the Strategic Plan available on our website. This will be reviewed regularly, and I would encourage all members to provide contributions to this process.

The AAA has been busy over the last six months and will continue to be into early 2021. Some of the key areas that the AAA National Office and volunteers are currently working on are summarised as follows:

- Biosecurity model update. This will not only be an improved version of QAlpaca, but also a new system, with a wider scope to protect all alpaca owners from potential biosecurity risks.
- Sustainability Framework has been developed, with the key stakeholders input

the next phase. This has an increasing importance for the alpaca industry going forward due to factors such as our ethical and environmental impact becoming more important to consumers worldwide.

- Research & Development plan to be finalised. This enables the AAA to be in a better position to access additional research funding, as and when grants are available. This plan encompasses animal health, welfare and production improvements, while also a focus on end products.
- Export market access progressed with multiple avenues currently being negotiated.
- The AAA have historically been good at the education piece with lots of new breeder workshops and educational seminars or conferences held around the regions. We now have delivered online learnings, with additional content anticipated soon. These are being designed for the various degrees of member experience in the industry.



- Expand the Guaranteed Australian Alpaca label to support members with marketing their alpaca product.
- Focus and development of Youth Groups across the country. This is considered a critical component to the succession planning for our industry longer term. It should also not be underestimated the positive contribution that our Youth Events have had by giving back to the broader community.
- "There's no business, like show business" project to provide the opportunity for shows to eventuate in 2021, to whatever degree possible, for those members that appreciate alpaca shows for the benchmarking and marketing opportunities that these avail.

Although not a complete list, it does provide some indication of the commitment the AAA has to its members. I would encourage everyone to join us and help cement this focus on all things alpaca.

I appreciate the support from all those members that have touched base with me since the announcement of me taking on the role of President. Let's continue to work together. We will be successful. Bring on 2021 and the decade to come for alpacas in Australia.

Thank you. Brett

Building a  
**successful and sustainable**  
alpaca industry  
in Australia

[www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

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# Our story

## Mioshi Park Alpacas

Located in the Adelaide Hills just outside of Callington.

Email: admin@MioshiParkAlpacas.com.au

Tel: 0414 974 807 (Jodie)

[www.mioshiparkalpacas.com.au](http://www.mioshiparkalpacas.com.au)



**Mioshi Park is located in the Adelaide Hills just outside of Callington and is home to a small number of AAA registered suri and huacaya alpacas.**

We pride ourselves on breeding gentle, calm, well trained alpacas.

All of our cria are halter trained and handled to ensure that they are gentle and placid around humans.

Due to our breeding program, most of the alpacas we breed are shown extensively. This means that they are also introduced to strange and often very busy environments with a lot of interaction with strangers and things they have never seen before!!

This makes them perfect for our Weddings and Events services in addition to our Community Services.

Mioshi Park Alpacas are now offering personalised wedding (and other special events) packages.

We will provide alpacas, that have outstanding manners and loads of

cuteness factor, to make you and your guests go wow (they will try their best not to outshine the bride or guest of honour though!!!)

They will happily pose for photographs, interact with guests, and even wear bow ties, veils, or something to match your colour scheme, if that is what you choose.

The alpacas would love to bring your ideas to life but if you're having trouble deciding how to fit them in to your big day, how about: • ring bearer alpaca • flower girl/boy alpaca • meet and greet / mix and mingle • photo shoots with you and your professional photographer • random guest photographs and of course the mandatory selfies!!.

Have another special event your planning? The alpacas would love to attend your Valentine's Day surprise or is there a special birthday coming up? Imagine the photo opportunities! Or for the truly unique experience, how about an alpaca-posal - how could your partner say no if you organised that!!



## Steve the Awesome Alpaca

Steve was in training to be a therapy alpaca and to going to nursing homes, hospitals or where ever people need a bit of alpaca love, however Steve is a diva and prefers to outsource therapy alpaca work to the other boys!!!!!!

His interests are being a diva, greeting visitors on arrival and sniffing them and checking them out (I'm not sure what for - ask Steve!!).

He is usually friendly and loves to meet new people (unless his diva-ness is too high that day , he may just ignore you!!).

The only thing guaranteed with Steve is that he loves eating, sleeping and playing with his friends and bossing them around!!!

Steve is a huacaya alpaca and he was born on Christmas Eve 2017.

He is a fawn male and his stud name is Mioshi Park Captain Morgan.

He has been shown numerous times including at the National Alpaca Show in Bendigo Victoria.

Steve retired from the show ring in March 2019 to enable him to focus on his passion to be a therapy alpaca but he now prefers to be a diva and send the other boys out to do therapy!!!

Steve can arrange for the therapy alpacas to come for visits within South Australia.

For super special events, that Steve needs to approve of first - of course, please contact us and we will liaise with the diva himself.

Follow his adventures on Facebook and Instagram.

If you are interested in meeting Steve and his best buddies and having a visit, feel free to send us a message or give us a call.

# Alpaca Teeth

## The Owner's Guide to Alpaca Dental Health and Wellbeing

Dental problems are common in alpacas and can cause pain, suffering and, if left untreated, death. As an alpaca owner or carer, you are responsible for the long-term health of your herd and you can play an important role in detecting animals in your care that might be suffering from dental issues.

The highly-anticipated 'Alpaca Teeth: The Owner's Guide to Alpaca Dental Health and Wellbeing' is the first book of its kind and contains all you need to know about your alpacas' teeth. Written by renowned Alpaca Dentist – Allison Quagliani – this guide contains a wealth of knowledge gathered during her 15 years of practicing, including a collection of case studies.

'Alpaca Teeth: The Owner's Guide to Alpaca Dental Health and Wellbeing' will take you on a guided tour of the mouth of the alpaca, demonstrating the role that the mouth and teeth play as the first part of the digestive process. You will learn about normal dentition, what can go wrong in the mouth and, most importantly, how you can identify animals in your care that may be suffering from a dental problem.

Written in everyday language and fully illustrated with over 100 photographs and diagrams, 'Alpaca Teeth: The Owner's Guide to Alpaca Dental Health and Wellbeing' will complete your alpaca husbandry reference library, and is an invaluable practical resource to have on-hand when checking the health of your alpacas

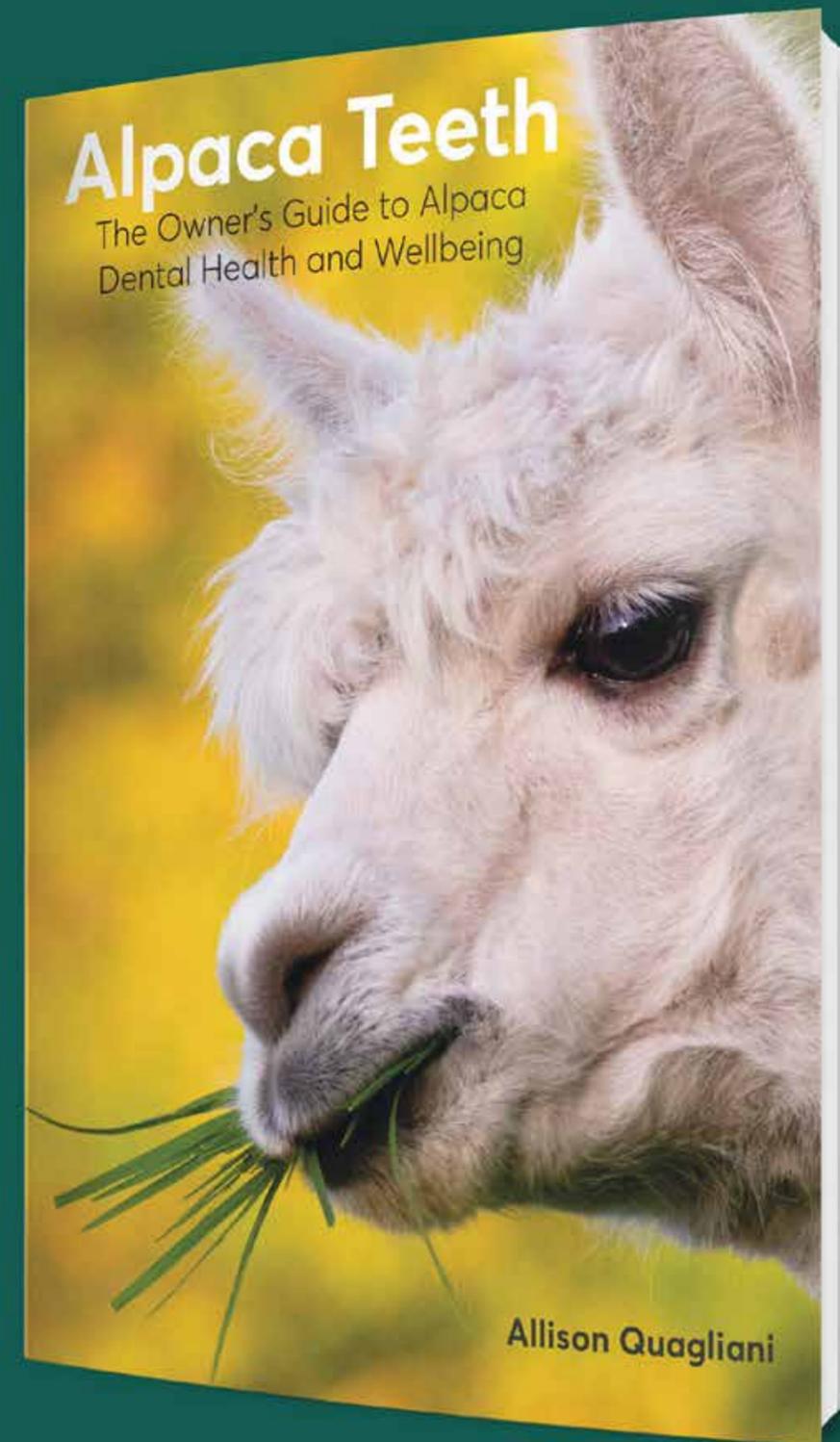
## About the Author

Allison Quagliani is the first dedicated Alpaca Dentist in Australia and has been providing specialist dental care to alpacas for over 15 years. Allison started breeding alpacas in 1996 and became interested in alpaca dentistry in 2002 when one of her own animals developed a painful tooth problem and required dental treatment.

While completing a two-year apprenticeship, Allison developed specialised instruments and equipment required to make dental procedures safe, comfortable and stress-free for both the animals and their handlers. In January 2006, Allison set up her practice - Alpaca Dental Services - and has since provided dental care to over 8000 alpacas.



Allison is passionate about the importance of dentistry to alpaca health and wellbeing. She is always keen to share her expertise with the alpaca community, providing articles for magazines, presenting at regional information days and national & international conferences. 'Alpaca Teeth: The Owner's Guide to Alpaca Dental Health and Wellbeing' is another way for Allison to share her extensive knowledge with alpaca owners and carers worldwide, with a simple goal - to improve the health and lives of alpacas.



Available now at  
[www.alpacadentist.com.au](http://www.alpacadentist.com.au)



# Mighty-Min®

## Alpaca breeders love their animals.

A lot of growers see them as part of their family. TNN Australia's Mighty-Min® mineral range has been developed to maximise the health of your extended family.

As you know 85% - 90% of all health problems stem from nutritional disorders, or lack of nutrients. TNN Australia's Mighty-Min® helps eliminate these deficiencies.

Not only in Alpacas but sheep, cattle, goats, horses even pigs and chooks.



Everything that eats is missing out on some minerals as they have been leached out or mined out of the soil. TNN Australia's Mighty-Min® has a large quantity around 19 or these minerals to help bodily functions and enhance the digestive system of your animals.

Some farmers dose their animals with one or two of these necessary minerals, but it has been proved that nothing works alone. Life and health are all about balance. TNN Australia's Mighty-Min® supplies balanced mineral supplements that covers most bases.

Users of Mighty Min® tell us that it reduces the need to use conventional worm drenchers and improves fertility with higher weight gains and healthier happier animals.

*I have been impressed with the communication between alpaca breeders and I thank those of you who use Mighty-Min® for telling others about the benefits of using it.*



### Best time to use Mighty-Min® Supplements

- Before loss of production
- When you want maximum weight gain & growth
- When your animals are in their main stress times
- Change of season or weaning
- Pre-mating
- Change of pasture intake

### Mighty Min® is easy and economical to use.

#### Administer:

- Orally as a drench
- In the water trough
- Mixed with feed.
- Or whatever suits your management system.

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## About the Organically Protected Trace Minerals in TNN Australia's Mighty-Min® and their role in animal health

**ZINC:** Zinc is an important mineral for fertility and growth of young livestock. **Deficiency symptoms include:** Poor fertility, slow recycling, poor weight gain in young livestock.

**SELENIUM:** Selenium deficiency is one of the main causes of what stockmen call "White Muscle Disease" **Deficiency symptoms include:** Unthriftiness, pale skin in sheep, weight loss in all stock, drastic decrease in lambing percentages.

**CALCIUM:** is required for skeletal strength, and is important for milk production. **Deficiency symptoms include:** Milk fever, Tetany.

**COBALT:** Cobalt is required in ruminants for the manufacture of Vitamin B12. **Deficiency symptoms include:** Cobalt deficiency can be observed by weight loss, lack of vitality, extremely pale skin in sheep, rough coat in cattle, increased number of "poor doers".

**LIQUID KELP:** Gives an immediate response and adds extra natural trace element minerals for the benefit of the animal.

**COPPER:** Copper is one of the main promoters of production for weight gain, strength, fleece growth & quality, reproduction & skeletal strength. **Deficiency symptoms include:** (a) IN SHEEP - harsh steely wool, scouring, pale skin, infertility, (b) IN CATTLE rough coat, loss of condition, loss of natural colour in coat, eg; black coat will show a rusty appearance, red coat will show a yellow appearance, scouring and reduced growth weight.

**MANGANESE:** Manganese is very important for fertility and reproduction. **Deficiency symptoms include:** The first signs of deficiency is abnormalities in young calves and lambs, also in decreased conception rates.

**IODINE:** Iodine directly affects thyroid gland secretions which to a great extent control heart action, nerve response, rate of body growth and metabolism. **Deficiency symptoms include:** Premature and stillborn calves and lambs.

