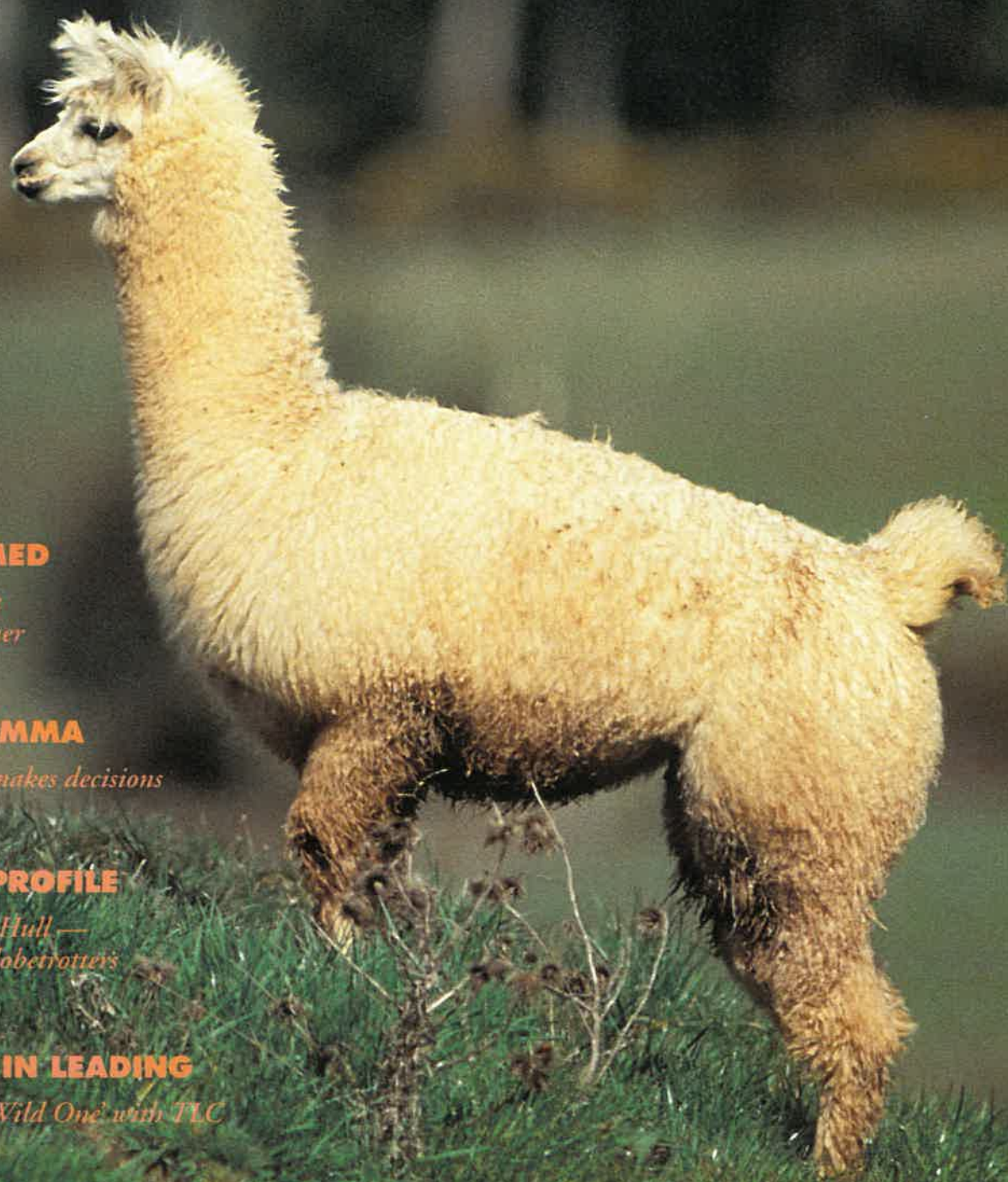


# Alpacas

A U S T R A L I A

SPRING 1993

\$5.00 (AUST.)



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*Welcome to an  
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*The dog that makes decisions*

## BREEDER PROFILE

*Pam and Ken Hull —  
busy, retired globetrotters*

## A LESSON IN LEADING

*Taming 'The Wild One' with TLC*



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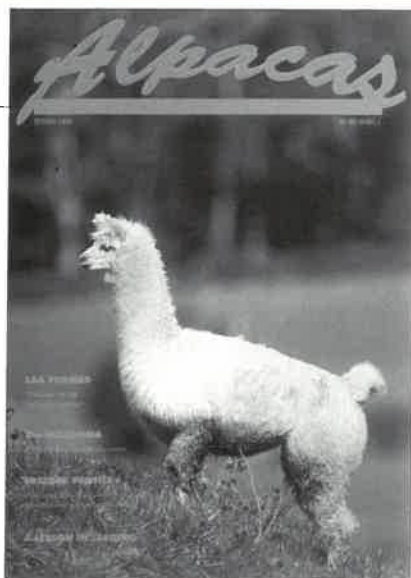
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*Please contact Cherie Bridges or Alan Hamilton ...*

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Cover: Ken Urwin

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### ALPACAS AUSTRALIA

### SUMMER 1994 EDITION

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*For bookings and information on advertising rates, please contact Joy Vellios during business hours, at Pass The Word Pty Ltd. Phone: (03) 818 1237 or fax (03) 818 1010.*

# ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

## *Sneak preview - US Alpaca sale*

HAVE YOU EVER been to, or seen TV footage of, the Myer annual stock-taking sale? People breaking fingers in the attempt to get the last discount fridge; breathless women using their handbags as weapons in the struggle to beat someone else to a bargain. Well, these are the images that popped into my mind on hearing the reports of the U.S. alpaca importers sale held on October 8-10 in Michigan. Our deadlines did not allow us the time for a full written report — we'll run that in the next issue, but here are a few highlights.

One hundred and fifty huacayas into 3 pens for females and 3 pens for males (graded by importers into 'good', 'excellent' and 'superior' categories).

Approximately 600 people had one hour to preview and then one hour to sign up purchase orders.

Where there were duplicate purchase orders for an animal, all buyers' numbers went into a hat and one was drawn (one huacaya had 29 purchase orders, several had over 20).

The same process was then completed with 72 suris but in packages of six (5 females and 1 male). Purchasers had no choice regarding the animals comprising the package and they had to take all six.

- All animals were sold in the sale which grossed over \$US4,000,000 (\$A6,000,000).
- Approximately \$US3,000,000 (\$A4,500,000) was taken in first two hours of sale.
- Average female price US \$18,500 (\$A27,750).
- Average male price US \$20,000 (\$A30,000 AUD).

Several major US llama breeders bought their first alpacas at this sale. Pretty exciting stuff. The US alpaca




community is abuzz. Many buyers who missed out have been visiting breeders to purchase.

Read the AAA notes for details of our AGM, it was a stimulating day with very positive outcomes.

Foundation registry now closed — this includes stock which may be imported in the future from Chile or New Zealand, so if you are contemplating purchasing imported animals be sure to check if they are registered.

The Alpaca Fibre marketing company is proceeding — and will be officially launched in July 1994.

The Certified male system has been approved to weed out genetic faults in breeding males.

It's wonderful to be part of the industry's maturation process and to see the foundations being firmly laid for a sound and viable future. I hope you enjoy reading this latest bigger and better issue. 

*Cherie Bridges*

Cherie Bridges, EDITOR

*Alpacas*  
AUSTRALIA

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# BREEDER PROFILE

## THE 'IMPULSIVE' HULLS

*By Pam Hull*

*The story of  
the Hull family's  
move from the  
'fast lane'  
to the farm.*

Are we impulsive? Without a doubt!

At the age of almost nineteen, I packed my bags and left the shores of my native Australia alone. I had no idea how long I would be gone, but I never dreamed it would be fifteen years.

As luck would have it, I found a man as impulsive as I am and we hit it off. Ken was working for an international car and motorcycle manufacturer and preparing road racing motorcycles in his spare time as a hobby. He was then asked to be the Chief Technician for the Honda Grand Prix Team. We led a very exciting, hectic and wonderful life.

A few years later, Ken decided to leave professional racing and settle down. By the following year, we had set up our own motorcycle endurance team. This involved doing twenty-four-hour races throughout Britain and Europe. It had its moments, some successful, others heartbreaking — but all of it exhilarating.

When our only son reached school age we decided the racing really did have to stop. For me, this meant the opportunity to acquire another dog. (Both dogs survived their quarantine and, happily, still live with us.) Ken went to work as a company executive and I started doing work for a well-

### BENLEIGH ALPACA STUD

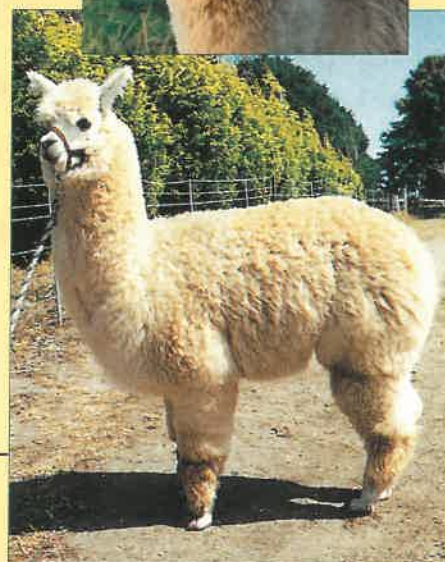
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known animal charity. We travelled a lot over the next few years, some of it as a result of Ken's job, some because we had difficulty in sitting still!

Although we were happy, we both felt there must be more to life. I wasn't too pleased to see my son rush home from school every night to play computer games; Ken was always away on business. The traffic of London was rapidly reaching Surrey, where we lived. Although I never mentioned it, I sometimes yearned for open space and green paddocks — somewhere to keep the horse I planned on getting some day.

Ken toyed with the idea of coming out to Australia to live, but I never took him seriously.

#### PERMANENTLY WAYLAID

We came out for a holiday, and stayed with my mother on the outskirts of Melbourne. Slipping out for a pint of



*Ken Hull with Sydney and Enrico*

milk one day we somehow got waylaid. We turned off a side road (probably because there was a sign pointing to a winery!) We were stunned by the breath-taking beauty that surrounded us. Ken stopped the car at the side of the road in front of a property that was one of the most beautiful we had ever seen. 'I want to live there!' he announced. Unbelievably, when we reached the gate, there was a 'For Sale' sign. The next day we viewed

the property and there was no doubt in our minds that this was where we belonged. We proceeded with all the legalities and agreed terms with the owners.

Okay, so now we owned a farm. Not a large farm, granted, but still large enough to keep us busy. What were we going to do with it? As I have been a vegetarian nearly all my life, farming something that would end its days surrounded by mint sauce or Yorkshire pudding was totally out of the question.

#### A LOAD OF FUNNY THINGS...

We happened across a copy of *Town and Country Farmer*, which was right down our alley. It just so happened that this particular issue had a feature on alpacas. I still remember Ken's Cockney accent as he exclaimed, 'Hey, get a load of these funny things!'

## INCA ALPACAS

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We rang Cherie Bridges and made an appointment to go and see some of these weird and wonderful creatures. We were smitten on sight.

We arranged to buy three pregnant girls from among some alpacas which were in quarantine, having been brought over from Chile. Because we had to fly back to England to settle our affairs, we left it to someone else to choose them for us — and what a good choice she made. We became the proud owner of three animals we hadn't even seen.

When we received photos of the new members of our family, we almost wore them out looking at them ourselves and showing them to friends and anyone else we could corner! We became accustomed to the groans as we approached, armed with our little red photo album.

We decided we should find out as much as we could about alpacas as we now owned three! We contacted the British Camelid Society and went to see some breeders. We also attended the first ever British Alpaca and Llama show. There aren't many alpacas in the UK, but from what we could see there is no shortage of enthusiasm. We found everybody who was involved with alpacas to be very friendly, which seems to be an international trait. We collected some useful information and looked into where the fibre was selling and where breeders over there think the market is heading.

Six months later we were back in Australia, living on our farm and waiting for our girls to come home from the quarantine station in Keith. We waited, and waited and waited.

Eventually, the phone call came saying that we could go and fetch our animals. By now we had six to bring home as the girls had all given birth. We were extremely lucky, as we had two female crias (one solid white, one solid black) and the most stunning



*Pam Hull with Enrico*

boy. If we had gone out to buy them, we couldn't have done better.

We set off one morning at about four o'clock for Keith in South Australia. It seemed most people who had bought animals which were at Keith were having them taken to the importers in NSW and were going to collect them from there. We were much too impatient for that! The drive seemed endless. At about ten miles out of Keith we came across a huge stock truck parked at the side of the road. It was full of alpacas. My excitement reached fever pitch and I began screaming at Ken to hurry.