### Alpacas & All Ruminants

<b>6.5</b>	
Typical Analysis for Each Litre	
Cobalt (Co)	3.0g
Selenium (Se)	1.1g
Sulphur (S)	27.0g
Copper (Cu)	6.5g
Zinc (Zn)	8.5g
Manganese (Mn)	6.5g
Iodine (I)	0.11g
Magnesium (Mg)	2.5g
Micro Fine Liquid Kelp	
Stabilizers Flavouring	

Regular

### DOSING GUIDE Alpacas, Sheep & other ruminants

Do not administer to livestock more than once every 6 (six) weeks or as directed by a veterinary surgeon	Crias, Lambs & Hoggets	5 ml	4000
	Adult Alpacas & Sheep	10 ml	2000
	Studs & Rams	12 ml	1600

### DOSING GUIDE Dairy & Beef Cattle

Frequency of Dose in weeks	Live Body Weight Kg	Dose in mL	No. Animals treated per 20 litres
4	at 1 month	5 ml	4000
4	50 to 100	10 ml	2000
4	101 to 150	15 ml	1330
4	151 to 200	20 ml	1000
5	201 to 250	25 ml	800
5	251 to 300	30 ml	660
5	301 to 350	35 ml	570
6	351 to 400	40 ml	500
6	400 to 450	45 ml	440
6	451 and over	50 ml max	400

This product manufactured & sold to comply with APVMA Veterinary Guideline No. 8

### Cattle Only

<b>8.5</b>	
Typical Analysis for Each Litre	
Cobalt (Co)	3.0g
Selenium (Se)	1.1g
Sulphur (S)	27.0g
Copper (Cu)	8.5g
Zinc (Zn)	8.5g
Manganese (Mn)	6.5g
Iodine (I)	0.11g
Magnesium (Mg)	2.5g
Micro Fine Liquid Kelp	
Stabilizers Flavouring	

for Copper Deficient Areas

### Mighty-Min® 6.5 or Mighty-Min® 8.5 Cattle - Outback Travel & Yard

All the benefits of Mighty-Min® plus extra Phosphorus and the benefit of added Fulvic to address pasture that has not been fertilised with Phosphorus, as found in many areas of Queensland. Used as an aid in reducing Dark Cutters in Beef Cattle while helping to reduce weight loss in stressed animals through transport or yarding. This is a mixture that may benefit livestock during Hard Times.

TNN Australia has a complete range of regenerative biological sustainable fertilisers, both granular and liquids, to improve the health and viability of your soils, for better results in cropping and pastures, horticulture and viticulture, virtually anything that grows in the soil. Good soil grows anything well.



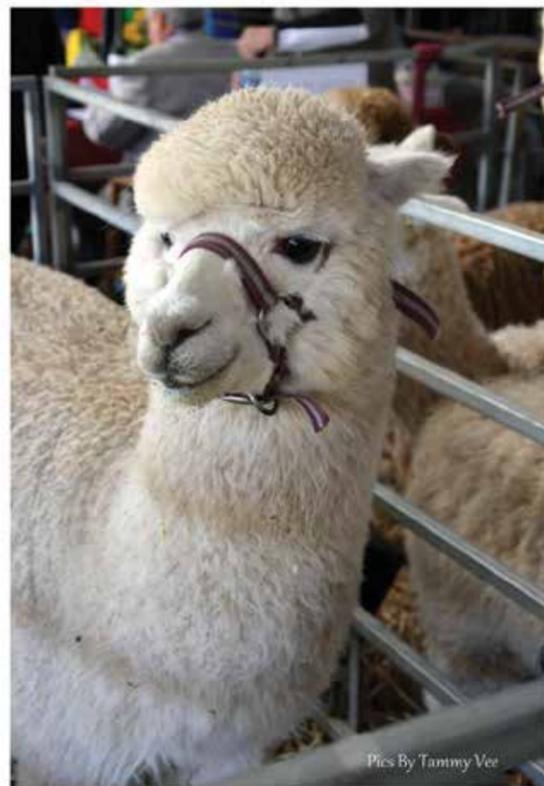
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# Avenel Alpacas



Avenel Ridge is a boutique, coloured Alpaca Stud based in Warrenbayne - North Central Victoria. We are a stud that focuses on the development of quality white and coloured animals. We currently use a combination of our own registered males and external males to improve our herd. We are focusing on breeding consistently fine stylish and well-structured fleeced animals across all colours. Our herd is structured with about 60% white animals and 40% coloured animals including a growing focus on Fancy animals.

We are developing different sections of our business all the time with a diversified approach to our alpaca experience. The full paddock to product is a big part of our future focus.



Pics By Tammy Vee

## About us

We are family run stud that has a focus on the animals first as they are all part of the family, and all parts of the family get involved with the animals.

We are currently building our herd with the view of improving our animals across all colours. Our aim is to breed top quality stud animals in the future. Along the way to our ultimate goal, we will also cater for those parties looking for Pets, Herd Guards and/or starter herds.



## Our journey

I fell in love with alpacas many years ago and at some point, wanted to have them on our farm in Avenel. Neither my mother or I come from a farming background, but both had and have a love for animals of all shapes and sizes. Our journey started at the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo (SAFE) in 2009 where I walked into the AAA (Australian Alpaca Association) tent and eagerly spoke to the exhibitors about the animals they had on display. Little did I know at that point I was taking my first steps into the world of Alpacas and alpaca farming. I met a lady by the name of Ann Sales at SAFE that year, who I bought my first two animals from, a little dark brown girl and a little white girl, which was the beginning of a long-term friendship with Ann and her husband Rod that has been invaluable to our growth and education along the way.

From our small beginnings we have breed, bought and sold over 200 animals along the way to getting us to where we are today with a herd of just over 80 animals. Our herd is currently running at about 60% White/Light Fawn and 40% coloured animals. We have made the decision to diversify our herd across a more commercial White fibre focus and the balance being the production of an array of beautiful naturally coloured animals. Our goals are to improve the quality of the fibre produced by both our white and coloured animals along with industry goals. We made this decision as there is greater demand for white fibre generally and we can attract a better per/kg price for our white fibre. With our coloured fibre we have moved into value adding ourselves by having the select fleeces commercially processed into yarn and more recently into high end knitted products ranging from scarves and beanies to shoals and our latest inclusion of baby's blankets. I have a passion for natural coloured fibre and the story you can tell associated to each yarn and the animal it comes from. Customers enjoy the product but they equally like the story that goes along with the finished product.

We market our products online, at local markets and at various field days that we attend. Eventually we aim to establish a farm gate shop that will allow customers to come and experience the animals and the products firsthand.

Over the last 12 years we have actively participated in the showing of both animals and our fleece at reginal and state

levels. We have found that our involvement in the showing of our animals and fleece has not only enabled us to build a great bunch of friends with a like interest in these great animals, but we have gained an abundance of information and feedback from judges and fellow breeders that has helped guide us in our breeding decisions and ultimately helped us improve our herd across the board. Showing our animals has become very much a family affair with my two eldest children stepping up to take our animals into the show ring, relegating Dad to the sidelines as an onlooker until the time comes to parade our bigger animals in the show ring. My daughter Lily has been showing since she was 7 years old and absolutely loves the animals and the experience of showing off our animals. This will be her 5th year in the showing and has even stepped up to take charge of the bigger animals at times. It is a very proud dad moment to see my kids in the show ring enjoying and participating in an industry that I love and enjoy. They are the future at the end of the day.

It has been an amazing 12 years so far and we look forward to many more in this industry as it grows and develops along the way. I would encourage anyone considering a treechange to consider Alpacas as a farm stock of choice as the experience albeit not without its ups and downs is a thoroughly enjoyable one and one that has a bright future ahead of it. Our regions are always holding education and training days to suit all levels of interest from beginner to seasoned breeders wanting further development or a simple refresher, you never stop learning. Feel free to contact us at Avenel Ridge for a chat or to arrange an on-farm visit to talk all things Alpacas, we are only too happy to assist in your journey with these magnificent animals.

## What's next

We are excited with where the industry is headed and the speed in which the quality of the animals is progressing across the board. We will continue to focus on both white and coloured animals with a very specific focus on our development of fancy and appaloosa animals in our herd into the future. It is an exciting time to be apart of this industry and we are only too happy to assist you where we can.

Let's hope that 2021 brings us a somewhat return to normal that sees a return of the show season that allows us to get our beautiful animals back out on display to the world and us back out talking to the public promoting all things Alpaca. See you out there.

“

***I began a career in agriculture in the alpaca industry as it has always been a hugely supportive and friendly industry to be a part of.***



**KATY ARMSON-GRAHAM  
AUSTRALIAN ALPACA FARMER**

#WeAreAustralianFarmers  
#NationalAgDay2020  
#AustralianAlpaca  
alpaca.asn.au





The Australian Alpaca Association Ltd works tirelessly on behalf of all alpaca owners in Australia. For everyone's benefit, including non members, there is alpaca care information readily available on the website.

Some of the key member benefits, that are driven by the strategic direction of the AAA Ltd, also have good cross benefits for the industry as a whole. Examples of these include;

- AAA Ltd is recognised by the Australian Government as the peak industry body for the alpaca industry in Australia. This advocacy to government provides the voice for the alpaca community to government and other policy makers regarding agribusiness development. In recent times it has included consultation on transport and export guidelines, parameters and legislation.
- Membership of Animal Health Australia and close relationships with other livestock peak industry bodies which give a bigger voice as part of the agricultural advocacy agenda.
- Industry representation to other corporate bodies, such as media, retailers and animal welfare groups.
- Close liaison with international alpaca associations to progress the international industry.
- Alpaca industry marketing in its entirety. It is recognised by the AAA Ltd that there are many different aspects of the industry, including alpacas, alpaca products, alpaca business opportunities, agri-tourism, and finally, yet not to be underestimated, the lifestyle investment.

Some of the attributes of what the AAA Ltd does are more specialised for Members. These include, and are not limited to the following;

- Ongoing investment in alpaca research, development and extension. Currently the AAA Ltd are working on the research strategic plan, but this investment is on all levels, with the Richard Dixon Sponsorship a current opportunity for any Veterinary Science student projects.
- In-depth animal health information. The most current and reliable animal health, welfare and biosecurity information is regularly updated on the Members Portal of the website.
- Regional network with local expertise and access to mentors.
- Social and networking opportunities. Events for the whole family, with inclusive culture irrespective of age, gender, race, LGBTQI or disability.
- Access to member information & events. These include regular educational workshops, such as the recent webinar with Dr Kylie Munyard and Dr Jane Vaughan. Now even more accessible in webinar format.
- Programs established and funded to encourage Youth participation in the industry.
- The ability to benchmark your breeding program through showing of animals and fleece with access to local and international judges
- Marketing support material. An example of progress made in this area is the supply chain and marketing initiative, Guaranteed Australian Alpaca swing tag.
- Biosecurity program development & maintenance. As an example there is an improved version of QAlpaca being worked on currently.
- eAlpaca which provides an alpaca registry, alpacas for sale, show results and breeding predictors
- Regular communication via the AAA website, member update newsletter and social media channels (eg Facebook, Twitter)

**For more information about AAA membership, see the website – [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)**

“

***I am a living example of “you can take the girl out of the country, but you can’t take the country out of the girl”.***

***I am a dairy farmer's daughter who went to the big smoke, returning to the land 27 years ago. The alpaca industry offers many farming business opportunities such as fibre production, stud stock, meat & hides, agri-tourism, and the pet market. We have been running a successful stud stock alpaca business for the past 27 years.***



**PRUE WALDUCK**  
**AUSTRALIAN ALPACA FARMER**

#WeAreAustralianFarmers  
#NationalAgDay2020  
#AustralianAlpaca  
[alpaca.asn.au](http://alpaca.asn.au)





# Wattle GROVE ALPACAS

BY Diane Boede

## A bed and breakfast where we supply the bed and breakfast and you make both, who could ask for anything more?

Perhaps your contemplating a break away from the hustle and bustle of a busy life, then why not treat yourself to a boutique alpaca farm stay in the Valley of a Thousand Hills.

We are in Strath Creek, a small rural town in the Shire of Murrindindi, a lovely area with scenic drives to enjoy. We are located 15 minutes from Broadford, 10 minutes from Flowerdale, 25 minutes from Yea and Seymour.

Relax and recharge your batteries. Watch the abundant birdlife chatter in the nearby trees, listen to the frogs at night in the dam or sleep the day away.

Our farm has a variety of flora, fauna, and lots of native visitors to watch, explore and enjoy and maybe even catch a photograph of them. In addition to our native visitors, we also farm alpacas which roam about in their paddocks. You are most welcome to feed the alpacas during your stay, in fact we encourage you to come and meet our furry friends, just arrange a time with us during your stay and we will take you into the paddock for an up close and personal 'alpaca' experience.

'The Cottage' is suitable for singles or couples. It is beautifully decorated for the Bed and Breakfast enthusiast.

Your boutique, self-contained accommodation includes gorgeous bedding on a queen size bed, with luxurious alpaca doona and alpaca pillows made to keep you warm during winter and cool during summer. We have a selection of DVD's, magazines, books, and games to entertain you.

Our property has plenty of stunning views for you to enjoy and if you are feeling energetic, take a hike up 'The Ridge' for a calorie burning walk with the reward of breathtaking views of The Valley of a Thousand Hills at the top. A photographer's delight!

Into Fishing? The King Parrot Creek is a short 12-minute drive away. The main targets are trout and Macquarie perch.

We are a boutique alpaca breeder, our goal is to breed fine, white huacaya alpacas, with commercially viable fleece.

Diane has a passion for alpaca fleece and is a qualified AWEX Alpaca Classer (refer Alpaca Classers listing on AAA website).

We purchased two alpacas quite a few years ago now, which we agisted until we finally purchased our property here in Strath Creek.

We discovered alpacas at the Royal Melbourne Show, I thought they were so unusual and unlike anything I had seen before, and further research indicated that alpacas produce beautiful, soft, fine fleece that can be processed into luxurious, soft, lightweight gorgeous products (I could go on, but I won't) and that's what got our attention and we were hooked.

We love the rural lifestyle, farming our alpacas in a caring and eco-friendly environment, sitting with them in the paddock, watching them and getting to know their personalities. With river flats and slopes, the alpaca has a low impact on the soil and therefore the 'Green' livestock choice for us.

We are passionate about our alpaca's well-being; we interact with them daily and handle them with gentleness and kindness.

We feel lucky to be able to share our alpaca farm with our guests, introducing them to our alpacas, which has enlightened and educated some of our guests. We are spreading the 'alpaca' word.

We are waiting for our first on farm proposal in the paddock with the alpacas, hopefully we do not have too much longer to wait! Perhaps someone reading this article will be our first proposal! Let's talk love.

Guests can sit and relax under the verandah or your own private grassed area with provision of table, chairs, birdbath, and fountain.

Our farming philosophy has always been to treat the land kindly and alpacas are the best green, eco-friendly livestock choice. They are soft on the land, they convert their feed efficiently and their curious, intelligent, and gentle nature add to the holistic country lifestyle.

We are members of the Australian Alpaca Association and support the alpaca industry in Australia.

If you are you interested in staying at our farm, meeting our alpacas or perhaps you are considering alpacas for your farming enterprise, no matter which option resonates with you- call us and have a chat. We can talk alpacas all day (and wedding proposals)!

### Contact details:

M: 0419 528 808

Alpacas - [info@wattlegrovealpacas.com.au](mailto:info@wattlegrovealpacas.com.au)

B & B - [bandb@wattlegrovealpacas.com.au](mailto:bandb@wattlegrovealpacas.com.au)

### Website

[wattlegrovealpacas.com.au](http://wattlegrovealpacas.com.au)

[wattlegrovealpacas.com.au/b-and-b](http://wattlegrovealpacas.com.au/b-and-b)

### Instagram

Alpaca and B & B information, stories and images of our farm  
[www.instagram.com/wattlegrovealpacas/](https://www.instagram.com/wattlegrovealpacas/)

### Facebook

Wattle Grove Alpacas – [facebook.com/WattleGroveAlpaca/](https://facebook.com/WattleGroveAlpaca/)

# Tirrikee Alpacas

BY Jennie Menzies

*A story of a cria with weak hip muscles.*

I (Jennie) have always loved medically related things and animals, just about every animal... and genetics I find fascinating, so alpacas and genetics work well together for me. Roy has mainly been involved in horticulture, so he is very used to plants he works on today, being in the same place tomorrow, unlike animals which could be a paddock away! However, we have a good balance between us in running the farm.

Everyone who own alpacas have many stories to tell. We all have different ways of dealing with issues that arise that we can share. Here are two of our stories. ....

I fell in love with alpacas when some of the first imports into Australia landed in the This was a first for us. Isn't it interesting how there is always a new situation we can experience!

This year we had a cria born that was walking with a peculiar gait. Walking was not really the word...it was 'managing' to have some mobility!

I didn't notice at birth, as many cria have flat hips at birth and we have all seen the triangular position newborns take up as they 'find their feet' and find their balance but as they gain strength, the legs aren't splayed as much, until they are able to stand walk and run with parallel legs. This was not just the splaying of newborns we were seeing a few hours later.

This cria was unable to walk normally, as on each step the hip would rotate outwards and the knee would end up being perpendicular to the body. The cria had weak hip adductors and weak hip internal rotators.

## Day 2

The situation had not changed, so I had to find what I could use as a soft splint. Fortunately, I found at the back of a drawer a long forgotten pair of pantyhose! I cut off the top, (photo S1 next page) about 3 inches wide (about 7.5 - 8 cms) and putting a twist of about three turns between my fingers ( photo S2 next page) applied the splint by putting each of the back legs into one of the loops.

Instantly, the cria could now walk. There was still some abduction and external rotation occurring, but not as much as before and the cria can now walk and the muscles would be better able to start working.

Importantly...

The splint was not tight around the legs to allow for stimulation of the muscles from a more favourable position (diagram). Using pantyhose as a soft splint, it had 'give'.

The cria was now even running and starting to interact with an older cria. Running, well really more of a bunny hop but it worked and meant that the muscles around the pelvis and hips are also working and getting stronger.

## Day 4

The hips were still rotating outwards more than I would like, so I pulled the splint down over the knee on the right side. This did seem to help and movement was not limited in any way. However...

## Day 5

...the splint came off sometime overnight.

I watched the cria walking and saw that both hips were still rotating but the right more more than left. The hips were still both abducted when weight-bearing (the wide base triangle position).

I reapplied the splint with more twist (now about four twists) but this still meant that the splint was not tight around the thighs of the cria, allowing for no circulation constrictions and also allowing for the muscles to be in a favourable position to stimulate contractions of the weak muscles (meaning the muscles weren't in a fully stretched position)



### Day 8

Splint removed. The cria was moving well. It appeared that the splinting had worked.

### Day 9

No signs of external rotation.

Photo taken on day 9 and the cria is moving well, has no apparent muscle weakness, no external rotation of the hips on weight-bearing and happily runs, chases and plays with the other cria.

Since then, there has been no deterioration of the muscles. The cria is has good hip alignment and muscle strength.

Another experience in our alpaca journey.

We have not done a lot of showing over the years, however we always enjoy the shows we do attend and have left shows with the coveted broad ribbons.



Photo S1



Photo S2



### What have we learnt in the alpaca world?

- Alpacas are beautiful, calm and stoic animals.
- Hands on experience with alpacas is the way to go.
- People interested in possibly owning their own alpacas, should ask if they can look, touch feel, inspect alpacas whenever possible.
- Alpacas' trust of humans is quite amazing.
- Alpaca people can be the most generous of people.
- Alpaca people are happy to talk about alpacas ...always!
- Becoming involved (volunteering) in alpaca activities is rewarding on many different levels.
- Never underestimate any visitors to your farm, they may come back to you years later when ready to buy their own alpacas.

There is always more to learn.....

### Tirrikee Alpacas

Jennie and Roy Menzies

"Tirrikee"

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Limekilns NSW 2795

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[rjmenzies@activ8.net.au](mailto:rjmenzies@activ8.net.au)



### Coating cria.

When we started in alpacas, I would see some cria with coats on, some no coats, and the question was always, "when do you coat and for how long?"

These are just some thoughts on how, why and when I coat healthy newborn cria. Other breeders may have different ideas.

Alpacas cope with the cold, however they don't cope well if it is cold, wet and windy, especially the very young, the elderly, and after shearing

My indications for coating healthy cria....

- If a cria is under 9kgs
- the temp is under 9degree C,
- the cria is under a week old.

I only coat at night unless the weather is particularly inclement.

Also, I only double coat at night for first 24 hours (if cria healthy) if it is really cold, wet and windy. I don't double coat a cria that is more that two days old.

One coat should be sufficient in Autumn and after a week the cria would be OK at night without a coat.

I was taught that cria are able to self regulate from 5 days on.

Of course if the cria is weak or premie, use your discretion and keep it on longer. The cria will develop all its follicular potential as a protective response to the cooler weather. Additionally, crias do need sunshine to ensure they can collect Vit D, so on a cold sunny day with no wind, the coat can come off.



I double coat a newborn cria if it is cold, removing the inner lining every half hour or so until the cria is dry. A cria's own body heat will help them warm up as long as they are protected from wind.

If very cold, and the dam hasn't read the instruction book and gives birth in the early evening/late afternoon, I find that as long as the cria is on the way to being dry, I replace the inner lining with a dry one (and have sometimes warmed the lining in the drier) just before I go to bed and the cria will have a good night and be totally dry by morning.

I have been known to put another full coat over the double coat in these circumstances when it has been freezing, but only for the first night. In the above cases, the dam and cria are also in a pen in the three-sided shed, with the rest of the maternity group able to share the shed as they wish. We do have sheds that the girls and cria do use in unfavourable conditions, and we do have areas (three sided sheds, and a fully enclosed shed) we can lock them in if necessary.

This is what I mostly do....However,.... sometimes you need to coat, so that YOU get some sleep!

The double coat I make (as opposed to using two commercial ones at the same time) are as below and see photo...

The outer coat (A1) is a commercial coat.

The Velcro I sew into the commercial cria coat by hand, just attached to the inner lining...not sewing all the way through or the waterproofing would be compromised.

Photo A2...I use fleecy sloppy joes that are "worn out". Sometimes I use two layers sewn together around the edge and sometimes I just sew extra pieces over the kidney areas...

Then the Velcro is matched to the new extra lining(Photo B)

Use the smoother loopy Velcro on the commercial coat and the "hooked" side of the Velcro on the new inner. By doing this, you can leave the coat on a cria without the Velcro being a problem once the inner coat is removed.

You do not have to sew or cut out the linings with finesse!

I have used this system to dry out healthy crias on less than perfect birthing days. I remove the inner linings and replace them after about ½ hour, allowing the body heat of the crias to dry themselves. All my linings match with all the coats and other linings, so I don't have to go looking to match linings.

**Jennie Menzies**

"Tirrikee Alpacas"

# story of



## *The Tree Change*

Dan and Denise Durrant emigrated from the big sprawling cities of the UK in 1986 and settled in the Northern suburbs of Perth.

Life in those days centred around work and the boys! We owned a small Automotive business and In 2007 after being in the Automotive industry for nearly 20 years We decided to have a well-earned break; This included a visit to Canberra purchasing a motor vehicle and touring back across Australia to Perth. On the way back we visited an Alpaca Stud called Buckland Alpacas it was here we discovered the possibility of a wonderful new lifestyle and our first introduction to Alpacas.

After purchasing 4 alpaca jackets for our boys from Buckland Alpacas we continued our journey back to Perth. We spent a lot of time driving back chatting about the different lifestyles we had discovered on our journey.

Across the never ending Nullarbor Plain we had plenty of time to chat, and by the time we had got to WA I think we had both decided we wanted a “change” from the Suburbs and when we passed a previous Farm stay with a 4 sale sign displayed that we had visited 10 years prior we drove back to check it out.

We eventually concluded that the farm stay was too far away from Perth and the business, but decided to look for “Our Tree Change” in the Swan Valley area which is only 45mins from the business and Perth.

In February 2008 we purchased our current 11.75-acre property in the Swan Valley and here we started our Alpaca Stud Alcatraz Alpacas. It has been said we are what you might call Boutique Breeders and a little unusual (in a nice way) from the generic alpaca breeder who traditionally has 100 ‘s of animals and acres.

Over the last 12 years when purchasing animals, we have been careful to select from some of the best Alpaca breeders in the country and sourcing the services of the best Stud males we can afford.

With only 14 quality breeding females it is essential with only 11.75 acres to keep a strict quality control. The sustainability of small numbers on small acres is unfortunately crucial to selling that quality show animal that should otherwise be kept and breed further to improve. Our show success has been significant, competing once at the nationals we managed a 3rd place and multiple champions over the years in WA. See us on Facebook Denise puts them all on.

## *The first inmates*

We initially purchased 3 females and two weathers from a local breeder, primarily as pets and mowers! The next year I purchased a Birthday Present for Denise, It was of course an Alpaca. A brown beautiful female with perfect confirmation, however she literally came out of the float kicking and spitting blood! she was a feisty animal with little contact to humans fresh out of a big paddock and herd. Although I eventually managed to calm her a little, she never took to Denise ha ha. Some days later Over a few beers/several with Ron Reid he encouraged us to bring her along to the show reluctant but excited at attending our first show we agreed. Well, that was it! we managed to wing a blue Ribbon with her we had a lot of fun that day and it was the start of an enthusiastic attendance and Participation to all shows more or less since 2011.



Alcatraz Lifetime Champion  
Albany Show 2017



## *Alcatraz Alpacas what the!*

So how did that crazy name come to past? Shortly after we moved in Daryl Sherman a friend of ours was visiting our new property. Later that day, Daryl overheard the boys complaining about how it was like a prison and how they had to dig the land with all the rocks and hard clay ground. Our 4 sons had been reluctant at the time to move out of the suburbs they had known all their life.

That evening we invited Daryl for a meal, that we had always nicknamed “Prison stew” it was actually prime steak and nice vegs, done in a slow cooker, it was hardly prison stew but a family joke. Our friend agreed to stay for the meal although I think still a bit dubious of the prison stew!

Our family meals to an outsider may have looked a bit like a canteen dinner with the 6 of us all sitting down to eat all having our say! That evening After the Prison Stew meal Daryl said, I know what to call your Alpaca stud “Alcatraz Alpacas” a little shocked but amused by this idea of the name we considered it against some other suggestions from family, classics like, Green acres, Golden Acres, Hill Top, etc etc so with tongue in cheek we decided, we lived on a hill surrounded by rocks, boys working hard labour and it appeared there was no escape! “Alcatraz Alpacas” was named.

## *Alcatraz 100% Australian Alpaca products.*

Over the years we have been a little frustrated with the marketing of Alpaca Fleece in general and frankly finding something to do with it to assist with the costs of shearing has been a challenge. As mentioned, we have attempted to procure the best quality animals to improve our small Herd. We have seen at first hand the quality of our own fleeces improving exponentially from those 5 animals we first purchased.

This has compounded our problem, of what to do with these beautiful fleeces when the market for fleeces doesn't reflect the value, we place upon them and the money we have spent breeding the animals that produce them.

Denise has taken the “Alpaca by the horns” (so to speak, would be an interesting breeding concept though)

Denise purchased a small hand operated Knitting machine and created a lovely array of Beanies that any layperson can see the quality.

Next has been the Alpaca bags, a clever creation with some of the neatest stitching I have seen.

Denise is actively marketing these products. See us on Facebook selling the product to America, different states in Australia, New Zealand and UK.

# Breeding Et treasure!

If you talk to any seasoned alpaca breeder, they will talk about that allusive animal they are searching for that clicks with another. However, it's like "Rainbow Treasure" you don't often get to it!

We found that "treasure" when we purchased Blackgate Lodge Whimsey and Taylor's Zuka.

Whimsey has produced an unprecedented 5 consecutive champion Cria see the following Progeny, photos and write up on each individual animal.

Dam 'Blackgate Lodge Whimsey'  
Sire 'Taylor's Zuka'



▲ Alcatraz Giventime Our 3rd Champion 'Whimsey' boy, again multiple champion winner.  
Champion and best fawn at the Perth Royal 2018 and seriously considered Supreme at that show.  
Champion Senior male at Warren Districts 2020. His current progeny appears seems to be following the amazing family trait.  
'Giventime' is available to purchase preferably half share.