Our total time at the quarantine station was half an hour — not bad, considering we loaded six worried animals and stopped for a chat. Once we had our critters safely loaded into the horse float, I told Ken to hit the pedal. 'I'd love a cuppa,' he said. Being a true Englishman, he'd come armed with trusty thermos and tea bags. 'No way!' I insisted. 'We're not stopping until we are back in Victoria.' This was probably hard-hearted, but I was plagued by visions of some Government official, his red tape stretched across the road, telling

us our alpacas were not allowed into Victoria. Ten feet over the border, we stopped and celebrated with tea and biscuits.

So now we had them home! We'd called our farm 'Alcheringa', which is Aboriginal for Dreamland, and this gave us the name for our herd, 'Dreamtime Alpacas'.

We had converted a shed near the house into an alpaca 'house' in which we started feeding them at night so we could get close to them. We would dearly have loved to cuddle them, but they were all very suspicious of us. This was not surprising, really, when you think of what they had been through: transportation from Chile, long quarantine, various tests... I think the breakthrough came the night I slept in the shed with them. I woke in the morning to find Krystal, our white girl, lying beside me with her legs stretched out over my body. All the others were huddled around staring down at me. A mutual feeling of trust developed from that day on.

It seems all alpaca people have their own ideas on how to care for these animals. I think this is a good thing. If we all did the same thing, we would never be able to learn from each other. I know most breeders never shed their alpacas; we do. One reason is that we live in a high rainfall area. I have heard it said that alpacas do not suffer from foot rot. Neither do humans, but I suspect that neither species benefits from standing bare-foot in a puddle twenty-four hours a day. We feel that shedding the alpacas at night gives their feet a chance to dry out. We also enjoy the extra contact bringing them in gives us. The sheds are not fully enclosed, so a good breeze blows through. We also installed feed troughs and lighting.

'How do you get them in?' we have often been asked. Simple really. We just open the gate and yell 'Bedtime!' and hope we don't get flat-



tened in the rush. It didn't take long at all for them to get used to being 'housed'; and if you could see them running full speed to bed, you wouldn't have any doubt about how much they enjoy it, even the old Chilean girls.

We now have eleven alpacas of our own, with others on agistment. There are two large sheds; one for the girls and one for the boys. The animals always have plenty of fresh water and haynets. We also give them some hard feed each day. We are aware that the animals need plenty of sunlight for vitamin D, so they are only brought in at night. We also supplement them with Dufasol. During the drier weather we probably won't shed them at all. The good thing is that if we do need to shed an alpaca in the dry season, say, for illness (although, thankfully, we have not had a problem so far) there will be no stress involved for the animal. Bringing them in each night in winter does create extra work as the sheds need to be cleaned out every day, but we think alpacas are worth that extra effort. By the way, each shed also contains a Maremma stock protection dog, just for peace of mind.

#### GOOD TIMES WITH ALPACAS

As anyone who owns alpacas knows, these animals are very intelligent. They are also real time consumers (not out of necessity, but out of pleasure). We spend many hours with our animals; halter training them is a great game — more a battle of wills, really, than anything. But once they decide to be trained, it doesn't take long at all. Even the odd, swift kick doesn't hurt us. My son, Matthew, and I often take our favourites for a walk and, if we have a picnic down by the creek or pond, the alpacas come too. Matthew has a pet wether, called Sydney, who has taken over from the computer games. Sydney's fleece is

now his jumper — you couldn't have that with a pet tortoise or goldfish! (A friend spun the fibre, and I knitted the jumper.)

What are our plans for the future? My immediate ambition is to refine my spinning so that I can knit each of us a jumper from our own animals. I'm taking spinning lessons and they're going extremely well. The wheel now goes in the direction I

want it to and the yarn no longer looks like the car tow rope. Things are looking up! It will, of course, be impossible for me to spin all of our fleeces so we will continue to sell fibre to hand spinners.

We get great enjoyment showing our alpacas. Our first experience was at the Sheep and Woolcraft Show this year, where both the boy and girl we entered were awarded red sashes. We

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*'If we have a picnic... the alpacas come too.'*

were rather apprehensive about entering as the only experience we'd had was showing dogs. With the alpacas,

we didn't find the same ruthless rivalry as is often seen at dog shows. The Eastern Centres field day at

Pakenham was a great success: a glorious day with plenty of interest. Happily, with the inclusion of neuters, Matthew was able to take Sydney. Everyone, including our animals seemed to enjoy their day out (which is more than can be said for the poor alpacas who were used in the shearing display). Never mind, we all enjoyed watching and learning. As long as this friendly atmosphere exists, we will continue to show and enjoy these rather social events.

If I had to think of an overriding ambition, it would be, without a doubt, to have the first cria from my boy Enrico, who has a fabulous temperament and presence. I would prefer a boy with Enrico's qualities, but a girl would certainly do.

#### SMALL BREEDERS

I was recently asked 'What is your ideal herd size?' This is difficult to

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answer without a crystal ball. The problem, as we see it, is that for a viable fibre industry to exist, we need a much larger Australian herd. This will take many years to develop. The current emphasis, therefore, must be in breeding quality animals to create the foundation of the Australian fibre herd. The size of our herd (and most others) will be kept relatively small, due to several factors: high capital outlay, relatively slow reproduction rate and steady demand from new purchasers. Association membership statistics recently released confirm that we are already an association comprised mainly of small breeders. In our view, this situation is unlikely to change overnight.

We have two good stud males and we do not plan to purchase more animals in the foreseeable future. This means our herd will increase with births, but reduce as the result of sales



*Matthew with best pal Sydney.*

to new alpaca investors. Our ideal herd size, therefore, is the head count at the end of each year.

As we have touched on the topic of small breeders, it would be remiss

of us to pass up the opportunity to stand on our soap box and urge the Association committee to understand the constraints upon and requirements of small breeders and to ensure their needs are catered for in future policy and planning.

Are we happy with our impulsive actions? Definitely! Sure, we have had the odd day when we miss our old lifestyle and friends, but we wouldn't go back to it now. We have made many new and interesting friends through our involvement with alpacas. The nice thing is that they aren't all 'died in the wool' farmers.

This is an exciting new industry with a great deal of potential. It is not often in business that the commodity you are handling gives you so much enjoyment. Alpacas are fabulous animals that give a fabulous end product. It's in our hands to make our Association and industry a success. ▲

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# LLAMA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA FORMED

*The LAA is  
bristling with  
activity and  
has plenty of  
interesting projects  
in the pipeline.*

With the assistance and support of the Australian Alpaca Association the fledgling llama industry in Australia took a major step forward at the recent Roseworthy Alpaca Industry Seminar. A group of llama owners and interested people, including the president and two other members of the AAA committee, met at a Gawler Restaurant on the Friday evening prior to the Seminar and formed the Llama Association of Australia. The Association adopted as its purpose:

'To educate and facilitate communication between llama owners and the general public as to the caring for and appreciation of llamas in Australia and to advance the interests of the llama industry.'

The meeting opened with an address by one of the world's leading authorities on llamas, Dr Murray Fowler, from the United States.

A committee was elected with representatives from SA, Victoria and NSW. To ensure that all people inter-



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ested in llamas will be able to participate in the association, the meeting decided not to impose a joining fee and set a very low annual subscription fee of \$50.

#### LAA PROJECTS TO DATE

- Establish a registry for llamas, guanacos and their crosses in Australia.
- Arrange for Marty McGee, a leading TTEAM training practitioner from the US, to conduct llama and alpaca training clinics in Australia during March and April 1994. (See details, page 12). Marty McGee is well known to many Australian alpaca and llama owners through her training books and videos. It is planned that her training clinics will be held in each AAA region and cater equally for alpaca and llama training.
- Gain access to State and National Parks for all camelids through negotiation with various government authorities. A code of conduct is to be developed for alpaca and llama owners using these areas.
- Organise a llama bushwalk and picnic for November of this year. This will be held near Daylesford and will be the first of a number of activities. Additional events now being planned include: llama obstacle courses, llama farm visits, seminars, llama races and driving days, shows, performance events, wool appreciation days and social get-togethers.
- Early November will see the first issue of the Llama Association's quarterly newsletter. This will be distributed to all members and on request to interested readers.

The Llama Association of Australia is grateful to the Australian Alpaca Association for its co-operation and assistance during its formation and hopes for the development


of a close and supportive relationship between the associations and among the individuals within them. This seems most likely, given that eight of the twelve committee members and all of the executive of the LAA own llamas and alpacas. Whilst llama and alpacas are different species with their own characteristics, they nevertheless have much in common. The indust-

ries have much to offer each other.

For further information, membership application form and a copy of the association's first newsletter, please contact:

**Secretary, Mrs Nerida Aldred.**  
Phone or fax (055) 947 320.

**President, Mr Gary Grealy.**  
Phone or fax (054) 353 589.



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# TTEAM TRAINING IN AUSTRALIA

*An exciting LAA  
project offers  
llama and alpaca  
owners a chance  
to attend  
Marty McGee  
clinics early  
in 1994.*

The Llama Association of Australia has announced that Marty McGee will visit Australia in 1994 to conduct training clinics for both llamas and alpacas. Marty McGee is widely regarded as the most experienced llama and alpaca trainer in the USA. She is the originator of TTEAM. This is the Tellington Touch Every Animal Method, adapted from the Tellington Equine Awareness Method. Primarily, it is a method of conditioning an animal to the touch of a human. Once this is accomplished, touch can become part of a training process which is designed to place as little stress as possible on the animal.

At this stage it is proposed that there be one-day clinics, covering basic TTEAM philosophy, catching, haltering and grooming, all tuned to individual animals' behaviour. However, if there is a demand, a second day can be added with topics to include handling animals' legs without restraint, medicating without force, leading with refinement, obstacle courses and (depending on the animals attending) behavioural difficulties.

The clinics will be particularly useful for those owners who have animals with specific quirks, such as spitting, not liking to have its head touched, kicking or not enjoying

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### ALPACA STUD

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grooming. Participants will be welcome and, in fact, encouraged to bring their own animals.

There is also an opportunity for cart driving clinics. Again, this will be dependent on the amount of interest shown.

Clinics will be held in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. (Note that in Western Australia arrangements are being handled by the Llama Society who should be contacted for information.)

The proposed program for one-day clinics is:

#### NEW SOUTH WALES

*Sydney region, 12 March, 1994*

#### VICTORIA

*Central region, 19 March 1994*

*Western region, 26 March, 1994*

*Eastern region, 2 April, 1994*

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*9 April, 1994*

Any additional one- or two-day clinics will be held on days immediately following those listed above. Cost for one day is \$100.00.


Class sizes will be limited, so bookings will need to be prompt when dates are finalised.

These clinics offer a rare opportunity to learn from an expert trainer

and the Llama Association would like to ensure that the fullest use is made of Ms McGee's talents.

To enable finalisation of the number of clinics needed, the Association would appreciate it if alpaca and llama owners would indicate their interest in attending by filling in the

form below. Doing so creates no obligation, but will help to ensure that enough clinics are arranged. Full information will be made available to you as soon as final dates are set.

Mail or fax the form below. Those who do not wish to cut from this magazine can make a photocopy. 

## TTEAM TRAINING CLINICS FORM

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Llama Association of Australia  
PO Box 146, Camperdown Vic 3260

Fax: (055) 947 320

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# ALPACA FEST DIARY

*By Jim Mitchell*

*Jim opens his diary and tells us how taking alpacas to the fair is hard work... but good fun.*

Alpaca Fest is an annual gathering of Northwestern USA's alpaca breeders. This year's event was incorporated as part of the yearly Spokane Interstate Fair — a very large agricultural and pastoral show — run this year from September 10-19. This is one bemused antipodean's view of events.

## THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

*Friday Harbor, San Juan Island Wa*

Four o'clock start...groan! Stumbling around in the dark we load 14 immaculately groomed (now, there's a story in itself!) alpacas into Bruce Barr's enormous 'fifth wheel'. This is a goose necked trailer which attaches to a pick-up truck on a towball above the rear axle line, a superbly manoeuvrable and stable towing arrangement. There's little time to spare because we have a ferry to catch at 6 am.

Sunrise over the San Juan islands is hot, red and simply breathtaking as the Washington State Ferry ploughs the icy, calm, steel grey water. The animals are travelling beautifully as we take the road on a seven-hour drive to Spokane. We skirt the eastern edge of Seattle and turn east, taking the Snoqualmie Pass through the

beautiful Cascade Mountains. Deep green forests and mighty rivers border our path on this beautiful morning. With the mountains behind us, the summer landscape unfolds as flat and dry but, as we near Spokane, it is evident that this is very productive wheat country. Large scale agricultural toys and buildings dot the vast rolling seas of ploughed and stubbled fields. We see great columns of smoke rising skyscraper-like into the windless blue sky. The scale of these burnoffs is awesome.