Alcatraz Bigtime Our 5th Champion Whimsey boy arguably the best of the boys so far. 2020 Warren Districts Junior Champion Male.  
'Bigtime' is available to purchase preferably half share.



▲ Alcatraz Lifetime Our 2nd Champion Whimsey boy a multiple champion winning significant achievements with fleece, supreme win at a Colourbration show and Championship fleece at the Perth Royal. He is already producing Champion animals "Alcatraz Forget Me Not" Warren Districts Champion Junior Female and yet to be shown very promising "Alcatraz Taken".  
Half share of 'Lifetime' was recently purchased by the upcoming WA Stud 'Glenmore Alpacas'.

▲ Alcatraz Doin Time Our 1st Champion Whimsey male sold to Adelphi Alpacas WA.

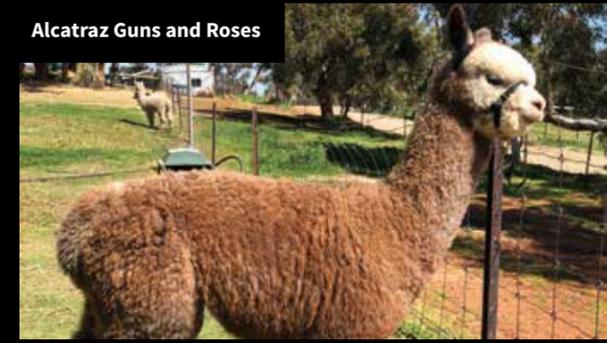


▲ Alcatraz Precious Time Our 4th Champion cria from Whimsey This "time" a treasured female. She achieved 4 Champion awards in 2019 and at the one and only show for 2020 champion adult female. We are so excited and anxiously waiting to see her cria in the new year.

▶ Alcatraz Game Changer due to popular advice from our peers here in WA we "changed the game" and used a different male for 'Whimsey'. We mated her to 'Kurrawa Legends Challenge' owned by Faversham Alpacas. We now have another stunning boy. Looks like The 'Whims' has done it again!



Here we have our up and young coming boys:



Sired by a quality male we purchased in 2018 'Canchones Grey Zanzibar' "Guns" has a stunning grey fleece with a presence to complement him.



Unbelievably another stunning boy from Whimsey and we think the best boy so far. 2020 Warren Districts Junior Champion and Best Light Fawn. Producing Massive bundles of fleece all over the saddle and into the extremities.



Sired by 'Alcatraz Lifetime' his dam is feisty 'EP Cambridge Getaway' another stunning female we purchased in 2017 'Alcatraz Taken' has beautiful long defined small staples. One of our future stud boys.



Reserve champion and best mid fawn at the 2020 Warren Districts Show. He is sired by Vista El Comodin. 'Risktaker' aptly named because a half share was purchased by a visiting breeder at only 3 days old. A beautiful dense mid fawn lustrous fleece and excitingly colour tested Classic Grey.

**"Back In Town"**  
A beautiful black female from Alcatraz Talk of the town and another lovely Sire we purchased, Canchones Backgammon. This lustrous fleeced animal has yet to be shown during the covid period.



“

***Our commitment is to the entirety of the alpaca, the sustainability of agriculture and to the passion for the development of the Australian alpaca industry, ensuring its viability for years to come***



**MICK WILLIAMS  
AUSTRALIAN ALPACA FARMER**

#WeAreAustralianFarmers  
#NationalAgDay2020  
#AustralianAlpaca  
alpaca.asn.au



**W** WHARNCLIFFE  
ALPACA STUD

# Getting on with it

Thanks to Covid-19, 2020 had any thinking person feeling anxious and 'down': locked down, let down, let out and locked down again. Shows, promotional activities and our usual outlets have gone for now and it's a bit hard to see how and when we can get back into it.

Enforced isolation created opportunities for flexibility and innovation but that in itself is draining.

But, the alpacas have just got on with it, giving their own brand of stability and enabling a positive, forward-looking optimism as I await the outcome of decisions made last year and the year before.

So now, in January 2021, it's that exciting time of year when our two "crops" arrive almost simultaneously, as they do in Tasmania where our shearing is late and our cria season follows soon after.

After shearing I look forward to the fleece test results, which are a useful snapshot. My fingers are telling me a parallel story of a raw material that will process into lustrous black yarn that is a pleasure to wear next to the skin. Perhaps equally importantly, it is a product that people seek out for the pleasure of spinning, weaving, knitting and wearing.



[www.wharncliffe.com.au](http://www.wharncliffe.com.au)

Value adding my fleeces into rovings and yarn - has created a viable opportunity: Alpaca South was born, and tells the Wharncliffe story at Hobart's Salamanca Market. I'm grateful for the work of Anne Marie for her processing input at Echo Beach Fibre Mill as well as to AAFL who take the bulk of my fleeces and whose Natural Selection products I stock. I've never wavered from my belief in the value of natural colours which can be processed with minimal chemical input. And who doesn't wear black?

The other crop of course is the arrival of this year's cria. With a daughter interstate expecting twins, 2020 was always going to be crazy-busy, even without Covid-19, so in March I paddock-mated two

groups of girls to a pair of males with complementary characteristics. Half-brothers, the older of the two retains a 20m fleece at 9 years old and the younger has other valued qualities.

Paddock mating seems to work well and there is a satisfying number of very round tummies to watch over the next few weeks. The girls are starting to clear their personal space and murmur in preparation.

Already, the first five have arrived in the past week.

As a small breeder situated way to the South, with family and work commitments, I don't have access to interstate genetics quite as easily as I'd like.

Not everyone wants to send a top male to the island state, so the breeders who have made outstanding genetics available to me over the years are very much appreciated. I hope their confidence has not been misplaced. Also appreciated are the breeders who have purchased my alpacas for their breeding programmes in other states.

The search is on now for a certified male that will take my youngest girls forward but without the shows and the ability to travel, I feel it will be an uphill job to find my next hero. (challenge issued)

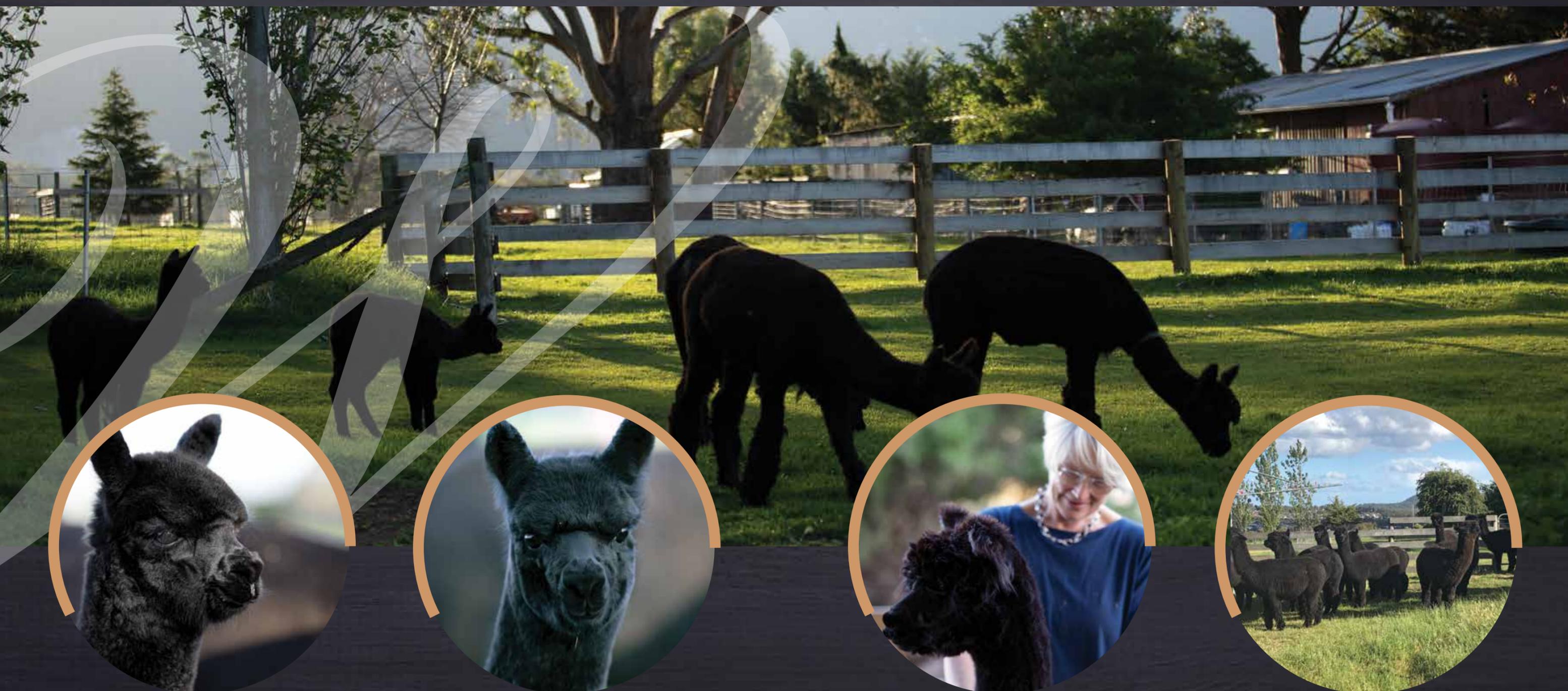
Wharncliffe has well-known bloodlines in unique combinations and - always on that small scale - we are producing a consistent line of lustrous, soft-handling, inky black, alpacas with sound conformation

and good health.

I'm well aware that by not adding other colours into my genetic pool, I possibly limit the density of my fleeces and I'm OK with that to a point, because what they have is good colour. Black. Not brown black, nearly black or almost black. Actual black.

So that's my little goal from a little farm on a little island, to produce alpacas with inky black, soft handling, lustrous fleeces that are a pleasure to work with, a delight to wear and improving every year.

Let's get on with it.



Thanks to @pagodromo for photographs

[www.wharncliffe.com.au](http://www.wharncliffe.com.au)

# Royal View Alpacas



Halter training & cuddles - My daughter Britney

## Welcome to Royal View Alpacas

We are Sharyn & David Jennings and we live on a 40 Acre property at the foothills of Middleton with spectacular views of the ocean from Goolwa to Victor Harbor and gentle rolling hills.

We moved from Townsville to Middleton early 2018 after being introduced to Alpacas through a fellow breeder. We instantly knew this was what we wanted to breed, gentle on the paddocks, with a gentle nature and who could resist those big brown eyes. We adopted several Marino crosses with 2 Alpacas as herd guards when we purchased the property and they have been worth their weight in gold. The alpacas have saved several lambs from foxes.

We started with 3 female Huacaya for our breeding program and have quickly grown the herd to over 30. We are focused on improving our genetics, fineness & density with improved genetics. We know we have a long way to go, but with mentoring from other Alpaca Breeders, workshops and World of Alpacas our learning and improvement is coming along in strengths. Who would have thought within 2 years we would be showing alpacas, husbandry, fencing and growing crops.

With shelters in every paddock for shade in summer and the cold winds in winter, they also serve another purpose, to keep our hay rounds dry. We also have purpose built stables in a shed for overnight care with fans to accommodate for several Alpacas if needed.

In the future, we would like to diversify, possibly into selling fleece, yarn, gifts and Alpaca products. I have purchased a spinning wheel to one day learn to spin our own fleece and make our own products.

An added bonus is that friends and family love coming to help with the alpacas, whether it be hand feeding, halter training, medical or just for a cuddle.

We have Certified Males ready for stud services, breeding females, females with cria at foot and packages available.

**Sharyn Jennings – 0437 887 387**

**David Jennings – 0438 708 840**

**info@royalviewalpacas.com.au**

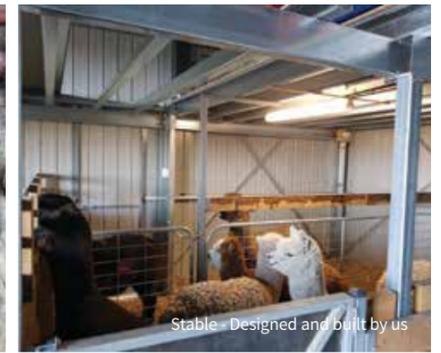
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2018 Strathalbyn Show



Alegria - Autumn 2020 cria



Stable - Designed and built by us



Shelter - our handmade shelters



“ We started with 3 female Huacaya for our breeding program and have quickly grown the herd to over 30 ”



Alpacas prior to shearing



# Moving forward to our vision for 2022

**2020** Let's consign it to history! Luckily, at Aberfeldy we were not immediately affected by the bushfires that wreaked havoc for so many in January. But, the proximity of several fires in our drought-stricken landscape certainly propelled us into weeks of intensive clearing (in conditions of choking smoke and searing heat), preparing for the worst.. Then, along came Covid-19, disrupting our plans for 2020 and indeed even our plans for 2021.

But with set-backs come opportunities. The Covid-19 restrictions provided otherwise rare "quiet time" allowing space to reflect on the highlights of our journey at Aberfeldy Alpacas - where we started, what passions drive us forward, and our vision for the future.

Our journey began in earnest with the purchase of our first alpacas in 2003, a pregnant dark fawn female "Goldena" and a female cria at foot. (picture 1) Goldena subsequently produced 5 female crias in a row for us, a great start but it meant that our early herd was predominantly coloured. Over the intervening years, we have won multiple show ribbons in both halter and fleece classes from Goldena's bloodline. (picture 2) Most recently, that has included wins at the 2019 Nationals, 2020 Canberra Royal, and the 2020 National Fleece Challenge. We are particularly proud of our beautiful boy, Aberfeldy Orpheus, who achieved first place in his class in all of the above, and was awarded Champion Roan Huacaya at the National Fleece Challenge in December.

In more recent years, with improved knowledge and experience in the alpaca industry, and greater awareness of the natural fibre industry overall, we have been gradually transitioning to a predominantly white herd - concentrating on breeding sound, well-conformed animals, with excellent fleece characteristics (low fibre diameter, high density and lustre, minimal guard hair). To that end we bought a certified white male "Glenhave Monte Cristo" in late 2011 (picture 3) but sadly lost him to an infection in 2018 after breeding only three (albeit excellent) progeny. For the time being we continue to use a range of outside sires, selected for their genetics, fleece characteristics and show records. In a final step towards our reoriented vision of a solely white herd (excluding any surprises) we will offer all our coloured animals for sale (individually or as a herd) in the coming 12 months.