Spokane, glimpsed briefly, is an architectural treasure trove with signs of Victorian prosperity poking through the highways and glass of a modern city. The show grounds are immense and we find ourselves directed to the alpaca and llama barn. Yes, folks! In this fairground camelids have a beautiful new pavilion all of their own. The interior has been divided with an elegant gate system and we unload our animals and show supplies into an area which we quickly personalise in the expansive Bruce Barr Alpacas International style. We are not alone, as Dan and Dar Mackie, Bill Barnett, Merle and Diana Moberley, Ralph Uber, Mike Safley and Bill and Nola Graham are all establishing presences of their own. It's going to be an impressive display.

Naturally, our little darlings have not been able to resist a bit of territorial spitting on their long journey and we have a job of re-grooming to do, but the hard work pays off and soon they're looking quite spiffy.

## A great night at Castle Hill

Now to the day's reward; Bill and Nola Graham have invited all the breeders to a barbeque at Castle Hill



*From left to right... Bruce Barr; Nola & Bill Graham; Ralph Uber; Janet & Jim Faiks; unknown; Mike & Julie Safley; Merle & Diana Moberley; Darleen & Dan Mackey; Bill Barnett*



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Farms. It's dark by the time we get our freshly-scrubbed selves there, so we don't get to see the farm, barn or handling arrangements for their one hundred or so alpacas. The turn-of-the-century house and grounds are magnificent. The house has a long and romantic history of decline and rise, even at one stage being the home of one of Al Capone's mistresses. Latterly, in the penurious care of two old spinster ladies, it had fallen into decay until being superbly and imaginatively rescued by our evidently tireless host and hostess. Bill and Nola have put on a delightful party and the air is abuzz with excited gossip and rumour. It seems some breeders have run out of animals to sell. The new promotional initiatives sparked by Bruce Barr and Mike Safley are paying off, ably carried forward by such as the Grahams; the US market is staging a renaissance.

The highlight of the evening was provided when the collected children at the event took turns to crack open the piñata. When this colourful animal (roughly in the shape of an alpaca or llama) burst, there was a shower of candies and a rush of excited children. Time for this over-excited kid to go back to the hotel and to bed.

#### FRIDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

##### *Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds*

We're at the fair by 8.30 am, fine-tuning our display and grooming our animals. The fair runs from 10 am to 10 pm, so they are going to be long days. At the last minute, Jim and Janet Faiks arrive. They and their alpacas have had a long and, for them, exhausting trip from Alaska, but they soon have their display up and running and running is what we all do, from opening time on.

Now most of you will have been through the, 'What kind of sheep/goat/dog/horse is that?' routine and, as this is a fair for the general public, we get a lot of that. The question I get asked most, however, is, 'What's the difference between an alpaca and a llama?' It seems people in the Spokane area know llamas quite well, but are charmed to meet their even prettier small relatives.

Some of the local llama owners are seriously miffed at having to share 'their' space with alpacas. Their days at the fair will come after we have gone. It strikes me, not for the first time, that llama and alpaca farming are complimentary — not rivals; but there's 'no accounting for folks'.

Serious interest is evident, though, and all the breeders spend a lot of time with prospective new owners. Some are ranchers looking to diversify out of wheat or into new and easier

### *A touch of heaven in the Yarra Valley*



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stock to handle. They are very interested in aspects of fibre production and impressed by the promise of alpacas.

Others are refugees from the pressure of city life who are moving from the over-crowded coasts to the mountains to find contentment in low-key, small farm, small town, rural lifestyle.

Reports on television and in *Time* magazine have identified this growing movement and alpacas fit the aspirations and abilities of these new farmers perfectly.

### Oz practices reinforced

After a morning in which I talk myself hoarse, I elect to go to a nearby hotel to take in a seminar given by Walter Bravo whose subject is 'Reproduction in Alpacas', and Steve Parrish of Washing State University, who is to talk on neonate and general alpaca health. The presentation is well attended and, without going into huge detail, I'm relieved to gather that what we regard as sound practice in Australia is backed up by the science presented by both of these speakers.

Interestingly, Walter Bravo's research seems to indicate the re-breeding the new alpaca mother is optimum at twenty days after the birth of her cria. Her ovulation recommences at around seven days, but her uterus has not returned to anything like its normal size until about the twentieth day. In their study of ovulation, his group has been measuring estrogen and progesterone levels in the urine, but when I questioned him about a commercial test to prove pregnancy or ovulation, he suggested this was some way in the future.

A constant theme of his — minimal intervention in the process of birth and bonding — caused an intake of breath from some breeders.



*Visitors to the alpaca pavilion at Spokane were treated to spinning and weaving demonstrations — alpaca fleece is extensively used for handcrafts.*

Steve Parrish gave an easygoing talk which emphasised the practical aspects of health. His underlying philosophy was that an alpaca, despite some unique characteristics, is simply a mammal and not impossibly special. To one questioner who asked one of those science laden questions on IGg levels, he provided a gentle but firm admonishment. 'This is not like high school chemistry, take X, apply it to Y and you get Z. Every animal is different and has to be treated as an individual.' It's probable I'm displaying a bit of Aussie chauvinism here, but I can't help feeling that some breeders in the US place more faith in science than they do in really knowing their animals, so I was glad to hear these cautionary words.

Back at the heat and dust of the fair, intense buyer interest continued. The talking, explaining and showing went on until 10 pm on Friday night and we all staggered back to our hotels, exhausted.

### SATURDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

#### Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds

Today in the alpaca and llama barn, breeders are scheduled to give talks on a variety of subjects. All are avidly attended.

Jim Faiks talks about crating and moving animals by air; few there would know better than he the intricacies of this process.

Bill Barnett presents the suri — he has numbers of these beautiful little creatures on display. Although I'm listening to these talks between my own ongoing presentations on our stand, I'm intrigued to hear Bill's opinion that the suris (regarded in their native land as more vulnerable than the huacaya) are positively thriving in the benign conditions of Washington State. His birth rates are 100 per cent and complications have been few.

Mike Safley discusses the financial aspects of alpaca breeding and Bruce

Barr reviews international markets. Both talks have the stands packed and lively question times ensue.

Ken Jones, a Kiwi shearer now based in Oregon, gives a demonstration on one of Bill Graham's males. The animal is shorn standing and only the blanket is taken, leaving plenty of wool on for the approaching winter. It's an impressive display of shearing.

Outside there are strong winds building. The air has turned grey and there is an ominous cast to the light that filters through. Cars are feeling their way along the roads outside the ground, headlights ablaze — and it's only 4 pm. My first thought is that the burning has got out of control. However, it emerges that strong winds have been whipping the fine topsoil of newly-turned fields and the resulting dust clouds have been dense enough to close highways. No wonder our throats feel dry at the end of this day. We stagger off to bed and collapse.

#### SUNDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

##### *Spokane Interstate Fairgrounds*

Today is the last day of proceedings and, for some breeders, judgement day! A very practised judge from New Mexico has been flown up and the grooming this day is particularly assiduous. We have elected not to show. Bruce's animals have been shorn, taking only body wool and leaving head, neck and forelegs as a 'head and shoulder's portrait of the animals' coverage. The back legs have also remained unshorn. This gives the animal comfort in summer, but leads to lots of 'poodle' jibes. This is often a breeder's dilemma: how to ensure the animal's welfare yet not remove its key selling points.



*Perplexed amidst the Suris.  
Judge has a hard job placing these final alpacas.*

##### **A judging dilemma**

The animals on display are a credit to their owners and their intense preparation is evident. The judge is excellent, giving a clear and confident appraisal of conformation, fibre coverage and quality. We all learn a lot.

It is interesting, though, when the suri class is judged. Here the judge has a real headache and her perplexity shows. She candidly admits in her judge's notes that indecision should never show. But she says, 'I'm going to be honest with you; although I'm familiar with suris from here to Peru, this is the first time I've ever judged them.'

The victors' ribbons go to animals which have been groomed so that the suri ringlets are evident, but not so pronounced as the 'dreadlocked' animals we are becoming increasingly familiar with. For the judge, a very tough call.

##### **A 'hugely successful' show**

Sunday ends much as it has begun with the talking, showing and presentation going on well into the night.

It's been an exhausting, but hugely successful, show with many animals sold and a very large new group of enthusiasts turned on to the breed.

Great praise is due to the Northwestern breeders for their enthusiasm and enterprise. Particular credit is due to Bill and Nola Graham and their farm manager, Jennifer Travis, who have worked without ceasing to bring about this splendid and well run event.

It is evident that, over the next few weeks, farm visits are going to be running hot and many new sales achieved. Bruce has sold animals at the show and his farm visits start as soon as next Tuesday afternoon. Tomorrow (Monday) we make the long drive back.

We will all be glad to get a break from the talking and the dust which, despite rain on Saturday night, has scarcely abated within the showgrounds themselves. Dry, dusty fields and heavy traffic have overcome the organisers' best efforts to lay the dust.

My solution is simple — a long beer or, better still, several. Cheers! 🍷





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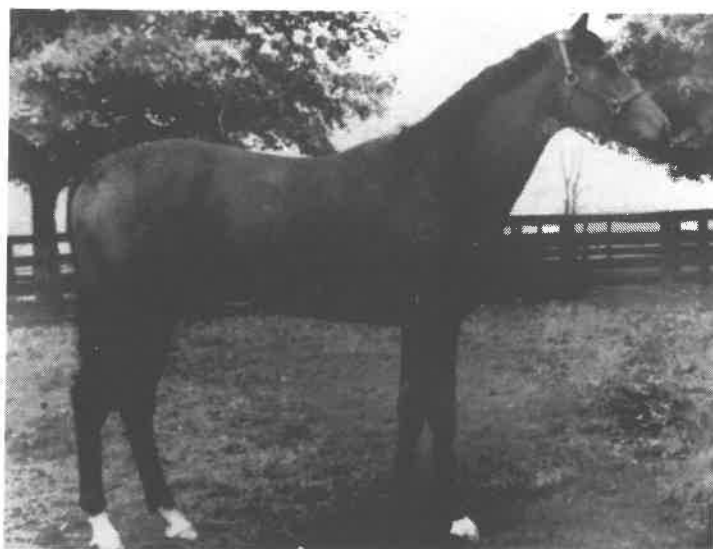
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# A LESSON IN LEADING

*Karen and Andrew Caldwell run Wyona Alpaca Stud, near Young, NSW.*

*Their camera records the first lesson for 'Amazon', a five-and-a-half month weanling female.*

*She was naturally extremely flighty, nervous and curious — the original 'Wild One'. She'd never been handled before...*

## 1 : Yard design

We use an enclosed yard, 20ft x 30ft, with sides of approximately 4ft. A smaller yard would do.

## 2 : Preparation and correct halter fitting

Before catching the youngster, have the halter ready to put on. Hold the nose band in the left



hand, as the right arm will be restraining the animal. A correctly fitting halter will be high on the bridge of the nose, with no interference to the eyes. Do the buckle or clip up very firmly.

## 3a : Desensitising

Time must be spent desensitising the ears, head, muzzle and legs — everywhere you handle your youngster.



## 3b : Desensitising

The alpaca is a naturally 'head shy' animal.



## 4 : First reaction to halter resistance

You will almost always experience some violent initial reaction to the losing of the alpaca's 'get-away-quick' mechanism.



## 5 : Keep head down

In cases of severe rearing up, keeping the head down when an animal threatens to 'go up' will avert a disaster.





#### 6 : Facing up

Stand to the side of the youngster (at her shoulder) and pull her head around to face you, making sure her body has swung around also. Release pressure on the lead immediately, she has 'faced up'. Repeat often, equally for each side.



#### 7 : Discouragement/reward system



Make the experience uncomfortable until the animal does what is requested; then follow with immediately with praise and reward. Don't ask for too much — take it slowly.

#### 8 : Leading from the shoulder

Keep the youngster's head and front legs in front of you; your body should be level with her shoulder. Encourage her to move toward your lead hand by touching her occasionally on the rump. Repeat this procedure on both sides.

### THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOUR... IT'S NOT SO HARD, AFTER ALL!



*'Little and often', is our golden rule when training youngsters.*

*Lessons of ten minutes each, twice a day, will ensure against boredom and resentment.*

*Try and finish each lesson on a happy note, so that the animal has good memories of the experience.*

*Good luck!*

# INTERNATIONAL CAMELID SYMPOSIUM

*Alpacas in  
the Negev Desert  
and guanacos  
in Wales...*

*Andrew Forrest  
reports from Bonn.*

*Andrew Forrest of  
International Alpaca  
Management Pty Ltd,  
Sydney with  
Dr Jane Wheeler  
of the San Marcos  
University,  
Lima, Peru*

A four day European Symposium on South American Camelids was held at the end of September at Bonn in West Germany and was attended by sixty-two delegates from around the world, including Philip and Judith Street and Andrew Forrest from 'Coolaroo', Berrima, NSW.

The eighteen participating countries included Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bolivia, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Peru, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA.