Our alpaca journey has had difficult times but, overall, we can say our involvement with the industry has been a fantastic experience that has truly enriched our lives: the excitement attending the birth of new cria, the pride in seeing the improvements in fleece quality at each shearing, and the new and long-standing friendships made. Encouraging newcomers to the industry and providing opportunities for school visits to Aberfeldy (picture 4) are among Margaret's favourite things, along with her passion for Italy and the Italian language. Her combined love of alpacas and all things Italian has led to some amazing experiences and friendships in recent years but these are subjects for another day!



Photo 1



Photo 3



Photo 2



Photo 4

**MARGARET DORSCH & LEON LE LEU,  
ABERFELDY ALPACAS**

20 WELLS PLACE, GOOGONG NSW 2620  
MOB 0409 141 595  
ABERFELDY.ALPACAS@GMAIL.COM  
WWW.ABERFELDY.COM.AU



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**CATHERINE AND MATTHEW LLOYD  
AUSTRALIAN ALPACA FARMERS**



#WeAreAustralianFarmers  
#NationalAgDay2020  
#AustralianAlpaca  
alpaca.asn.au



# Fibre Naturally



We are passionate about alpacas and their fibre and with the flexibility of being able to do small batches we can help you achieve your own boutique and unique blends with the satisfaction and pride that comes from producing a product that is created from your own alpacas.

We had a dream.....  
To take **raw fleece** and turn it into **soft luxurious** products and **yarn** for **knitting** or **roving**s for hand **spinning** or **felting**

We are a small family business with 3 generations working side by side. With over 10 years Mill experience and over 25 years of Alpaca breeding, we are passionate about alpacas and fibre. With the flexibility of being able to do small batches we can help you achieve your own boutique and unique blends with the satisfaction and pride that comes from producing a product that is created from your own alpacas. We can process as little as a single fleece or your entire clip.

# EPDs: Accounting for Environmental Differences

**P**icking out that new herd sire, or choosing replacement females is part of what makes alpaca (and all livestock) production fun and

exciting. Once selected and used in the breeding program, the anticipation of the birth of the offspring only adds to the excitement.

Yet that selection decision is often a challenging task. Entering the process with a clear vision of what traits need improvement in your home herd narrows the pool

of potential breeding animals; however, the challenge remains – picking the animal with the best genetics for your program while not sacrificing performance in other traits.



DR. MARK ENNS

For each trait a difficult task is to separate out the non-genetic influences, or environmental effects, on that animal's performance to better focus

on genetics. Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) is a tool that helps the process, resulting in more accurate selection and breeding decisions. Yet, just as with visual appraisal, EPDs must also account for environmental differences between animals and farms.

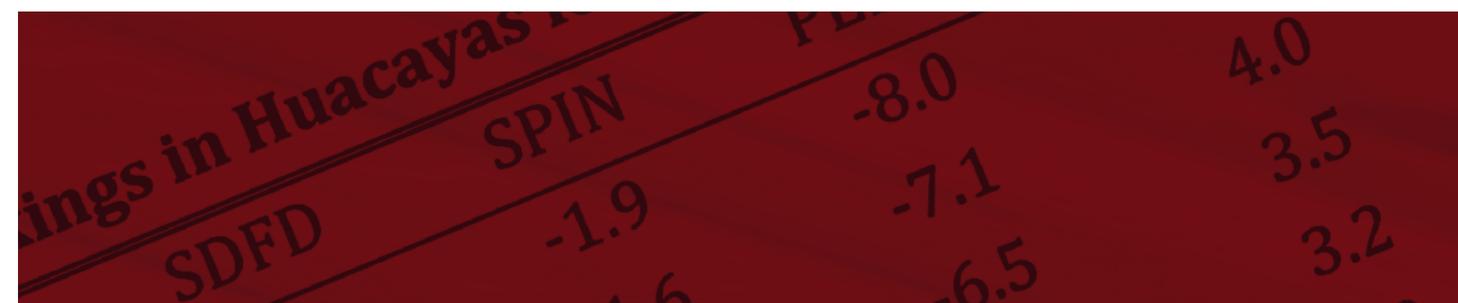
## CONSIDERING KNOWN AND UNKNOWN EFFECTS

To better estimate animals' genetic merit, environmental differences must be addressed in the calculation of EPDs. There are two approaches that accomplish this, based largely on whether the impact of the environmental effects are "known" or "unknown."

Known effects can be directly quantified. Unknown effects must be addressed indirectly with a grouping approach.

Examples of known environmental effects include differences in sex of the animal and differences in age when the measurement was recorded. For example, sex is typically considered a known environmental effect on birth weight, something to be adjusted for to make EPDs comparable across all sexes. After all, breeders are concerned with the genetic effects influencing birth weight independent of the sex of the animal.

Adjustments for this "environmental" effect occur when EPDs are calculated, and in the last AOA (Alpaca Owners Association) evaluation that adjustment for sex differences was just under half a pound. Biologically it is a result



of the typical male cria weighing more than the typical female cria at birth.

Fiber diameter provides another example. As animals age throughout life, the fiber diameter changes along with the aging process. However, that change is not related to the base fiber diameter genetics of the individual. As a result, non-genetic changes in fiber diameter associated with aging must be accounted for in the EPD. This is currently accomplished by including the age of the animal when the fiber sample is collected and measured in the statistical model.

In turn, this means without a known age, fiber diameter measures are not used in the EPD calculation. The adjustments for these “known” environmental effects are relatively straightforward, but what about “unknown” environmental effects?

### WHY ARE CONTEMPORARY GROUPS IMPORTANT?

In the calculation of EPDs, unknown environmental effects are accounted for through the use of contemporary groups. Animals are grouped in the analysis according to the environment they have experienced for expression of a trait. Animals in a contemporary group should all have had the same opportunity to express their genetic potential.

For instance, for fiber diameter EPDs, a contemporary group is comprised of all animals on the same farm with observations taken during the same year. Performance of the animals is compared against others in that same group, knowing they have been exposed to the same climatic and nutritional environment. Therefore, the differences in performance are more likely due to differences in genetic makeup.

In the EPD analysis, fair comparison of animals’ genetics across many farms and environments is only possible if contemporary group differences are considered.

This “contemporary group” approach results in EPDs that are adjusted for differences in physical environment, such as climate/weather, and for managerial differences between farms, such as differences in feeding regimes.

To illustrate, research shows that over- or under-feeding animals will influence their fiber diameter measures. This is not genetic, however, and therefore must be considered when EPDs are calculated, and, provided animals within the contemporary group are similarly fed, is included in the current EPD calculation process as animals in the same year on the same farm are contemporaries.

As breeders make their fiber and data collection plans for the upcoming year, consider how the concept of the “contemporary group” might influence management decisions to ensure animals are given the same opportunity to express their genetic differences. ■

Dr. Mark Enns is a professor of animal sciences in the College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University. Mark grew up on the family’s fourth generation wheat and cattle operation in Oklahoma. Those early experiences stimulated his interest in livestock and agriculture, and led him to undergraduate degrees from Tabor College, and Masters and Doctorate degrees in Animal Breeding and Genetics from Colorado State University. He then worked two years in New Zealand as a visiting scientist for Landcorp Farming Ltd, the largest ranching company in that country, developing genetic improvement programs for beef cattle, deer, sheep, and goats. He joined the Department of Animal Sciences at Colorado State University in 2001. At CSU he teaches and conducts an active research program focused on genetic evaluation and improvement of livestock using pedigree, performance and DNA marker information. The goal of his research program is to develop and improve genetic tools that enable breeders to make more accurate selection decisions. With that focus Mark and the team at what was then ARI worked to develop expected progeny differences (EPDs) for huacayas and suris in that registry. Mark continues to calculate the EPDs and accuracies for the annual AOA analysis, and talks to breeders about proper use of this technology. He serves as co-leader of the CSU Center for Genetic Evaluation of Livestock—a center that calculates EPDs for breed associations and producers’ groups both nationally and internationally. He is also the Western Region Secretary for the Beef Improvement Federation.

## GREETINGS FROM AUSTRIA





## Kepler Mountain View Alpacas MANAPOURI FIORDLAND NZ

We started as many do in the alpaca industry – 3 wethers for pets! It took only about 6 weeks with them for us to totally fall in love with them and start on our breeding alpaca journey back 12 years ago and has taken us in a variety of different ventures

### Wild Wool Gallery:

After a couple of years of letting someone else take the fibre in lieu of shearing we decided to learn to use the fibre ourselves. This led into full time felting creating wearable art and a range of other alpaca products which are now solely sold onsite at our Wild Wool Gallery, selected markets and shows and online at [www.wildwool.nz](http://www.wildwool.nz).

### Kepler Mountain View Cottage:

Our small farm is located on the edge of Fiordland National Park with breath taking views every which way. We welcome others to stay and enjoy our property and the surrounds in a private fully self contained cottage onsite. Its one of those places where you won't want to leave, soak at night in the outdoor spa pool right outside the cottage front door and star gaze into the crystal clear night skies

or just enjoy the ambience of looking into Fordland's various mountain ranges and enjoy the peace and quiet.

### Alpacas:

We welcome our guests to join us to meeting and learn about alpacas during their stay along with running farm tours. We breed a variety of colours of alpaca and recently have focused specialising in Elite Blacks, Greys and Leopard Appaloosas.

Come and visit us, stay a while and enjoy our piece of paradise.

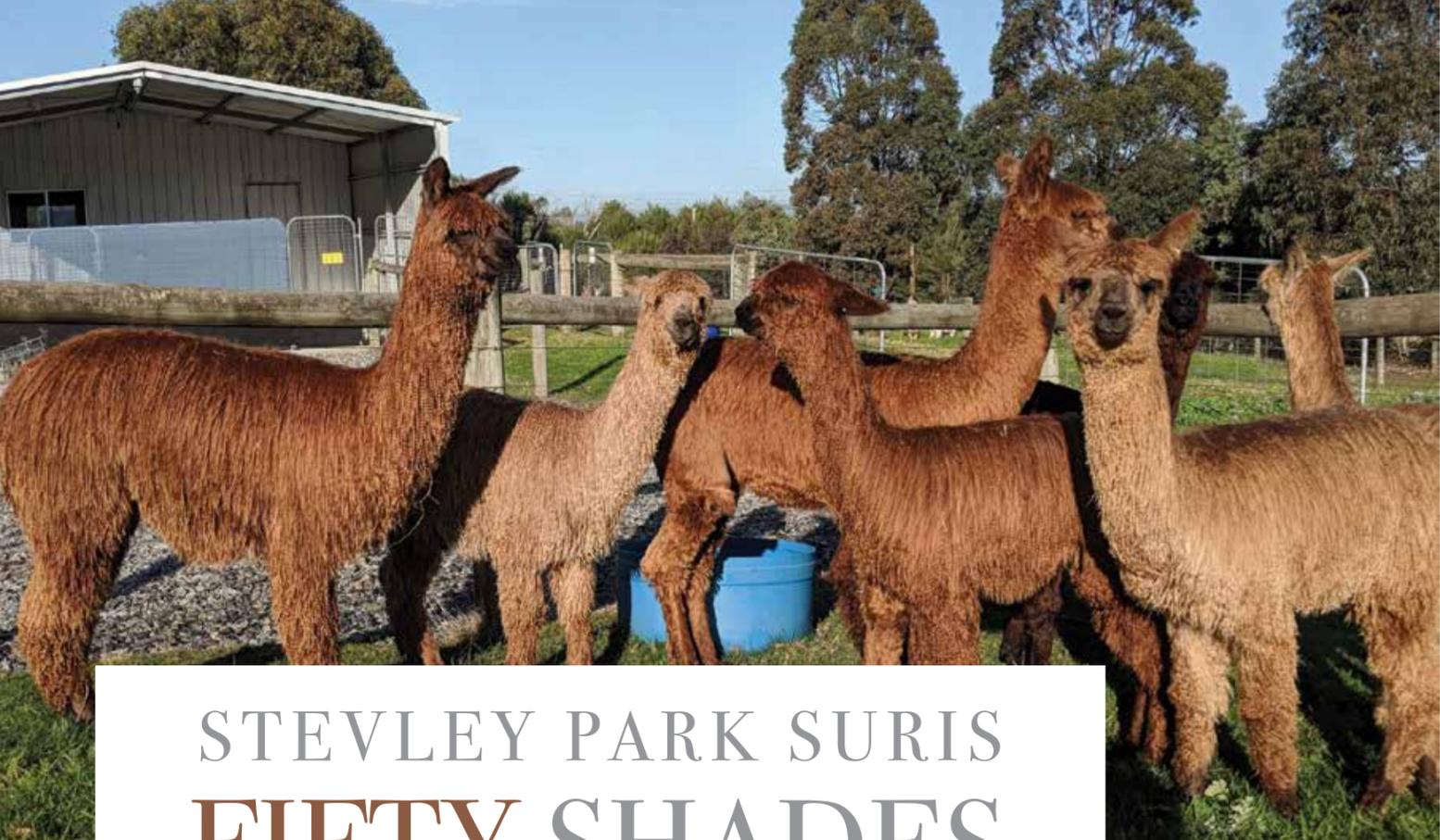
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Come and visit,  
stay a while  
enjoy our piece  
of paradise.





# STEVLEY PARK



Designed and Created by  
*Lezley Golding*

## STEVLEY PARK SURIS FIFTY SHADES OF BROWN

by **Lezley Golding**

**N**ear Nar Goon, West Gippsland, Victoria, is the home of Stevley Park Suris, owned and operated by Lezley and Steve Golding.

Our breeding program is focused on Brown Suris, striving for fineness, lustre and density in all '50 Shades of Brown'

Stevley Park Suris are proud co-owners of Canchones Diesel Plus ET.

We have bred many broad ribbon winners and our breeding program is now at the stage to offer quality affordable packages. Check out our sales list [www.stevleypark.com.au](http://www.stevleypark.com.au).

On farm husbandry and shearing workshops are available on request. Having been in the industry for nearly 20 years we enjoy giving back and offer mentoring, help with farm layout and ongoing support for new customers and new members entering the industry.