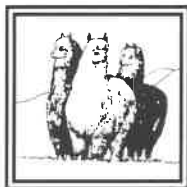


There were speakers from eight of these countries who presented twenty-four individual discussion papers overall. These papers were divided into four basic topics which included: genetics and breeding; nutrition and management; fibre production and marketing; camelid organisational and management strategies.

While the alpaca was in the forefront of most papers presented, the llama, vicuna, and guanaco were also the subject of much discussion. All these first cousins have been, or are being, researched around the world; there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained by the study of these animals.

Of particular interest to the delegates was the presence of Ilan Dvir from Israel who imported three hundred alpacas from Chile and runs them on the Negev desert. These animals have apparently acclimatised without any problems although, for

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unknown reasons, it took about two years for the females to commence breeding.

His animals are maintained on a controlled feeding program, as there is very little grazing available. He intends increasing his herd substantially over the next few years.

Another interesting contributor was Dr Gwyn Moseley from the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research at Dyfed, Wales. He presented a paper on the 'Digestibility and intake of herbage by guanaco under stall feeding and grazing conditions'.

Dr Moseley runs a herd of some thirty guanaco which he is carefully grading and which have an average fibre test of 16 microns and a lower limit of 14 microns. This is after the rather expensive exercise of removing-guard hair, resulting in a cut of approximately half a kilo per year, per head.

I presented a paper on 'Launching the alpaca industry in Europe', in which I stressed the importance of obtaining animals from a disease-free country with a wide genetic base, like Australia. I also pointed out that while the elements of risk, profit and satisfaction have been so much part of the Australian, New Zealand and American experience, Europe has a particular advantage which wipes out the risk factor, leaving the profit and satisfaction elements wide open.

The Symposium organisers were Dr Martha Gerkens from Bonn, West Germany, and Dr Carlo Rinieri from the Facolta de Medicina, Veterinaria, Italy. The Symposium was chaired by Dr J. Lauvergne from the Laboratoire de Genetique Factorielle, Paris, France.

On the final day, the delegates were taken on a tour of the Valley of the Rhine and Moselle — a grand and fitting finale to a most interesting and informative four days. ▲



*Ilan Dvir of Alpaca Farm, Israel with Andrew Forrest.*

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# THE MAREMMA

*Alpaca owners  
with Maremmas  
guarding their  
herds tend to  
be strong advocates  
of the breed.  
Here's why...*

Of all the animals connected directly with humans, dogs provide the only example of domestication based on mutual recognition and commonality of purpose, rather than on capture and domination. In its earliest days, that purpose was hunting. Today, dogs and people share a number of tasks and activities.

Around 25 to 30 million years ago *Cynodesmus* roamed the earth. This animal was the ancestor of the wolf, jackal, fox, coyote and all the canines. The first wolves appeared on the earth about twelve thousand years ago. Eventually, humans and wolves discovered that they had similar needs and recognised in each other traits that could be used for mutual benefit. More importantly, wolves seemed to recognise humans' superior skills and

acceded at least in part to human authority. This marked the beginning of the relationship between dog and human.

An Arabian greyhound, the Saluki (meaning 'noble') was probably the first fully distinct breed of dog. It was the Arabs who first set down the concept of breeds (in relation to horses, but applicable to all bred animals):

*A breed is a group of animals raised by man so that it possesses certain hereditary qualities, including a uniform look which distinguishes it from other members of the same species.*

## BEWARE OF THE DOG

Although hunting is the prime instinct of the dog, other valuable latent instincts have been discovered

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and developed. One of these is guarding. As long ago as 10 BC, *Cave Canem* quite commonly appeared on houses in Pompeii. This may have been the first *Beware of the dog* sign and probably applied to the Molossus, a large, ferocious dog with pincer-like fangs. It was kept chained by day, and freed at night to guard its owner's property.

In desert, mountains, plains and forests, herds have been kept through the ages, needing protection from a variety of predators. The first sheepdogs were big and aggressive, ready to take on bears, wolves and any other stock predator. Nomadic shepherds in Asia were probably the first to use dogs in a herd protection role. The Phoenicians introduced them to Europe where they mated with local dogs.

#### THE WORKING DOG

Although the working dog has been part of the Australian rural scene for as long as traditional farming has existed in here, its primary role has

been one of stock control: mustering, and droving. The basis of this farmer-dog working relationship is mutual respect and an acknowledgement by the farmer that the dog is an individual with its own place on the farm. Such a place is far removed from the family pet status of most city dogs.

It has long been recognised that the best way to spoil a good working dog is to distract it from the role it

has been bred for, perhaps by trying to also treat it as a pet. This is particularly true of Maremmas — a dog with a tradition of guarding flocks which is as old as humans' practice of keeping herd animals.

The Maremma is a result of the interbreeding of two Italian dogs, the mountaineering Abruzzese and the Maremmano. The Maremma has been recognised as a bona fide breed



*An increasingly familiar sight — the Maremma and the alpaca, on friendly terms.*

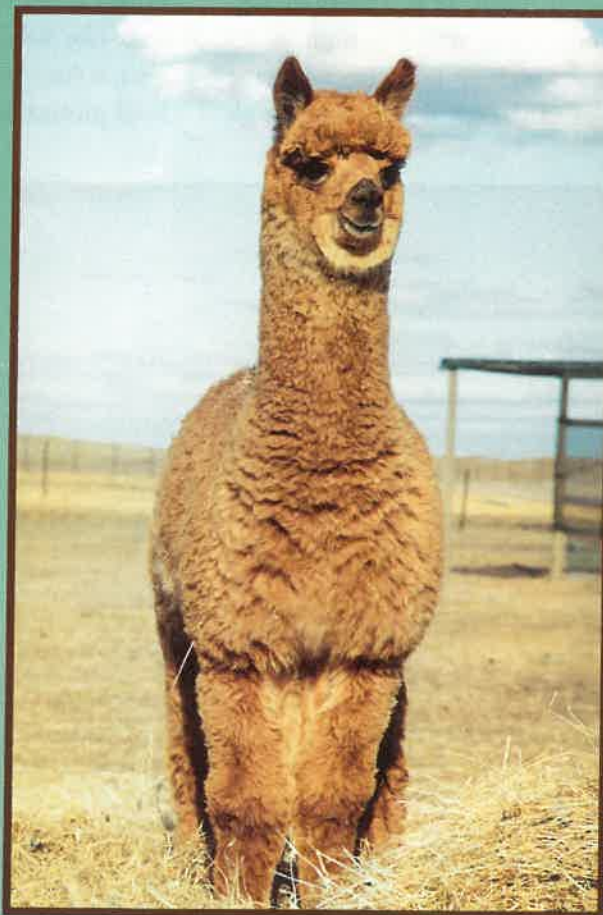


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*Traditionally hardy — the Maremma is at home in snow country. In Australia, the dog has adapted to warmer climates equally well by shedding its coat in summer.*

since only 1950. It is a massive dog. The males can stand as high as 73 cm, and weigh up to 45 kg; while the females can reach 68 cm and weigh

40 kg. A majestic animal with a large bear-like head and lively, intelligent eyes, it has, in the tradition of all true herd protection dogs, a light coloured

coat. (White or light-coloured herd dogs are easier to see at night and are less likely to be mistaken for darker-coated predators.) The coat, although dense, needs no grooming, is bramble resistant, and it provides excellent insulation for the Maremma against the cold. In Australia, the Maremma sheds much of its coat in warmer weather and regrows it in time for winter.

The Maremma is fearless, resourceful, trustworthy and extraordinarily loyal to its charges. Once

trained, it is not an animal that works in response to voice commands, whistles or signs. It does its most important work independently and at night, when stock is most vulnerable. The Maremma sizes up a situation and makes its own decision on how best it can be handled — aided by centuries of acquired wisdom through a long line of superlative herd protection ancestors.

### TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

Given the amount of stock (particularly sheep) losses to foxes and other predators, it seems odd that the concept of using a dog specially bred to protect stock has not become widely accepted in Australia by owners and breeders of more common herd animals.

Perhaps one answer is that many find it difficult to believe the capabilities of the Maremma as a stock protector. Alpaca owners and breeders appear to have been more willing to give the breed a chance to prove itself and to put time and effort into training the dogs.

### THE BONDING PROCESS

The description of training given here is for general information only. There are breeders and trainers available who will be happy to help anyone who is contemplating acquiring a Maremma, or an owner who may need advice on any aspect of training.

The training of the Maremma is achieved primarily by a bonding process. With sheep or goats the Maremma pup is introduced to, and lives with, young animals from the herd which the dog will protect. This process can begin when the pup is three weeks of age and still with its mother. Initially, the Maremma is put into a small paddock with the companion animals, lambs or kids of



*There's a special relationship between Maremmas and crias.*



about the same age — the beginning of the bonding process. At about ten weeks of age, the pup and companion animals are put into a small enclosure in a paddock which houses the flock the pup is to guard. The pup is let out among the herd for short periods, these periods being progressively lengthened to a full day at about sixteen weeks of age. A month after this, the Maremma is generally ready to be left out with the herd permanently, day and night. If, for some reason, a different herd requires protection, the Maremma's original companion animals may be introduced along with the Maremma to the new herd — a process which will hasten the acceptance of the dog among its new charges.

With alpacas, the process is slightly different. Goats or kids are of a similar size to Maremma pups; this is obviously not the case with alpaca crias so that the process of sharing a pen is not possible, at least while the pup is small. Additionally, alpacas have generally had little or no contact with dogs and initially need what they regard as a 'safe' distance between themselves and the Maremma.

The introduction of the alpaca to the Maremma can be performed by having the dog placed in a small enclosure either in the alpaca paddock, or in an adjacent paddock. This way, the alpacas can hear the dog and observe it without feeling threatened. The dog, in its turn, can observe the alpacas and become attached to them. As the dog grows, and if there are crias, they are sometimes housed together at night so that bonding can be strengthened.

The next step is to allow the dog in the alpaca paddock during the day. This should be a period of observation for the owner. The dog, at all stages of training, must be taught what behaviour is not acceptable. A

curt 'No!' or occasionally a clod of earth flung in the dog's direction will be sufficient deterrent.


The dog will defend its charges courageously. The day-to day process of guarding includes three activities.

- The dog will bark if it senses something amiss, therefore it is not advisable to chastise a working Maremma, or one in training, for barking.

- Scent marking with urine is undertaken by the dog around the boundaries of its territory — a warning to unwelcome intruders that the territory is occupied.
- The Maremma will patrol the boundaries of the flock mainly at night, when danger is at its highest.

To properly train a Maremma requires time and concentrated effort.





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From the beginning, the Maremma is focussed on to the job at hand — guarding and protecting. Any distractions, such as over-petting, or unnecessarily prolonging human contact with the dog, risks diminishing the effectiveness of the dog.

#### ALPACA OWNERS AND THEIR DOGS

Talk to a few alpaca owners, each with one or two well-trained Maremmas guarding their flocks, and you'll be surprised at the depth of admiration they have for their dogs. Even though alpacas are not at risk

from foxes as other stock animals are, many owners see risk from 'two footed' predators and potential problems with roaming packs of dogs.

#### Geoff and Nancy Halpin

Geoff Halpin was a leading Angora goat breeder who first used Maremmas to protect his goats. Nancy, his wife, notes that they had no losses, except when the dogs were removed from the flock. When the Halpins first imported alpacas into Australia, in 1988, it was decided that the Maremmas should be used to look after them, too.

An angry alpaca can seriously hurt a dog — and the dog will remember a bad experience. Such bad experiences can make a perfectly good dog lose confidence and inhibit its performance. As well, alpacas are valuable animals and no chances must be taken with their safety. And for this reason, the Halpins advise caution and patience in introducing the dogs to alpacas. Their approach has paid off, *Bathsheba*, their Maremma bitch made the transition from goats to alpacas. She is now seven years old and going strong.

Geoff has found that alpacas will move in on a dog's feed and try to eat it. He now feeds his dogs in an area away from the alpacas — a nip on the nose is not particularly useful for an alpaca's good looks!

Nancy Halpin feels that Maremmas are not suitable as pets. Over time they can become extremely possessive and cause great difficulties for their owners. This seems entirely reasonable, given that the dogs' instincts are to protect whatever, or whoever they are bonded to as puppies. One dog that spent its first three years as a pet has spent the last five with the Halpins. Nancy says that it took a long time to retrain the dog to take on its more appropriate role as a herd protector.

Nancy and Geoff keep people who are unfamiliar well away from working Maremmas. While not vicious in nature, the dogs are trained to identify anything unusual and to protect the flock from what they recognise as a threat. To the dog, an unknown person may represent such a threat.