Stevley Park Odin



Triangular Shawl



Nuno Scarf



Luxurious Suri Scarfs



Alpaca Toys

Lezley is a Fibre Artist. Her unique handcrafted items are available through our Farm Studio/Shop, On-Line Shop and takes special orders by request. Felted and Hand Knitted items include: scarfs, shawls, beanies, fingerless mittens, soft alpaca toys, baby wear. Yarn, hand dyed and natural colours. Farm shop is open by appointment.



# shearing

in the  
RAIN

BY James Wheeler // Kobler Alpacas

There are no two ways about it while out and about shearing over the last few weeks the weather has been weird. We have seen 43C to single digits raining and most things in between.

The heat may be unpleasant, but it is the rain that causes us a major headache.

Be it alpacas, sheep, goats or any other fibre animal, we know of no shearer keen to place an electric handpiece into a wet animal. Or even if the stock are dry stand out in the rain/drizzle and shear. It is a simple case of basic electrical safety for everyone.

But it's now stopped raining, and my animals are now drying out can you please shear them?

Damp animals still pose significant issues. If the animal is wet on the outside and dry at the skin yes it is possible to shear it however you must consider the following.

- Wet/damp animals are more challenging to secure; they can be very slippery, which increases the risk of injury to both handlers and stock.
- Wet/damp animals result in wet human handlers; this can have serious health consequences for them, including colds, pneumonia and some nasty skin issues associated with the wet fibre in contact with the skin. Downtime due to illness causes loss of income for the shearing team and a significant rescheduling effort inconveniencing many.
- Wet/damp animals not in the shed can churn up the ground making it slippery and increase risks of physical injury to animals and humans alike.
- Depending on species yarding wet animals in close proximity to each other can have adverse health effects for the animals.

- Wet/damp fleece will have little to no value. The sheared fleece must be adequately dried, or it will go mouldy in storage.

The bottom line is, out of respect to your shearing team, please do not ask your shearer to shear wet/damp animals.

So you have waited what seems like an eternity for your shearer to get out to you and shear and it looks like it is going to rain, so what can you do?

No shearing team is going to hold you responsible for the weather. You will, however, need a plan. There are few things more frustrating as a shearing team travelling for hours to find the animals in a nonshearable condition (wet) and having to turn around.

Most shearing teams schedules are very tight, so the opportunity to 'just' pop back tomorrow is usually unrealistic.

It is the shearings client responsibility to provide dry animals, so can you be creative? If you have only small numbers can you put them in floats, garages other sheds? Open fronted sheds with gates or panels to keep the stock in. Penning under a tree will not work, nor will hoping the stock stays in a paddock shelter if it is raining.

Always watch the weather forecast, if it looks like there is a hint of rain shut the animals away. Putting wet animals in a shed/shelter is almost always too late. The humidity builds up in the shed, and with little air movement, it takes forever to dry fleeced animals.

If its all gone horribly wrong and your alpaca/sheep/goats etc. are wet, or you know you are not going to be able to keep them dry in advance phone/text your shearer. Your shearing team should be able to assume you are all ready to go and not have to chase, remember a 730-830 start on a 3-hour drive means your shearing team may be on the road very early, you don't necessarily want us phoning you before we leave to check your animals are dry!

## ART, PHOTOGRAPHY AND PRODUCT SHOW

Entries close on Friday 5th March. Judging from 22nd March.



FURTHER DETAILS -  
[ALPACA.ASN.AU](http://ALPACA.ASN.AU)  
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/39BPDY6](https://bit.ly/39BPDY6)



# Golden Charm ALPACAS



We are Darryl and Jessie Raines and we live on a 30 acre property on the coast on the outskirts of Bundaberg in Qld. We have owned suri alpacas since 2002.

*Breeders of coloured and white suri alpacas*

**Darryl & Jessie Raines** - PO Box 8228, Bargara, Qld 4670

**P** 07 4159 4624 **M** 0407 155 403 **E** [gcalpaca@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gcalpaca@bigpond.net.au)

# Keiana Lodge

**What a year we have had. In the middle of a 5 year drought – fire. Over two months, our son Andrew was involved in fighting our local fire, night and day. He managed to save our homes and sheds with the fire only a foot away from the back step of our home. We lost over 6 kms of fencing and stock.**



We had 11 of our top girls in our front paddock that were birthing around Christmas, so that there were close at hand. Unfortunately as the fire came closer we were made to leave. Everything went quite for awhile and we were able to return. All I could think about was all our animals, sheep, cattle and alpacas, spread all over the farm and being told that they were safe that the fire had changed direction. Fire has a mind of its own, the wind changed direction and we were forced to leave again, leaving Andrew fighting the fire along with our farmer neighbours. On Christmas eve his CB stopped working, so we purchased one and came home to what looked like something out of a horror movie, it was so eerie. It was horrible - how those fires kept going week in week out in unbelievable heat, with not much rest. Ten of our girls in the front paddock were put down along with 6 crias. We have three crias which we were then bottle feeding, that survived. They were beautiful, took to the bottle and have been so helpful for us to cope with the loss of their mums.

We were then depending on Rural Aid for food for our animals. They were wonderful. Relying on help to feed our animals when we have never asked for help in our lives was hard.

Moving on and we have had some rain, which gave the eerie black landscape a green tinge. Of course up came all the weeds, some we had never seen before. A little more rain and we started to get grass growing, still more weeds and still feeding out. More rain and the difference in the farm was unbelievable – most of the black gone. The trees that have survived still look sad and are trying so hard with little shoots coming out of their trunks. When you have been looking at dirt for so long and then the black of the fires – the green just puts you in a good place.

In our area we had the Gaspers Mountain, Kerry Ridge and Palmers Oakey fires. For a while it looked like they might join up. They came so close to the twin towns of Kandos and Rylstone. These three fires have affected a large area of farming land as well as National Parks. The Capertee Valley is such a beautiful place with the widest canyon in the world but also such diversified flora and fauna.

Then of course Covid-19 hit Australia.

That was the start of lock down and eventually everything closing down. Sydney Royal was cancelled as was all our Alpacas shows. This has made it hard for so many people as the camaraderie at these shows cannot be measured. Of course our local markets were closed as well.

It was great in September, under guidance from New South Wales health we were able to open our local Rylstone Artisan and more Markets, in which our New South Wales President of the Australian Alpaca Association Keryn Burns is involved in along with her mum Bev and myself. Although not affected by the fires Keryn being a fire was involved in the fire out from Rylstone.

We have a lovely group of all ages at our markets and at the moment with lockdown between borders we are seeing a lot more people out and about and spirits are high that we will come through this terrible virus. In saying this I know we will come through this virus and we will be in a better place soon.

I am sure everyone will be celebrating the end of 2020 with gusto and looking forward to a safe and better 2021.

Life doesn't always follow the script you've written and when it takes a different direction, you've simply got to pick up and follow that direction.

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Running Stream, NSW 2850

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e: keianalodge@gmail.com

[www.keianalodge.com.au](http://www.keianalodge.com.au)



Whispering Gums Alpacas like many studs/ breeders before us started with pet alpacas.

These marvelous animals captivated us from the moment they arrived on the property. From here being totally intrigued by these majestic animals our herd slowly grew and before we knew it we had 30 alpacas in our small herd.



Our passion for these animals set us on a journey to learn more. We were introduced to breeding by fellow alpaca lovers and have been guided and mentored along the way by some very knowledgeable and passionate breeders. To them we are forever grateful.

Realizing we were outgrowing our 6 acre property we moved the family and the herd to " Bundara View " a truly beautiful property of 140 acres on the Leigh River Valley in Inverleigh Victoria. This has given us the room to expand and introduce more colour to the Whispering Gums herd.

Our breeding aim is to focus on all coloured alpacas, endeavoring to produce strong true to type Alpacas with correct conformation, density, uniformity and fineness.

We have been fortunate enough to acquire a very diverse range of stud sires over the past few years, they are the backbone of the Whispering Gums herd and are producing some very exciting progeny for us.

#### Stud Services:

Our stud sires are available for off farm matings, these include: Blackgate Lodge Sunseeker (Light Fawn), Merrigig Trademark (Light Fawn), Rainbows End Marksman (Roan), Snowmass Fortune Favors (Brown), Rainbows End Tornado (Grey), Whispering Gums Polar Express (Light Fawn) and coming soon Whispering Gums Kalypso (White).

Agistment is also available for girls being mated on farm

- Stud Services
- Breeding Females
- Herd Guards
- Alpaca Pets

Our future is full of some wonderful ideals and it is our passion to create a herd of quality bred alpacas to enhance an already reputable Australian alpaca industry on the domestic and international market.

#### Contact us:

Darren & Emma Smith Inverleigh, Victoria Australia 3321 Mob: 0409 901 931 Email: wgalpacas@bundaraview.com.au

# Making Sense of EPDs: How to use EPDs to improve your herd

By Shauna R Brummet, PhD

Photos courtesy of the author.

Many articles have been written about EPDs, by me and other authors. What else can possibly be said? The most important message I can offer is to encourage every breeder and owner to participate in the AOA EPD program. It's the single best tool we have to evaluate alpacas across the national herd.

Why should I participate, you ask, when I do not understand what EPDs are or how they are generated, and I am suspicious others can manipulate their submission to make their alpacas have better EPDs than mine (even if I don't know what "better" means)? Doesn't that just about sum up what you're saying to yourself?

It's human nature to question things we don't understand, especially when those things appear to use a lot of fancy math that occurs "behind the curtain." We are not in Oz, though, and the concept of EPDs is quite simple.

If you could do anything you wanted to evaluate a particular alpaca's genetic quality, what might you do? How about looking at all of that alpaca's offspring, its parents, and its siblings? Would you like to see the histograms of each of those related alpacas? Would you like to see what offspring are like from different mates, or that live in different parts of the country? If we could see 50 offspring from a single male, or 10 offspring from a single female, that lived in different places, we would have a really good idea of the genetic merits of those alpacas.

When you see an alpaca whose offspring look a lot like that parent, and they have qualities you think are very positive, what do you think? That the alpaca is a good one and produces the trait quality you appreciate for your breeding or production purposes? Guess what? You are using EPDs!

Have you ever heard someone say, "This old female is not much to look at, but she has consistently produced outstanding crias. Her crias have uniform fiber micron and long staple length." Guess what? You are using EPDs!

Or have you seen a female that, when mated to one male, produces better than herself, but when you mated her to another male you thought looked good (even though you did not know anything about his other offspring), she didn't produce as good as herself? Guess what? You are using EPDs!

Have you ever bought an alpaca in one part of the country, perhaps one raised on dry lot or somewhat sparse pasture, brought it back to your farm and fed it lush orchard grass hay and sweet pasture, and its fiber diam-

eter increased? What happened when you used that alpaca in your breeding program? Did that alpaca produce finer-fleeced offspring than you generally have in your herd? Or, did it produce higher micron offspring (or less uniform fleeces)? What happened? Guess what? You are using EPDs!

What do I mean when I say we are "using EPDs" in these examples? We are using the equation that **Phenotype** (what we see and measure) = **Genotype** (the individual's set of genes) + **Environment** (feed, hay, pasture, minerals, weather, exposure to stress, etc.).

Let's use a little math and rearrange this equation to solve for the genetics part of the equation.

Now we see that **Genotype = Phenotype - Environment**.

We would like to know the alpaca's genetics, but all we know is its phenotype – the things we can measure or evaluate. These things include fiber traits -- fiber diameter, standard deviation of fiber diameter, percent of fibers > 30 microns, staple length, fleece weight, curvature -- and other traits, such as birth weight and birthing ease.

What else do we know about the measurements we have taken? We know the animal produced the specific fiber measurements during the time it lived in a specific location (environment). Think about that animal in the example above whose fiber diameter got larger when it moved from one location to another. Does the alpaca have the same genetics in the two locations? Yes, of course, it does. What changed? The way in which the genetics interacted with the environment in the different locations – that is what changed, resulting in a different phenotype.

What if you took a group of full siblings from one location to another, and all of them had fiber diameter increases in the new environment (feed, hay, pasture, weather, and stress)? What does this tell you about the genetics of these alpacas? That the genetics caused the alpaca to perform differently (have different fiber diameter) in different locations, right? What can we conclude from this observation? We can conclude that environment impacts the performance (phenotype) produced by a specific set of genetics.

So, if we could examine the performance (phenotype) of an alpaca or a whole herd of alpacas in different environments all at the same time (age) of the alpaca(s) we could deduce something about their genetics. We would be able to evaluate which sets of genetics generally produce finer fleeces, or more uniform fleeces, or longer staple length, or bigger or smaller crias at birth.



But we cannot do this – we can't see how a specific set of genetics performs in different environments...or can we?

In fact, we can. This is what using EPDs – estimated progeny differences – does.

The use of a complex mathematical tool called matrix algebra in an algorithm called Best Linear Unbiased Prediction (BLUP) can take performance (phenotype) data from alpacas that share genetics (are related to each other) and live in different environments, solving thousands of simultaneous equations (that's the matrix algebra part) for genetics, based on knowing the phenotype.

By examining lots of data it is possible to determine just how much of the phenotype measurement is due to the alpaca's genetics and how much is due to the environment in which it lives. This value is called Heritability. The greater the heritability, the less impact the environment has on a particular trait. Genetics determines a more significant part of the phenotype (think of the alpaca's fiber diameter in different environments). For traits with higher heritability, the environment has less impact on the phenotype.

The greater the contribution of genetics to the phenotype, the easier it is to move phenotype in the direction you want it to go by selective breeding. Heritability for alpaca fiber traits has been determined (using all the submitted data) to range from 0.35 to 0.55. That means for various traits, the alpaca's genetics determines 35 percent to 55 percent of the phenotype. This is good news for breeders. It means that we can make excellent progress in moving performance (phenotype) in the direction we want it to go.

Using the math and lots of data allows us tease out the contribution of an individual alpaca's genetics to its performance and, subsequently, to the performance of its offspring. This focus on the ability of an alpaca to impact the performance of its offspring is what Estimated Progeny Differences (EPDs) means. Using measured data and known genetics (our validated pedigrees) allows the impact of environment to be understood and effectively removed from the equation so we can determine how, and to what extent, an alpaca's genetics can impact the performance of its offspring.

Here is an example set of EPDs for Male A:

Trait	Value	Acc	Rank	Rank%	
AFD	-2.244	0.534	161 of 22,959	0.71%	Top 1%
SDAFD	-0.668	0.533	115 of 22,959	0.51%	Top 1%
SF	-2.311	0.604	153 of 22,959	0.67%	Top 1%
%F>30	-6.363	0.607	908 of 22,959	3.96%	Top 5%
MC	1.883	0.518	5,245 of 22,959	22.85%	Top 25%
SDMC	1.433	0.553			
%M	-4.296	0.434	614 of 22,959	2.68%	Top 5%
MSL	4.646	0.445	393 of 22,959	1.72%	Top 5%
FW	0.285	0.376	7,872 of 22,959	34.29%	
BW	-0.968	0.31			

The units of EPDs are those of the trait being measured.

AFD, SD, SF are in units of microns, MC (mean curvature) in degrees/mm, MSL (mean staple length) in millimeters, and FW (fleece weight) and BW (birth weight) in pounds.

EPDs indicate what an alpaca will produce in its offspring on the average. EPDs do not allow the determination of the results of a single mating.

This set of EPDs (above) shows an alpaca that has the genetics to make finer and more uniform fleeced offspring (AFD, SD, SF, % > 30, % Medullation EPDs) and to increase staple length and fleece weight. This alpaca will also make crias that are smaller – on the average of its offspring.

Note that fineness and staple length are “antagonistic” traits. Generally, as fleeces become finer, they also become shorter, so this male is what is called, in the vernacular, a curve bender. His ability to improve both fineness and uniformity while also increasing staple length is unusual.

EPDs looked at in this way compare an individual alpaca to the average of all the alpacas who have contributed to the calculations.

EPDs can also be used to compare two animals – on the average. If we are looking at two males to use, we can determine how much difference there will be (on the average) in the offspring of the two males.

Here is an example set of EPDs for Male B:

Trait	Value	Acc	Rank	Rank%	
AFD	-2.522	0.652	56 of 22,959	0.25%	Top 1%
SDAFD	-0.578	0.652	369 of 22,959	1.61%	Top 5%
SF	-2.536	0.684	60 of 22,959	0.27%	Top 1%
%F>30	-7.425	0.686	338 of 22,959	1.48%	Top 5%
MC	8.524	0.645	23 of 22,959	0.11%	Top 1%
SDMC	3.516	0.665			
%M	-1.881	0.606	4,647 of 22,959	20.25%	Top 25%
MSL	-3.98	0.59	22,138 of 22,959	96.43%	
FW	0.434	0.556	4,462 of 22,959	19.44%	Top 25%
BW	-0.186	0.474			

Let's compare the second set of EPDs to the first. These two males are pretty similar. We can determine the differences they may make in their offspring (on the average) by subtracting the EPDs of Male B from those of Male A for each trait (see Table 1).

Just looking at the EPDs of these two males, it is easy to see they are not very different in most of the traits. They both have the genetic capability of producing crias with finer and more uniform fleeces. Male B will have offspring (on the average) that are slight lower in AFD and % > 30 and will produce slightly heavier fleeces.

However, where they differ considerably is in MC (mean curvature) and more significantly in staple length. The offspring of Male A will have (on the average) staple length more than 8 mm longer than Male B. This analysis could help us decide between two males with excellent genetics for fine and uniform fleeces, selecting the male that would be mated to a female who has a tendency to produce shorter staple lengths.

Here is another example, for Male C:

Trait	Value	Acc	Rank	Rank%	
AFD	-1.438	0.641	2,063 of 22,959	8.99%	Top 10%
SDAFD	-0.656	0.641	142 of 22,959	0.62%	Top 1%
SF	-1.653	0.655	1,303 of 22,959	5.68%	Top 10%
%F>30	-4.968	0.657	2,894 of 22,959	12.61%	Top 15%
MC	6.155	0.638	284 of 22,959	1.24%	Top 5%
SDMC	2.336	0.653			
%M	-4.421	0.539	542 of 22,959	2.37%	Top 5%
MSL	-0.507	0.577	14,269 of 22,959	62.15%	
FW	0.562	0.518	2,492 of 22,959	10.86%	Top 15%
BW	-0.895	0.395			

Here is an interesting trio of males (See Table 2 for comparisons of all three males to each other). Male C is similar to both A and B in SD (all three outstanding), but we see that relative to AFD, this male is significant in his ability to decrease SD. He is more similar to B in curvature and fleece weight. Even though his staple length is slightly negative, his offspring will have, on average, staple length more than 3 mm longer than Male B. He is more similar to Male A in his production of somewhat smaller cria (excellent for maiden females). If you have

**Table 1: Comparison of Male A and Male B.**

	AFD	SD	%>30	MC	%Med	MSL	FW	BW
Male A	-2.24	-5.67	-6.36	1.88	-1.3	4.65	0.28	-0.97
Male B	-2.52	-0.58	-7.43	8.52	-1.88	-3.98	0.43	-0.19
Difference (A-B)	0.28 B slightly finer than A	-0.09 A slight more uniform than B	1.07 B slightly less fibers >30 microns than A	-6.64 B higher curvature than A	-2.42 A less medulation than B	8.63 A considerably longer staple length	0.15 B slightly heavier fleeces	-0.78 A smaller birth weight crias

**Table 2: Comparison of Male A, Male B and Male C by EPDs.**

	AFD	SD	%>30	MC	%Med	MSL	FW	BW
Male C	-1.4	-0.66	-5	6.15	-4.4	-0.51	0.56	-0.89
Male B	-2.52	-0.58	-7.43	8.52	-1.88	-3.98	0.43	-0.19
Difference (C-B)	1.12	-0.08	2.43	-2.37	-2.52	3.47	0.13	-0.7

females with fleeces fine enough to suit your needs, but which could use improved uniformity without driving down AFD, then Male C would fit the bill without sacrificing anything on other important traits.

You can see how this approach allows you to evaluate individual alpacas against the national herd, as well as in comparison to each other as you consider breeding or other selection plans.

Of course, other traits are important to consider when making breeding decisions. Currently, our EPD program does not include trait calculations for brightness or luster, or conformational traits. We can evaluate reproductive qualities to some degree using the birth weight and birthing ease traits. Birthing ease does not yet enough data submitted by owners to allow calculation, but it is an interesting trait that could provide additional selection opportunities. I encourage you to submit data on that trait. On the registration of a cria you can indicate the birthing ease via a drop down menu with four trait levels.

Next time I will discuss accuracy, and why submission of selected data may not produce the expected outcomes. Using EPDs is a science practiced by the dairy, beef cattle, hog, and sheep industries for decades. It is a well-established process that brings great value to breeders and owners in helping to understand the performance

observed in our herds, and to drive performance in a desired direction while maintaining genetic diversity in our national herd. ■

Dr. Shauna R. Brummet is President and CEO of BioHio Research Park, an affiliate of The Ohio State University, College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Shauna holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Microbiology, Biochemistry, and Molecular Biology. Dr. Brummet served three terms on the board of the Alpaca Registry, where she was Chief Scientist. She was largely responsible for the development and implementation of the ARI (now AOA) EPD program, as well as improving the parentage validation system and leading two international symposiums on Camelid Health and Reproductive Biotechnologies. She currently serves on the board of directors of the Alpaca Research Foundation. Shauna and her husband, Jeff Skinner, have operated Hobby Horse Farm Samoyeds and Huacaya Alpacas for the past 22 years.



“  
***I became an alpaca farmer as I could see the potential to operate a viable enterprise irrespective of the size of my landholding. When my annual wool clip is sent off to fibre buyers, I know my product ends up all around the world!***

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Mark Mullette 0401 071 574

Our Alpaca Journey began in Queensland in 2007 with the creation of Shahrizai Alpacas. For years, we built our herd in the hot, humid north. In 2016, with the herd in Oakey, just outside of Toowoomba, we hit our peak of 280 alpacas on farm. We were breeding everything from white huacayas to dark suris, and we were breeding the with great success. We were proud to be a part of a very successful group of breeders in Sunshine State Alpacas, and as a group, we achieved a great deal between 2012 and 2017. But we needed a new challenge, and we decided to move to South Australia.

We knew moving south would be a great chance to bring our herd to another level. We also knew that a climatic change would be good for our animals. We chose nearly 100 to take with us on the move and set up pretty quickly at Yaringa on the western side of the peninsula. Three years on, we made our way to the new property at Kings Beach.

During the COVID lockdown, we decided that another change was coming. Shahrizai was the herd name from the very beginning, but it didn't reflect our family, our new home, or where we are headed. Looking each day at the 230-degree views of the beautiful Southern Ocean, from Goolwa in the distant east to the magical cliffs of Waitpinga to the west, we knew what the new herd name would be.

We look very forward to a new chapter in our alpaca breeding adventure - a chapter set against the most breathtaking backdrop in an amazing part of the world.





**Fleur de Lys Alpacas – Mastering the art of white and fawn huacaya**

**Serendipity** – noun – *an aptitude for making desirable discoveries by accident*

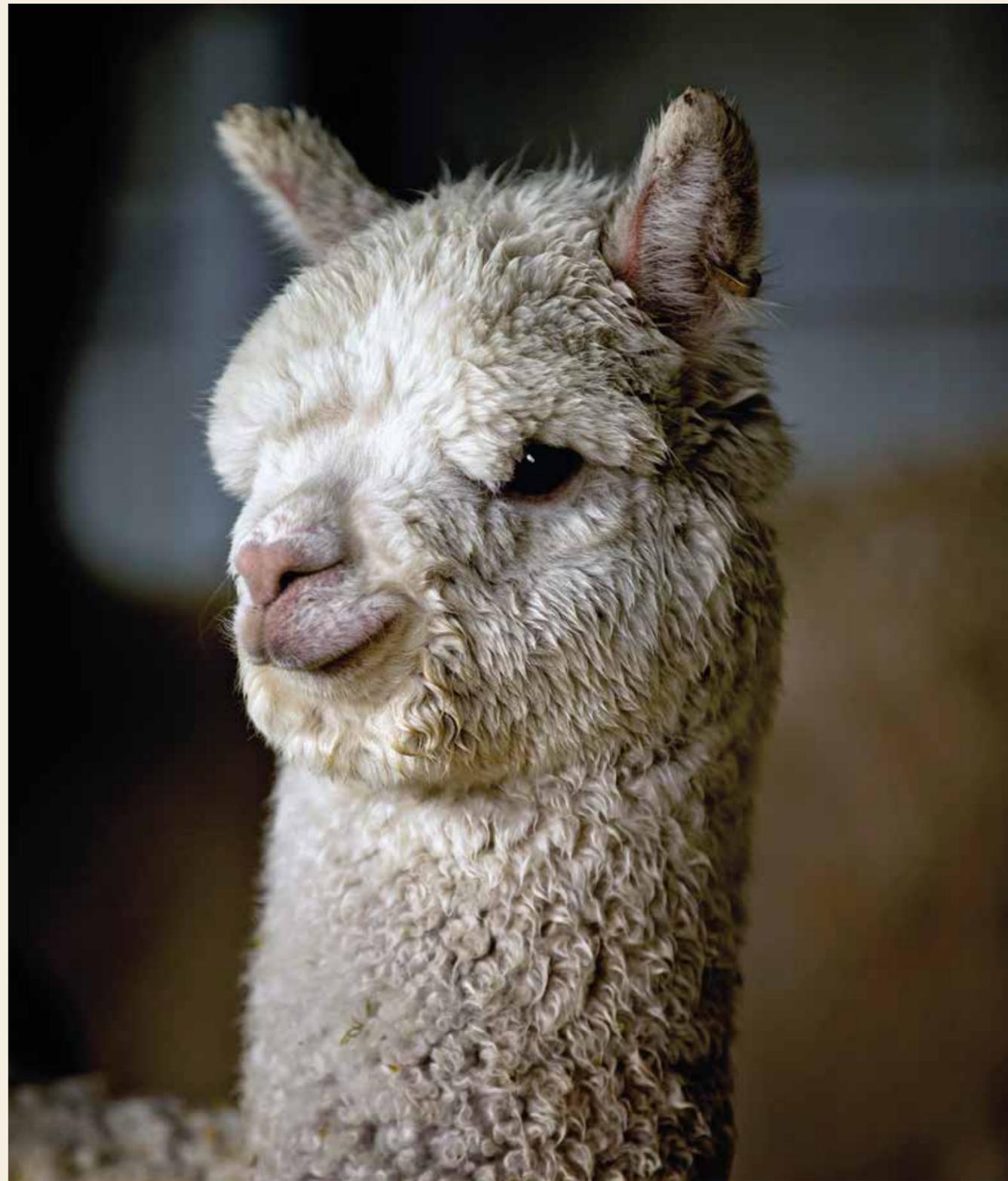
**Sometimes chance meetings lead to amazing people in your life.**

**Chance Meeting #1**

Nearly 10 years ago, I noticed a lady at the Nationals who seemed to leave the show ring with a ribbon after every class she entered. I checked the catalogue and confess to not knowing her or her stud. Curiosity won the day, so I found their pens and introduced myself to Judy and Greg Smith from Futura Alpacas, from Albany in Western Australia. We chatted, I looked at their amazing alpacas, asked the secret of their success and in due course purchased a half share in their stud male Rosedeane Sayonara. You may recall that at the following Nationals, they won the trifecta with 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in Junior White Male, sired by Sayonara, and of course they won Sires Progeny! Since then, Sayonara has enjoyed his trans-Nullabor lifestyle, with girls in both South and Western Australia on his “dance card”.



**FLEUR DE LYS**



Roll forward the years and many ribbons and trophies for Futura Alpacas along the way. Late last year, Judy and Greg, having enjoyed many accolades with their alpacas, decided it was time to retire from the alpaca industry after 27 years. Their phone call was both exciting and upsetting for me. As an industry, we need loyal and dedicated breeders like Judy and Greg to strive for improvements and use their experience and good judgement to continue to advance alpaca in Australia. We all benefit from their efforts and the dedication breeders like them make to their herds and the progress they achieve and sustain. While the phone call was to let us know their decision, it was also to offer us the opportunity to have the Futura herd join Sayonara at Fleur de Lys Alpacas in South Australia. How could we let such an amazing opportunity pass us by .. ??