The casual observer could easily be fooled by a sleepy-looking Maremma lazing around the paddock on a sunny day. The more observant will note that any odd sound or sight will set the dog's head turning to



*While the Maremma is still on guard, it doesn't stop him enjoying lazing with the herd on a warm and sunny day.*



identify what's going on. If all is well, you'll hardly notice the movement. If the dog senses danger, it will react immediately. Maremmas conserve their energy by day and become far more active by night. Geoff Halpin describes their night patrolling style as 'loping along'. The dog keeps moving at an economical pace that can be kept up for hours if necessary, checking boundaries, and investigating anything unfamiliar.

The Maremma's capabilities are not limited merely to recognition of external threats. Geoff tells of a puzzled owner who had not seen his Maremma, usually quite visible around his herd of goats, for quite some time. Alarmed, he went looking for the dog and found him standing guard over a goat who had managed to get its head caught in a gate. If an animal is sick or injured, says Geoff, the Maremma will stay with it until help arrives.

#### Pam and Ken Hull

Pam and Ken Hull (who feature in our 'Breeders Profile' this issue) are also strong supporters of the Maremmas. Pam and Ken acquired their Maremmas (two bitches) around sixteen months ago when they were both seven weeks old. The dogs were bonded to goats on Pam and Ken's property at Maccleston. There were no alpacas on the farm at this stage. They had been purchased but were still in quarantine, having been imported from Chile. Pam's approach to introducing the Maremmas to the alpacas was probably less cautious than that of many others. When she believed the dogs were ready and the alpacas settled, she put one of the bitches in with the alpacas — 'baptism by fire', as she aptly described it. She kept a close watch on proceedings especially that first night. All apparently being well, she introduced the second bitch to



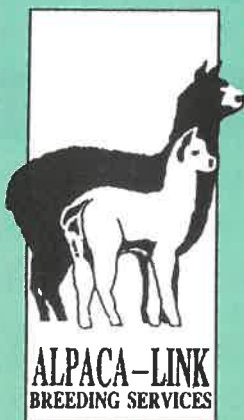
*Martino the Magnificent.*



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*Many Maremmas who are now guarding alpacas were originally bonded to other animals. Bonding is achieved at a very young age.*

the alpacas the following day.

While the dogs were still quite young, one of the alpacas was due to give birth. Anxiously awaiting the arrival of the cria, Pam was sticking close to home. However, she was persuaded to take a couple of hours off from her vigil and go to the market. This, of course, was when the alpaca decided to give birth. On Pam's return, she was confronted with the

sight of one newly born alpaca and two inquisitive dogs. These she promptly called off ('I just got there in time,' she remembers). Since then, there have been further births, all without a hitch. One dog sat with a cria almost non-stop for three weeks.

Towards the back of the Hulls' property is a nest inhabited by wedge-tailed eagles. Pam and Ken count themselves very lucky to have a

grandstand view of these majestic birds. The Maremmas are very much aware of the eagles as well, and keep a sharp eye out for them. When the eagles are close, the dogs toward any crias in the herd and sit with them until they're satisfied any danger has passed.

#### **Janet and Peter Sutherland**

Janet Sutherland's story of her involvement with both alpacas and Maremmas is quite unusual. She and her husband, Peter, had just acquired a new car and decided to trip away from their relocatable home village business in Budgewoi, NSW. Coming across a copy of *Town and Country*, they were somewhat taken with an article on alpacas and Maremmas. To give the trip some purpose, they decided to investigate further — especially as they had some acreage which they had plans to further develop.

The end result was the purchasing of alpacas and of *Martino the Magnificent*, a five month old Maremma pup. The pup was Peter Sutherland's choice; one look and 'That is the pup I want', he said.

Martino was bonded to sheep, but a couple of months later he had his

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first introduction to alpacas. The Sutherlands had purchased alpacas and some cashmere goats, and very late one night, brought them back to a property and unloaded them. Martino was placed in a small pen in a paddock where the animals were and more fully introduced by stages.

Initially, Martino thought it was great fun to chase the goats (which were purchased as companion animals). This was solved by the simple method of throwing an old shoe at him. The more difficult problem was Mercedes, an alpaca described by Janet as an 'old Chilean girl' and a 'matriarch'. Mercedes gave the dog a hard time for about six months. Happily, the dog handled the situation, and the alpaca eventually accepted the inevitability of having a dog around.

According to Janet, Martino smiles when a cria is born. His acceptance by the present twenty-two alpacas is so good that he has been permitted to help clean the new crias.

At one stage, another Maremma, Olivia, was used as a house guard for a while. (Olivia was acquired about six or seven months after Martino). This, observes Janet, was a mistake.

She feels that Olivia is still a little confused by the change in role and does not have the capabilities in the field that Martino possesses. Nevertheless, when Martino was out of action with a tic, Olivia took over his duties and did well. The Sutherlands now have a Rottweiler as a personal guard dog; this, Janet believes, is a far better arrangement.

That Janet is enthusiastic about Martino the Magnificent is an understatement. Her formula for bringing up a Maremma is simple: discipline them when necessary but remember that these dogs are, and must remain, independent thinkers. Don't spoil them, attend to their diet and follow their training schedule conscientiously.

There are probably as many Maremma stories as there are owners. The way in which Maremmas have been introduced to alpacas varies according to owners' perceptions of how their alpacas will react and how much faith they have in their dogs. Some recommend extreme caution, others believe the animals will find their levels of co-existence with less help. All agree, however, that Maremmas must be trained and sent out to work without distractions. They've been bred for centuries to the work of guarding flocks — to distract them from this task will diminish their capabilities.



*At home  
and on  
the job; the  
Maremma  
surveys his  
domain.*



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# EFFECTS OF FEEDING ON FIBRE GROWTH

*By Dr S Newman*

*Dr Sheryl-Anne  
Newman  
is a scientist in  
animal breeding  
and genetics, at  
AgResearch,  
NZ.*

The effects of nutrition on the quality and quantity of fibre growth have not been critically evaluated for alpacas. The marked seasonal wool growth pattern exhibited by long woolled sheep breeds in New Zealand has been widely demonstrated. Breeds such as the Romney grow wool about four times faster in summer than in winter.

There is a positive relationship between fibre growth and feed intake in sheep, with fibre growth increasing with increasing intake. Changes in wool growth rate due to feeding level changes are associated

with equivalent changes in fibre length and mean fibre diameter. There is also a pronounced interaction between season and the responsiveness of wool growth to feed intake, with the response rate to increased allowance less in winter than in other seasons.

The objective of the trial carried out at AgResearch's Flock House Agricultural Centre, Bulls, New Zealand was to investigate the effect of nutrition level on liveweight and fibre production in alpaca and to examine the response to nutrition level in summer and winter.

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Fourteen one-year-old alpaca were individually penned indoors over two trial periods for eight weeks — in summer from 1 January to 26 February 1992, and in winter from 14 July to 8 October 1992. Alpaca were introduced to a lucerne pellet diet before the trial and were placed indoors three weeks before the trial to allow adaptation to experimental conditions. Animals were offered either a low (maintenance) or

high (ad lib) feed allowance. Liveweights were measured fortnightly and a patch about 10 cm x 10 cm clipped on the mid-side of each alpaca monthly to measure fibre growth.

Intakes, liveweight gain and wool growth rates are presented in Table 1. Feed intakes are expressed on a dry matter (DM) basis, with the lucerne pellets around 88% dry matter. There was no difference between the feed intake of alpaca on the two feeding levels in summer, however, when compared on a metabolic liveweight (liveweight  $\text{kg}^{0.75}$ ) basis, which takes into account size differences of the alpacas, intake on the high feed allowance was greater than that on the low feed allowance.

Alpaca on the high feed allowance were fed ad lib and hence were able to select the amount of food they desired which provided an estimate of their voluntary intake. Voluntary intakes in the alpaca were higher in summer than in winter, as has been found in deer and goats. Voluntary intake in winter was about 70% of the summer level and intakes corresponded to

about 3% of liveweight in summer and 2% in winter.

Although intakes were lower in winter than in summer, the relationship between intake and liveweight gain was the same in both seasons. Liveweight gain was slower in winter because intakes were lower (see Figure 1). Intake required for maintenance, where there is no change in

liveweight, was 500 g DM ( $30.5 \text{ G DM/kg}^{0.75}/\text{day}$ ) of the lucerne pellets.

Maintenance feed requirements will vary depending on the energy value of the feed offered.

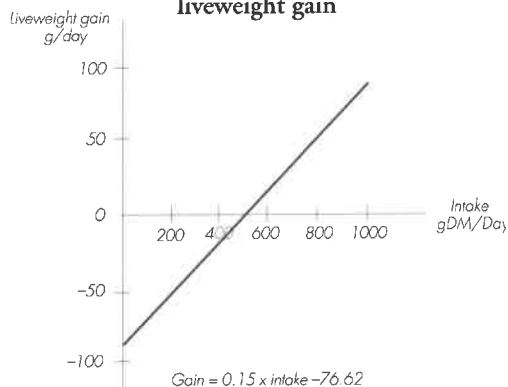
Maintenance levels for alpaca grazing outdoors would be higher than the trial alpaca as the alpaca kept outdoors would be more active, requiring increased energy. Increased levels above maintenance are required for growth (as shown in Figure 1), fibre growth, lactation, pregnancy, work and inclement weather. For growth in this trial, 6.5 g DM are required for each gram of liveweight gain.

Fibre growth is an integral part of an alpaca's metabolic processes, and it continues to grow even when the alpaca is losing weight, as shown in Figure 2.

Fibre growth rates were 25% higher in summer than in winter and 20% higher on the high feed allowance than on the low feed allowance. The response to feed intake was the same in both seasons and the higher fibre growth rates in summer were due to higher feed intake. Unlike sheep, increasing feed intake in winter would give the same response in fibre production as in summer. However, the voluntary feed intake is lower in winter than summer so fibre growth rates will not be as high under unrestricted feed conditions.

On the basis of this limited data it was shown that liveweight and fibre growth rates were affected by intake and by season, but unlike sheep, the response to intake was the same in both summer and winter. In this trial, a 30% increase in intake from the low to high feed allowance resulted in a 150% increase in liveweight gain and a 20% increase in fibre growth rate. Farmers will obtain an increase in fibre production by increasing feed allowance at any time of the year. ▀

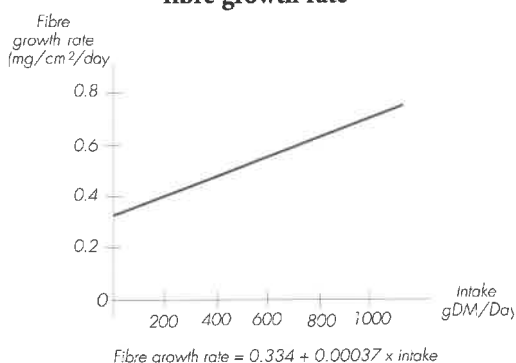
**Figure 1: Relationship between intake and liveweight gain**



**Table 1: Intake, liveweight gain and fibre growth**

Season	Summer		Winter		Std Error
	Low	High	Low	High	
Intake (gDM/day)	876	970	527	891	50
Met. intake (g/kg <sup>0.75</sup> /day)	56	68	31	47	2
Liveweight gain (g/day)	62	122	7	56	15
Wool growth rate (mg/cm <sup>2</sup> /day)	0.69	0.85	0.57	0.67	0.05

**Figure 2: Relationship between intake and fibre growth rate**





# THE WORLD'S FINEST LIVESTOCK INVESTMENT

*By Mike Safley*



*Mike Safley lives in Hillsboro, Oregon, on 30 acres with Julie, K.C., Charlie, Margo, Katie and 120 alpacas. He is partners in Northwest Alpacas with his father, Ken.*

*Mike enjoys working on various alpaca projects for the US Alpacas Owners and Breeders Association and is a frequent contributor to the US Alpacas magazine. The whole family enjoys tending the herd and the alpaca store at their ranch.*

strong demand, and people pay high prices for them. They are scarce, unique and the textiles produced from their fibre are known in the fashion centres of Paris, Milan and Tokyo. There are excellent profit opportunities and tax advantages available to alpaca breeders and investors. Historically, the alpaca's value has sustained ancient cultures, such as the Incas of Peru, and today alpacas are the sustaining economic force for millions of South Americans. History has validated the value of the alpaca.

*Editor's note: This article was published in the US Alpaca magazine, summer 93 edition and we are grateful for permission to reproduce it here. We hope our readers will enjoy the material and find it useful, bearing in mind, however, that information given has been based on American taxation and economic conditions and may not necessarily apply in Australia. Money values are US dollars.*

Why do people in so many countries call alpacas, 'the world's finest livestock investment?' For any investment to be valuable, it must possess certain qualities which make it desirable. Gold is scarce, real estate provides shelter, oil provides energy, bonds produce interest, stocks are supposed to increase in value and diamonds symbolise love. Alpacas share many of these investment attributes.

Around the world, alpacas are in

'Livestock', or animals raised for profit, was an investment long before financial stocks were sold on the New York Stock Exchange. The richest families of ancient times counted their wealth by the size of their flocks of sheep or herds of cattle. Today, wealth as a result of livestock ownership is not as common, but tending to a graceful herd of alpacas can also

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Alpaca breeders enjoy nurturing their animals every bit as much as receiving the profits they provide. The man who created the 'Beefmaster' breed of cattle from imported Limousine stock made the following observation: 'I know a lot of doctors and lawyers who would like to be cowboys, but I don't know any cowboys who would trade places with them.' A retired doctor who is now a full-time alpaca breeder had this to say: 'I would rather raise alpacas than anything I've ever done. Breeding alpacas is a labour of love and very profitable.'

Since 1984, alpacas have appeared, almost simultaneously, in several countries where they had never been seen before. The United States, Canada, New Zealand, France, Australia and England have all acquired the foundation animals for national herds. What makes this animal so desirable? Bottom line: Alpacas are both profitable and enjoyable.

#### ALPACA SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The developing market for alpacas has been restricted by lack of supply. There are only a few thousand alpacas in the US and about the same number in Australia. There has been little, if any, aggressive marketing of the animal, very few auctions, and very little national media attention for the alpaca. Yet both countries have experienced exceptional demand for alpacas at very high prices. Canada also has an active alpaca market, and many Canadians have invested in alpacas which are cared for on farms in the US and Australia.

Supply will continue to be restricted in the near future for a number of reasons:

- Alpacas reproduce slowly.

- Many breeders retain their offspring, building their herds.
- Import of the animal from South America is very difficult, risky and expensive. The cost of exporting an alpaca to the US. from South America is approximately \$10,000. The importer risks losing his entire investment if his animals develop health problems in the quarantine or experience any number of potential problems.
- Mass production of 'cria', or babies via embryo transplants is not feasible, since there is no available supply of suitable host females.
- The limited size of the national herds in each country outside of South America will restrain growth for some time to come.

Demand for alpacas has increased dramatically since their introduction outside of South America. The

American and Australian breed associations have more than 1,000 members, while only a few short years ago there were none. Each association publishes a full-colour Alpacas magazine which is available to its members.

Not only are there more breeders entering the alpaca market each year in established countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the US, but there are more countries competing worldwide to establish alpaca herds. Japan, Britain and Israel now have alpacas, and France recently acquired a few hundred animals. This process is sure to continue as the alpaca gains international recognition.

The demand for alpacas is part of a larger appetite for investment in rare breeds. Whole industries have sprung up around ostriches, emus, miniature donkeys and even Tibetan yaks. Investment in rare livestock

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coincides with people's desire to live in the country, raise their children on a farm or retire to a rural lifestyle.

Alpacas offer an outstanding choice as an investment. They have long been known as the aristocrat of all farm animals. But most of all, alpacas are easy keepers, they have a charismatic manner, do very well on small acreages and produce a luxury product which is in high demand.

Consumers are drawn to alpaca sweaters with just one touch. Alpaca is several times stronger and much warmer than sheep's wool. The fibre itself is semi-hollow and makes into very light, thermal garments. Alpaca fleece is easy to process and readily spins into both woollen and worsted yarn. Fabrics made from alpaca are sewn into the finest European suits and jackets.

Historically, alpaca production has been concentrated in the high Andes

Mountains where there is limited pasture. The world-wide population of alpaca is barely three million animals. As a result, alpaca is considered a specialty fibre with limited available supply. Alpaca fleece is comparable to cashmere in softness and is often mixed with other fibres, such as mohair, to enhance the value of the yarn produced. A future market for large volumes of alpaca fleece is easily envisioned.

The potential market for an animal with the characteristics of the alpaca is vast. Alpacas are loved by their masters and respected by those who process or consume products made from their fleece. They are truly the world's finest livestock investment.

#### INVESTMENT QUALITIES

An alpaca rancher with a small herd on a small acreage can expect to har-

vest his animals' fleece and sell their offspring profitably. The entire investment can be insured. Alpacas are easy to raise, very hardy and require minimal shelter. The entire family can participate in their care. Alpacas are respectful of children and value peaceful co-existence with humans.

The value of alpaca fleece is the economic underpinning of the future market for alpacas. The herds found outside of South America are not currently large enough to justify industrial processing of the fleece they produce. For the foreseeable future, domestic fibre will be sold to the cottage industries which revolve around handspinning and weaving. Most alpaca ranchers readily sell their fleece for \$2 to \$5 an ounce to local artisans. Each animal will produce five to eight pounds of fleece a year.

The current alpaca industry is based on the sale of breeding stock,

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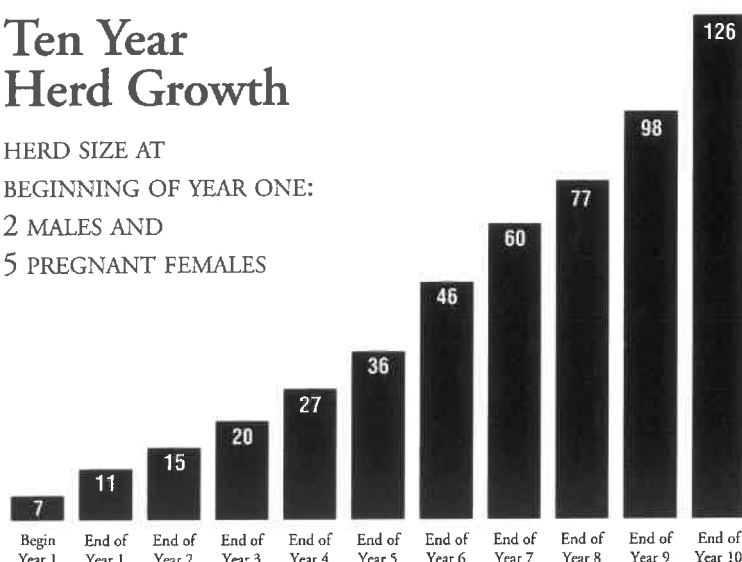
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which demands premium prices, selling for about \$20,000 to \$25,000 per breeding pair. Each pair is made up of one male and one female. Female

alpacas begin breeding at between 14 and 18 months of age. The males breed beginning at about three years. The females produce approximately

one baby per year during a reproductive life of about 20 years.

### ALPACA VALUES

The factors which influence individual alpaca prices include colour, conformation, fleece quality and quantity, age and sex. Females sell for more money on average than males, but herdsire quality males command the highest individual prices.

Breeders often prefer one alpaca colour over another, with the rarest colours demanding the highest prices. However, the parent colour does not necessarily guarantee a cria of the same colour. Correct, well-conformed alpacas sell for higher prices. Fleece density, uniformity and fineness also affect the animal's price.

The range of value for females is currently between \$12,500 and

TABLE 2

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	OVER PERIOD
<b>Herd at Beginning of year</b>											
Males	2	4	6	9	12	17	22	28	37	48	48
Females – Bred	5	5	7	9	11	13	17	21	27	35	35
Females – Crias		2	2	2	4	6	7	10	13	15	15
<b>Annual Births</b>											
Males	2	2	3	3	5	5	7	8	11	14	14
Females	2	2	2	4	4	5	7	9	10	14	14
Total Herd Size	11	15	20	27	36	46	60	77	96	126	126

Initial Investment \$118,500

#### Additional Investment:

Insurance Expense	\$3,075	\$4,185	\$5,445	\$6,825	\$9,075	\$11,550	\$14,625	\$18,810	\$24,150	\$30,405	\$128,145
Birth & Registration	600	600	750	1,050	1,350	1,500	2,100	2,550	3,150	4,200	17,850
Feed & Vet Expenses	1,400	2,200	3,000	4,000	5,400	7,200	9,200	12,000	15,400	19,600	70,400
Less Wool Sales	(1,680)	(2,640)	(3,600)	(4,800)	(5,480)	(6,640)	(11,040)	(14,400)	(18,480)	(23,520)	(95,280)
Total Add'l Investment	\$3,395	\$4,345	\$5,595	\$7,075	\$9,345	\$11,610	\$14,885	\$18,960	\$24,220	\$30,685	\$130,115

\* Female Crias \$15,000/Male Crias \$3,500

\*\* Bred Females @ \$17,500/Other females @ \$15,000

2 Breeding Males @ \$7,500/All Other Males @ \$3,500

Sale of Herd

\$1,272,500

Less Selling Costs – 5% of Final Herd Value

\$63,625

Net Sales Proceeds

\$1,208,875

Less Investment: Animals

\$102,500

Barns & Equipment

16,000

Additional Investment

\$130,115

Total Investment

\$248,515

Net Return on Investment

\$960,260

Divided by 10 years = \$96,026 Annual Return

**Return on Investment = 57.78 %**

(Based on Average Annual Investment)

Assumptions: Initial investment made January 1st

First crias born the first spring

80% birthrate

Females bred at 18 months of age



\$30,000. Many have sold for more than \$30,000. Males have a wider price differential. Herdsire quality males have sold in excess of \$75,000 and are often insured for more than \$100,000. Young, high quality stud prospects routinely sell for between \$7,500 and \$25,000, unproven. The financial analysis which accompanies this article incorporates animal prices which a buyer can expect to pay for good quality, sound breeding stock.

Alpacas are much like diamonds. The market pays a premium for brilliantly coloured, flawless examples of the breed.

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

There are essentially two ways to invest in alpacas. The first approach is to simply purchase the animals and begin raising them. The second approach is to purchase the animals and place them in the care of an established breeder. This arrangement for care and boarding of an animal on behalf of another is known as agistment.


Analysing either method of investing in alpacas requires making a set of assumptions. Determining the costs associated with raising the animals and how much they might sell for in the future are the basic elements used in projecting a return on the investment. The assumptions found in this article are estimates based on many breeders' experiences.

A major investment benefit of owning alpacas is based on the concept of compounding. Savings accounts earn interest, which if left in the account, adds to principal. The increased principal earns additional interest, thereby compounding the investor's return. Alpacas reproduce almost every year, and about one-half of their babies are females. When you retain the offspring in your herd, they begin producing babies. This 'Alpaca Compounding' tax-deferred wealth

building is another 'alpaca advantage'. As your herd grows, you avoid paying income tax on its increasing value until such time as you begin selling the offspring.


The graph on page 38 illustrates how a herd might grow in size over a ten-year period, assuming you begin with five pregnant females and two males. The herd growth depicted represents alpaca compounding at work. The initial herd, beginning with

seven animals, grows to 126 animals in ten short years. Not many investments appreciate at the same rate. There are two ways for an investor to turn the dynamics of compounding and tax-deferred wealth building into alpaca investment profits. We'll call the first approach 'The Hands On Alpaca Investment', or the active management approach, and the second approach will be termed 'The Agisted Alpaca Investment'.



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## HANDS ON ALPACA INVESTMENT

This method of investing in alpacas, as either a part- or full-time business, requires that the alpaca breeder own a small farm or acreage, properly fenced with a small barn or shelter. The alpaca owner is presumed to supply the day-to-day labour.

The projected benefits from a hands on investment in alpacas (see Table 2) are based on the following assumptions:

- The ultimate sale price of the female offspring you raise is equal to the original cost per female in your initial herd. In this analysis, five pregnant females were purchased for \$17,000 each. There are two herdsire quality males included in your initial purchase at \$7,000 each. The sale prices for the males you produced were assumed to average \$3,500 each. This allows for the fact that all males produced and sold would not be of herdsire quality.
- The cost of feeding and caring for the alpacas, including routine veterinarian cost, is \$200 per animal per year. This is exclusive of labour, which is presumed to be supplied by the owner at no cost.
- The herd reproduces at an 80 per cent annual rate after taking into account mortality. In other words, 80 per cent of your adult females produce a baby each year.
- You insure the herd. Alpacas can be insured for between one per cent to three per cent of their value per year. Smaller herds are often fully insured against all risk, with no deductible, for about three per cent. We used the more expensive full coverage in our projections.
- Additional breeding males will be acquired through trade with other breeders.

- We assumed you would have approximately \$16,000 in start-up costs for such things as barns, fences and equipment. These improvements should also add value to your real estate and could be depreciated for tax purposes.
  - Sales costs are five per cent of your gross sales price. This will cover your advertising and marketing expenses.
  - Babies are assessed a one-time \$150 charge for birthing cost and registration fees.
  - Fibre sales are predicated on \$3 per ounce and five pounds per animal per year.
- As you can see from the table below, the growth of your investment is dramatic. The herd which initially cost \$102,500 grew to a value of more than \$1,272,500 in ten years.

## RUFUS YOUNGBLOOD



Rufus Youngblood formerly of Glenwood Alpacas, now residing in the Hawkesbury Area of NSW established himself as a top sire when his daughter Cedar House Angelique won the 6-12 months class, Royal Easter Show (Syd) 1992. His son Wyona Chipper won the 6-12 months class, taking out Reserve Champion Male at the Royal Easter Show (Syd) 1993.