So it has come to pass that the Futura herd now resides with us, in South Australia. Judy and Greg have always been willing to share their genetics with the industry and we will continue this ethos. We would welcome enquiries about the sale of alpaca, or arrange access to the stud males that may suit your breeding program. It would please Judy and Greg to know that their achievements and success are helping others achieve their dreams and aspirations.





#### Chance Meeting #2

More recently, with travel restrictions and our suddenly empty show calendar, we had the chance to holiday at Robe, on the south east coast of SA. With surf boards, bikes, skate boards and teenagers, we explored the pretty coastal strip, savoured the delectable fare along the main street and relaxed for a few days – what a treat ... !!

By chance, our neighbour was a professional photographer. As I meandered around her amazing studio, admiring the images she had created, I had the chance to introduce myself to Jacqui Bateman. We chatted about her work, her love of the land and her preference to try to capture the essence of the being she finds in her lens. Her subjects range from cattle, sheep and horses in big vistas, with amazing skies, to those images that capture the connection between animals and their humans.

We were lucky that Jacqui was intrigued by the notion of photographing alpaca and were able to introduce her to some of our herd, one drizzly day. The wonderful images on these pages are Jacqui's work.

Jacqui would be delighted to hear from you, if you would like her to photograph some of the special animals in your life too ...



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lee.sadler@bigpond.com

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jacqui@jacquibateman.com.au  
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“

*The schools alpaca program has provided me the opportunity to learn from amazing mentor studs, inspiring me to start my own alpaca stud.*



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# A Journey Into Judging

Amberly Alpacas was established in 2006 by BAS judge Roger Clarke and his wife Elaine in Northern Ireland's picturesque Clogher Valley. One of the very first breeders in Ireland, the couple have worked tirelessly to continually develop and improve their herd and now pride themselves on being one of the most successful, experienced and influential herds on the island of Ireland.

What started as a hobby very quickly became a passion, writes Roger one that has seen us achieve many firsts for the country's developing alpaca industry. We were one of the founder herds of the Northern Ireland Alpaca Group back in 2013 and served as committee members respectively.

Members of the British Alpaca Society and the Alpaca Association of Ireland we have also worked through various stages of alpaca-related training to become Ireland's first BAS

as a BAS certified judge for both halter and fleece. Since qualifying, I have enjoyed the honour of judging in both the UK and Europe and consider it a true privilege to have the opportunity to appraise people's animals.

### From pastime to profession

The journey from hobby farmer to judge has been a long but enjoyable one, so how did it begin?



affiliate training couple. In 2019, we established the Alpaca Education Centre of Ireland from which we deliver and host a wide range of training and educational events.

Managing farm life with busy day jobs; I am a school principal and Elaine is a chiropractor, teamwork is the key. We keep a mixed herd of both Huacaya and Suris and are very proud to have been the first to import and breed Suris in Ireland.

My particular interest in genetic advancement culminated in 2019 when I became the first person on the island of Ireland to qualify

Following the acquisition of our first animals and after a few years of experience, alpacas soon became a deep rooted passion for us and an actual 'lifestyle' we loved and enjoyed.

As a result, we developed an ever growing preoccupation with not only developing and improving our herd, but also our own knowledge, understanding and expertise.

As a consequence, we researched the BAS training schedule and embarked on the beginning of our 'educational adventure', by signing up for the initial Alpaca Evaluation course.

“Entering the judging world was a true privilege for me and I can honestly say, that whilst it has been an all-consuming process and journey, it has definitely all been worthwhile.”

Following on from this and having thoroughly enjoyed the first leg of training, the two of us further completed both the BAS Foundation and Advanced Alpaca Assessment training and it was at this stage that my direction began to change.

Up until this point, our participation and attendance at courses was solely focused on developing our own learning and expertise, with the ultimate aim of raising the standard of the Amberly herd. As time went on however, I became more certain that I would like to further progress my learning and proceed onto the judge's training programme...and so, the journey began.



The judge training brought a whole new perspective to how I viewed alpacas and as I progressed through each stage, I invested as much time as possible in visiting other farms and gaining as much hands on experience as possible.

Putting in the foot work was a bit of a challenge for me, as it involved a lot of time spent travelling. That being said, it was the hands on experience that really allowed me to put my learning into practice... something that I would describe as an invaluable part of the whole process.

This experience not only involved visiting individual farms, but also included visiting and helping out at as many different shows as I possibly could, including the 2018 Alpaca Fiesta in Peru. What was also nice

was the fact that whilst Elaine didn't wish to participate in the judge training, she always volunteered as a handler and so, was effectively with me every part of the way.

As time went on, the hard work and dedication paid off and following a series of successful apprenticeships, a rigorous certification and period of co-judge testing; I qualified as a BAS judge in both halter and fleece in June 2019.

### What's it all about?

The judging process is the ability to identify, give value to and weigh up a series



of traits presented by each alpaca, whilst all the while comparing them to the other animals in the class.

As judges, it's our job to identify the positive and negative traits presented by each animal and weigh them up in terms of how close or far away they are to the ideal.

In the case of a halter show, the process begins with a visual appraisal of the overall phenotype. This includes observing the animal's gait from various angles and its overall conformation. Following this, a hands on assessment ensues, including an assessment of the fleece.

Whilst this is going on, I am constantly weighing up and prioritising each animal's characteristics, so that I am consistent

■ Roger Clarke

in my placings based on the sum of their strengths.

For me it's not only about having the skills to identify the best alpacas, but also having the ability to use oral reasoning as a tool to effectively communicate and engage with the exhibitors; helping them to understand their placings and to develop their wider knowledge.

Regardless of the context, a better understanding of positive traits, in terms of both conformation and fleece attributes, will naturally result in more informed breeding decisions, sensible, ongoing investment and the overall improvement of the National herd in general.

My vocation as an educator blends very naturally with the art of judging. Elaine and I have a real passion for delivering training and hosting seminars at our on-site facility - The Alpaca Education Centre of Ireland.

At all levels education and hands on experience are the key to success; be it knowledge of basic husbandry when you're just starting out, or a more advanced understanding of the hierarchy of desirable traits when it comes to breeding and selection.

#### Future ambition

My hopes for the future encapsulate my passion and drive. I look forward to furthering my experience and expertise and to working alongside my judging colleagues both within the show circuit and through ongoing professional development and calibration opportunities.



“As judges, it’s our job to identify the positive and negative traits presented by each animal and weigh them up in terms of how close or far away they are to the ideal.”



“

***As young people in the industry, it’s a privilege to convert our passion for alpacas into a career!***

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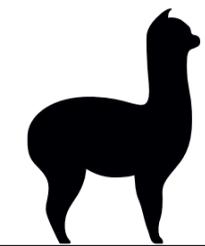
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“

***Being alpaca farmers has allowed our boys to grow up in an amazing environment. We love these animals and the lifestyle that comes with them.***



**MARC MULLETTE AND MARINA GRANGE  
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“

***We were lucky enough to grow up into, and meet through, alpacas***

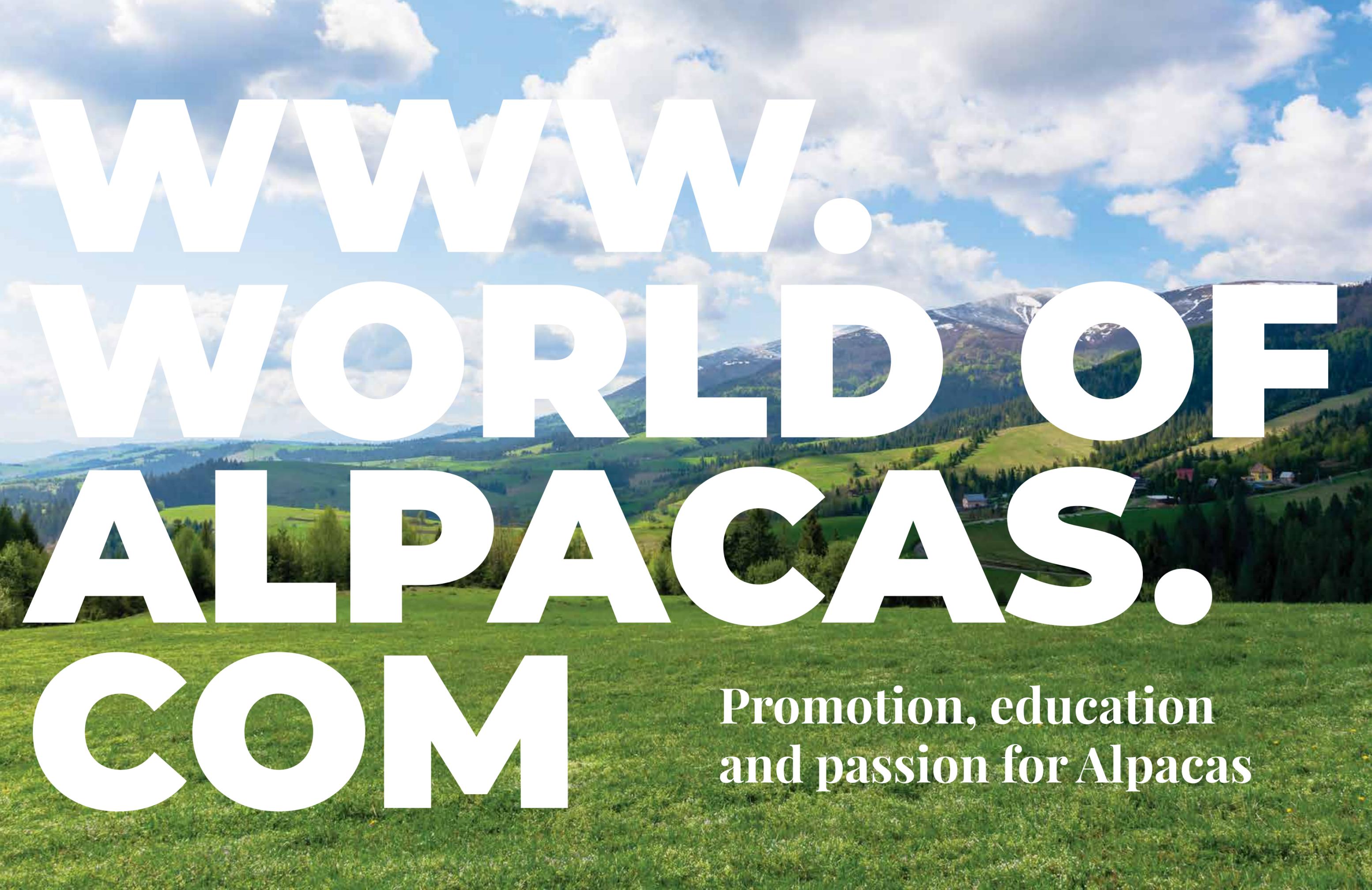
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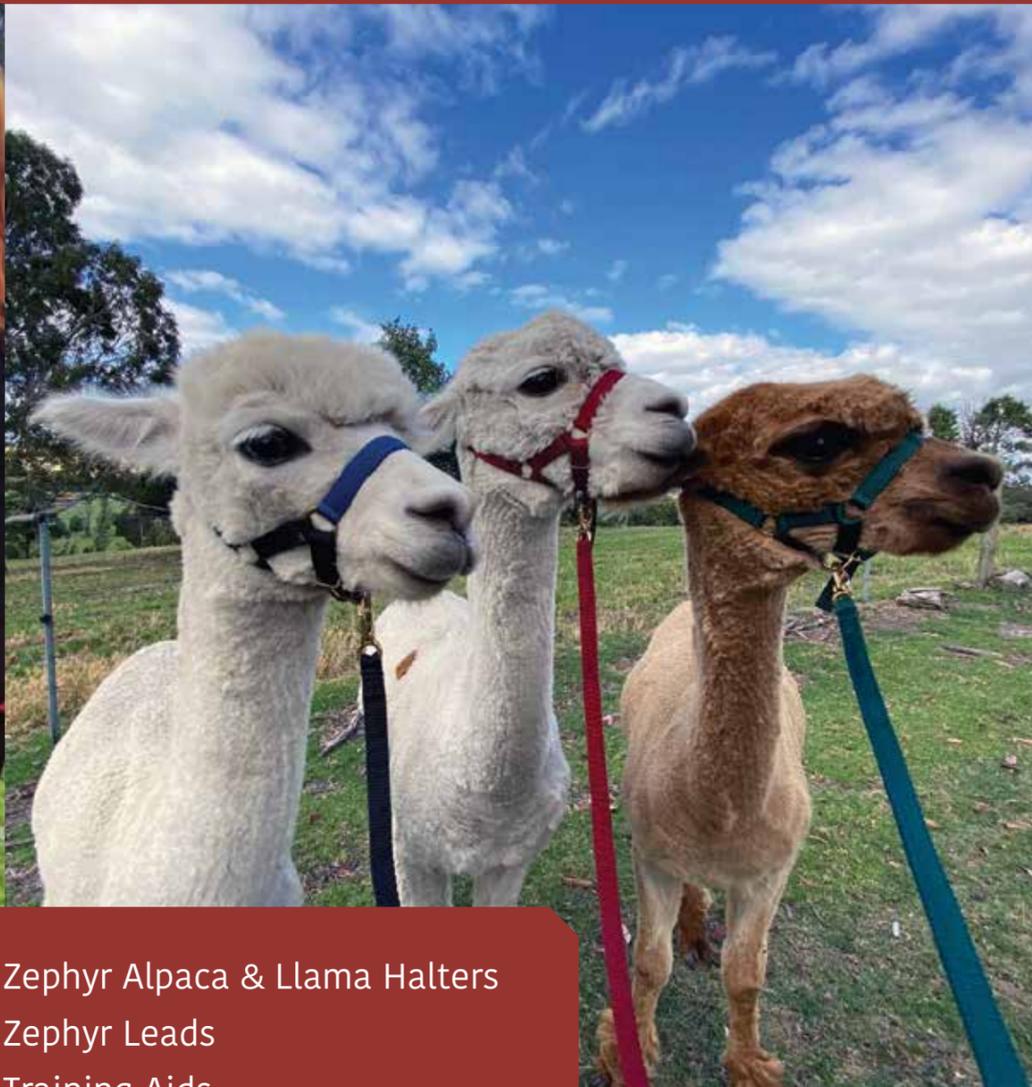
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