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The next return after deducting all the projected costs is \$960,260. This equals a 57.78 per cent annual average annual rate of return. The average amount invested over the ten-year period was \$166,200.

This is an impressive return, but remember to consider all the hard work your family put into nurturing this investment.

The Hands On Analysis also assumes that you don't sell any alpacas over the years — the \$1,272,500 future sale value is created by your herd's 'alpaca-compounding' for the full ten-year period. Most breeders grow their herds to a certain size then

begin selling their production annually.

You can use the Hands On Analysis to project what results you might expect from buying a larger herd and beginning sales immediately. To make this determination, pick a year where the 'value of production' less the 'additional investment' for the year equals the amount of cash flow you would like to achieve. For instance, if your goal was approximately \$60,000 of annual cash flow, year four would be the appropriate column to analyse. The value of the fourth year's production is \$70,500 less the additional investment or expenses of \$7,875. To achieve these

results, you would need to purchase nine bred females and two herdsire males.

This analysis also illustrates the conservative nature of an investment in alpacas. First, the analysis projects no increase in the value of the alpacas over time. In fact, the males produced were sold for less than the males purchased. Second, it's clear that the price of alpacas would have to decline drastically before you could lose your initial capital. With the current limited supply of alpacas and the growing demand, prices might rise in the future, but even if they don't, you still do quite well. ▲

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## PACAPOLOGY

In our Winter edition we made two mistakes. First, we spelt Teazles as Teazels — it definitely should be Teazles; second, some addresses got mixed up.

Teazles address is :  
Newstead Road, Newstead 3462

The Australian Alpaca Centre's address is : Old Hume Highway,  
Berrima NSW 2577.

There is no connection between the two firms.

*Our apologies for the error.*

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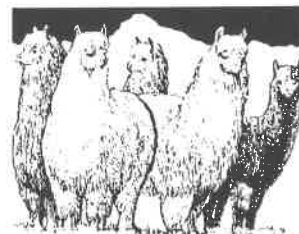


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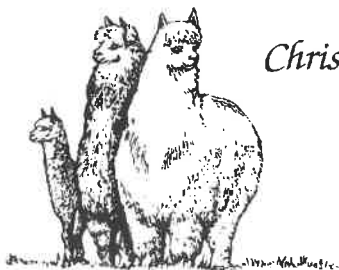


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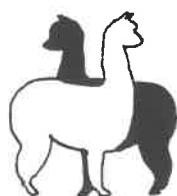
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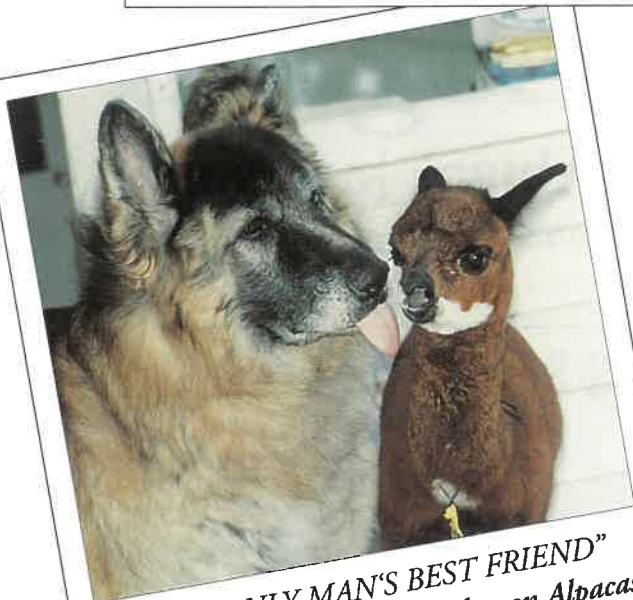
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# PACA PICS...

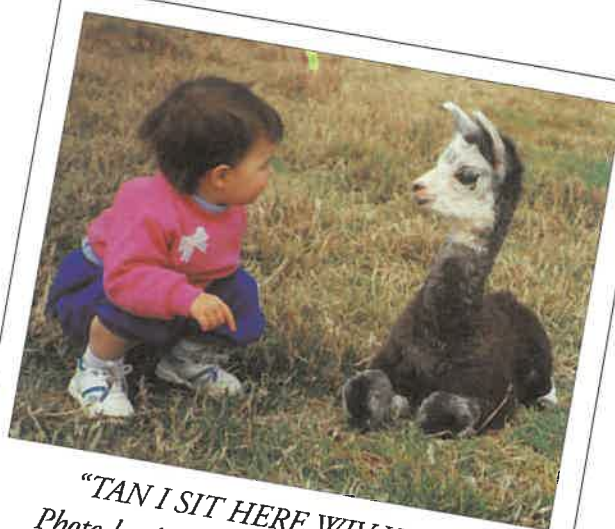


## PIC OF THE PACK

*"NICE CHEEK FUR ... SLIGHTLY UNDERSHOT JAW ..."*  
*Wayne and 'Anastasia'. Photo by Phillip, Central Coast Sun, Acacia Alpacas.*



*"NOT ONLY MAN'S BEST FRIEND"*  
*Photo by Chris Williams, Amberson Alpacas*



*"TAN I SIT HERE WIV YOU?"*  
*Photo by Amy Whitfield's Grand Poppy,  
 Kevin Rubie of Meadow Bank Alpaca Stud,  
 Forbes, NSW.*

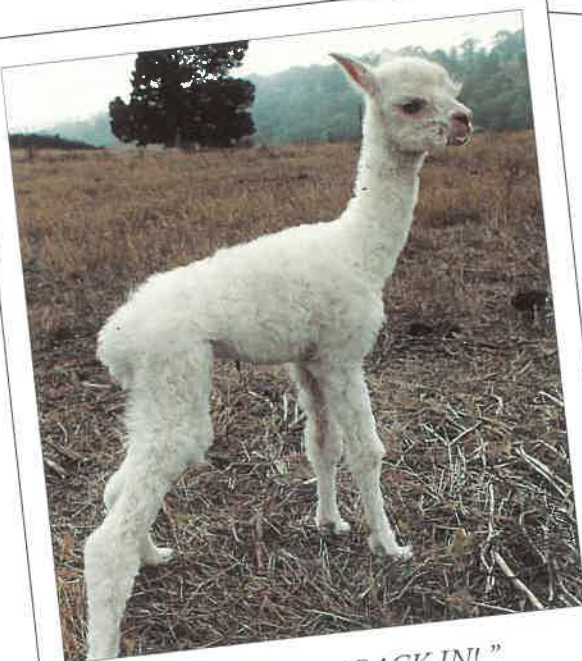


## PACA**PICS**...



*"WOH ... IS THAT 5.9 KILOS ALL MINE?"*

*Photo by Clair Allston, Waterford Farm, Courtesy of Heidi and Silver Cloud.*



*"LET ME GET BACK IN!"*

*Photo by Alan Cousill, Pucara Alpacas*



*"AREN'T THOSE HUMANS FUNNY?"*

*Photo by Mark Jefferis, 4 mile Alpacas, Benalla.*



## PACA**PICS**...



*"DO YOU THINK IT BITES..."*  
Photo by John Aldred, Caringa Alpaca Stud



*"LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE!"*  
Photo by Noel Laity, Park View Alpaca Stud

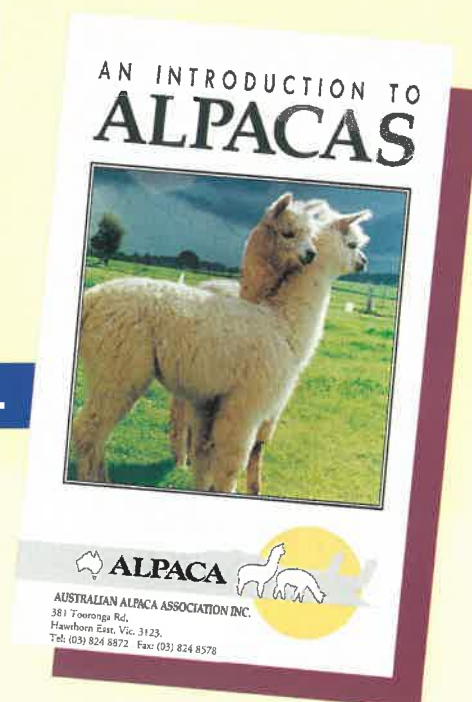
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## ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOW JUDGING RESULTS

*The judging was performed by  
Alan Hamilton*

### Female 6-12 months (all colours)

- 1st *Cherry Hill Moet*, T & D Oliver
- 2nd *Ceyreste Champagne*, D & Z Webb
- 3rd *Inca Honey Bunch*, K & I Allston

### Male 6-12 months, white and fawn

- 1st *Beau Blanc*, L Christall
- 2nd *Cherry Hill Hugo*, T & D Oliver
- 3rd *Malkiya/diamond*, C Nicholson

### Male 6-12 months, brown (dark, medium and light)

- 1st *Andalana Cassius*, J Cochrane
- 2nd *Cherry Hill Muscat*, T & D Oliver
- 3rd *Truleen Downs Cochison*, T Bailey & C Long

### Female 1-2 years (all colours)

- 1st *Cherry Hill Ebony*, D & T Oliver
- 2nd *Shanbrooke Friendship*, D & R Condon
- 3rd *Shanbrooke I'm a Toff*, D & R Condon

### Male 1-2 years (all colours)

- 1st *Pengelly Charlemagne*, C & P Nicholas
- 2nd *Pengelly Marmaduke*, C & P Nicolas
- 3rd *Purumbete Bullwinkle*, L Fisher & S Rainbow
- 4th *Purumbete King Arthur*, I & K Allston

### Male 2 years and over (all colours)

- No 1st place awarded
- 2nd *Shanbrooke Pretty Boy*, D & R Condon
  - 3rd *Narre Warren Boy*, T Bailey & C Long

### Female 2 years and over

- 1st *Shanbrooke Nusta*, D & R Condon
- One entry only

## CHAMPIONS

Junior Champion Male *Beau Blanc*

Junior Champion Female, *Cherry Hill Moet*

Senior Champion Male, *Pengelly Charlemagne*

Senior Champion Female, *Cherry Hill Ebony*

## FLEECE JUDGING RESULTS

### Fleece Saddle under 12 months

- 1st *Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud*, D & R Condon
- 2nd *Shorley Park Alpaca Stud*, R & P Morley
- 3rd *Chris Humphreys*

### Fleece Saddle 1 year and older

- 1st *Jenny Raymond*
- 2nd *Chris Humphreys*
- 3rd *Chris Humphreys*

## CHAMPION FLEECE

*Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud*

*Results supplied by D. Condon*

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**Keep those photos coming in folks!**

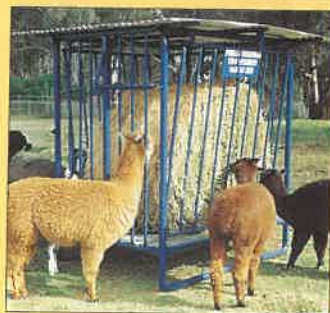
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# AAA NOTES

From Sandi Keane

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AGM

It was pleasing to see a large turn-up again for our Annual General Meeting held at the Commercial Club in Albury on 10 October, 1993

## COMMITTEE

David Webb has replaced Ken Allston as Vice-President and I have taken over from Dianne Condon as Secretary. Ken and Dianne have worked very hard for the Association over the past couple of years and were applauded, most deservedly, for their efforts. Three new members were elected to the committee: Dougal Macdonald from ACT and Gray Morgan and Peter Nicolas from Victoria. The line-up now is:

President: Alan Hamilton  
Vice-President: David Webb  
Treasurer: Alex Stevenson  
Secretary: Sandi Keane  
Committee: Ken Allston  
Keith Barnett; Cherie Bridges  
Dianne Condon; Roger Haldane  
Geoff Halpin; Laurie Harrison  
Allan Jinks; Dougal Macdonald  
Gray Morgan; Peter Nicolas  
Janet Sutherland; Western  
Australia representative

## CESSATION OF FOUNDATION REGISTRY

The members voted to close the registry to foundation animals in support of current legislation being draft-

ed by the Chilean government to allow only second-generation alpacas from approved research farms to be exported.

A secondary but important issue for members was the threat of FMD after official advice was received from the Bolivian Government about the number of Bolivian alpacas being moved across the border and sold as 'Chilean' stock.

It was noted that New Zealand had already closed its foundation register in July this year and that the American Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association would follow suit. With support from Australia, New Zealand and the US, it is hoped

## WE'RE PUTTING OUR BEST FEET FORWARD:

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THE ARRIVAL OF PERHAPS SOME OF THE FINEST CHILEAN BORN ANIMALS ONTO OUR SHORES IS IMMINENT AND WE INVITE YOU TO INSPECT AND CONSIDER THEM FOR INCLUSION IN YOUR CURRENT BREEDING PROGRAM. ALL OF THE ANIMALS HAVE BEEN HAND CHOSEN AND RIGOROUSLY TESTED PRIOR TO FINAL SELECTION AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THEY WILL BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NATIONAL HERD.

OUR CREDENTIALS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES. WE HAVE BRED MULTIPLE CHAMPIONS IN BOTH MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY. STUD MALES, INCLUDING "BUSTER", ARE SOUGHT AFTER BY MANY BREEDERS AND WITH THE ADDITION OF OUR LATEST MALES INTO THE LINE-UP, YOU ARE ASSURED OF IMPLEMENTING A FIRST CLASS BREEDING PROGRAM.

THE FEMALES INCLUDE A VARIETY OF COLOURS, SOME WITH CRIA AT FOOT, ALL ARE YOUNG AND HEALTHY WITH EXCELLENT ATTRIBUTES. INCLUDING FIBRE, HANDLE, DENSITY AND MICRON READING.

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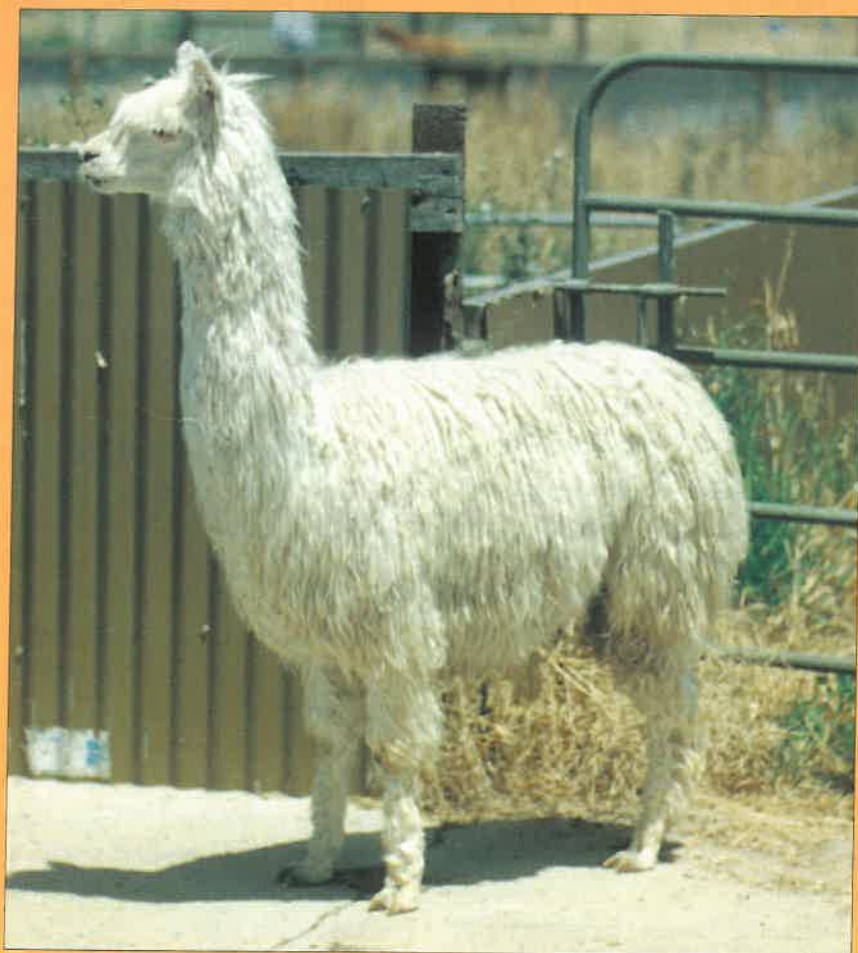
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## A L P A C A S

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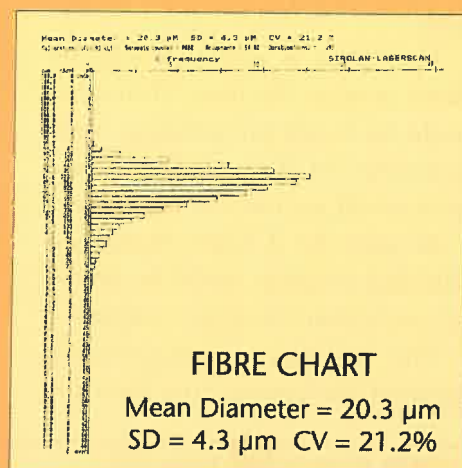
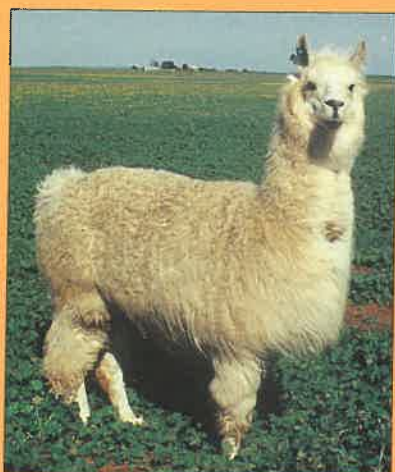
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Only one other group of Suri in Australia - Total 30



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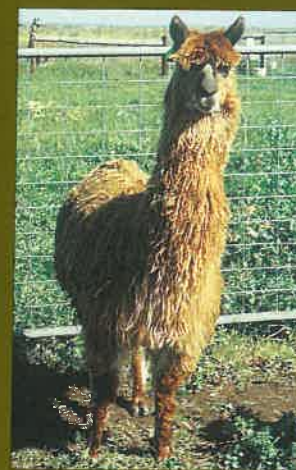
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that the new legislation will be passed by the Chilean parliament in December. Exports would then cease for four to five years to allow for production of export stock. This would effectively open up new markets for Australian breeders in Europe where a large number of permits from Chile are outstanding.

## MARKETING

In order to stimulate our marketing program, a marketing officer will be appointed. One of the roles of the marketing officer will be to develop a program of field days, Australia-wide, incorporating private sales. This will especially assist members with small numbers of animals for sale.

The marketing officer will also be responsible for publicity and the development of markets in Europe. The American Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association have reported renewed market demand and higher prices following the appointment of a marketing consultant.

An excellent marketing tool for members will be the new 12-page colour brochure available in mid-November.

## CERTIFIED BREEDING MALES

Members supported a move to introduce this new classification into the Registry to prevent breeding males with physical genetic faults from being registered. It was agreed that we needed to establish a breeding program to produce the finest possible stock to compete on the international market. A list of unacceptable faults has been drawn up.

It should be noted that the list deals mostly with health and genetic faults, such as limb deformities and ectopian eyes. No fibre characteristics

are listed, since issues such as micron preference can only be determined by future markets.

It is important to note that only crias born to Certified Breeding Males will be eligible for registration.

Those members who already own registered breeding males will not be affected by the new classification, although obtaining the new classification will obviously enhance the market value of their stud male. The new registration fee for the Certified Classification will be \$200.00.

## FIBRE MARKETING CO-OPERATIVE/COMPANY

Following the overwhelming support for the concept at Roseworthy, the President's report to the AGM outlining the structure and philosophy of his proposal was the highlight of the day. Essentially, the concept is that the company be grower controlled and funded rather than have capital sought from outside the alpaca industry. This would ensure that growers received the maximum return for their fibre.

Financing the operation would be achieved by offering 'cash' or 'fibre' shares.

Briefly, the Class A Shares would be fully paid with a minimum subscription of one thousand \$1 shares. These shares would carry voting rights.

The Class B Shares would be offered in return for fibre. Their value would be based on a sliding scale dependent on fibre quality. These shares would not carry voting rights.

As with the A Class Shares, no individual or group would be able to own more than 5% of the company.

The members unanimously endorsed the concept and gave the

President and Treasurer the authority to undertake the following steps:

- to engage an accountancy firm to work on the most suitable structure;
- to investigate more thoroughly
  - the setting up of a classing warehouse at Carpetwool Marketers in Geelong, Victoria;
  - the pricing structure of fleece;
  - the capital cost of setting up a classing warehouse;
- to discuss further with Jindalee Fibre Developments the processing of alpaca and the offer to the alpaca industry of a 10-24% share of the company. (Jindalee Fibre Developments was set up by Professor John Leeder, formerly Head of the Textile and Fibre Research Institute.)

The President and the Treasurer will report back to the General Meeting in March 1994 and the concept will be launched at the 1994 Annual Seminar to be held in Canberra in July.

## FIBRE RESEARCH

The outgoing Vice-President advised that a report on the scientific study of fleece parameters would be available to members shortly. Initial tests supported the claim of superior strength of alpaca fibre over wool and superior washing yields (over 90%) due to the low grease content of alpaca. Unfortunately, the Victorian Government's cost-cutting exercise has postponed the appointment of a Ph.D student to continue our research. An application for funds has now been made to the Federal Government.



# AAA NOTES

## TREASURER'S REPORT

We were happy to hear the good news from Alex Stevenson that our Balance Sheet showed net assets of \$66,739. However, income from registration and transfers is likely to drop from \$105,000 to \$45,000 this year. In

order to maintain the national office and employ a marketing officer, an increase in some registration fees is necessary. It was agreed that, in addition to the new Certified Breeding Male category (\$200) that transfer fees be increased to \$100 and registration of females to \$30.

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# COMINGEVENTS

## NOVEMBER 11-14

### *Bendigo Expo '93 — Vic*

AAA Victorian Central Region is manning a stand at the Bendigo Expo between November 11-14. This is a multi-faceted lifestyle and modern farming Expo and some of our members will be present with their animals in the Alternative Lifestock Section. Contact: Gary Brealy (054) 353 589.

## NOVEMBER 20-21

### *Lilydale Show — Vic*

Lilydale Agricultural Show will hold alpaca classes for the first time. They will be judged by Kelvin Maude, an A Grade Association Judge, on Saturday 20 November at 10 am. Contact: Dianne Condon (03) 730 1399.

## LATE NOVEMBER

### *Car Rally — Western Region, Vic*

End of year car rally and BBQ. Spend the day travelling between some of our Alpaca studs. Lots of fun and prizes. See the Newsletter for more details.

## 1994

## FEBRUARY 5

### *Nowra Show — NSW*

To be held in Nowra Showgrounds. Alpaca judging will be by an AAA recommended judge. (Nowra is one-and-a-half to two hours south from Sydney). Contact: Ian Davison (044) 460 096.

## FEBRUARY 12

### *Berry Show — NSW*

Held at Berry Showgrounds. Alpaca judging will be by an AAA recommended judge. (Berry is one-and-a-half to two hours south from Sydney). Contact: Ian Davison (044) 460 096.

## FEBRUARY 18-20

### *Seymour Alternative Farming Expo — Vic*

A few sites are still available for promotional purposes. The Association will be

manning a stand. This is a great opportunity for promoting your studs. For further information contact: Jane Szigethy (054) 270 375 or Peter Nicolas (054) 237 220.

## FEBRUARY 26

### *Lucindale Alpaca Fleece Show — SA*

Further details contact Convenor: Trudi Barnett, phone or fax (087) 660 026.

## FEBRUARY

### *South Australia*

Regional get-together. Time and venue yet to be decided. Contact: Keith Barnett phone or fax, (087) 660 026.

## MARCH 12

### *Sydney Region — NSW*

Provisional date for TTEAM Training clinic. (See details page 13 this issue). Phone or fax Nerida Aldred, (055) 947 320.

## MARCH 18-19

### *South East Field Days — SA*

Promotional stand, large animal display and fleece display. Contact: Keith Barnett, phone or fax (087) 660 026

## MARCH 19

### *Central Region — Vic*

Provisional date for TTEAM Training clinic. (See details page 13 this issue). Phone or fax Nerida Aldred, (055) 947 320.

## MARCH 19

### *Yarra Glen Agricultural Show — Vic*

Alpacas on display and information available. Contact: Dianne Condon (03) 730 1399.

## MARCH 19

### *Mt Pleasant Feature Show — SA*

This show will hold alpaca show classes. Contact: Rob Shepherd, phone (085) 246 150 or fax (085) 246 775.

## MARCH 26

### *Western Region — Vic*

Provisional date for TTEAM Training clinic. (See details page 13 this issue). Phone or fax Nerida Aldred, (055) 947 320.

## MARCH 26

### *Red Hill Agricultural Show — Vic*

Alpacas on display and information available. Contact: Catherine Sweetnam (059) 873 032.

## APRIL 2

### *Eastern Region — Vic*

Provisional date for TTEAM Training clinic. (See details page 13 this issue). Phone or fax Nerida Aldred, (055) 947 320.

## APRIL 9

### *South Australia*

Provisional date for TTEAM Training clinic. (See details page 13 this issue). Phone or fax Nerida Aldred, (055) 947 320.

## ATTENTION!

### ALPACA OWNERS AND BREEDERS

Lorna Howlett, well known author of *COMPLETE BOOK OF PONIES, PONIES IN AUSTRALIA, THE PONY*, etc. is presently writing the history of *ALPACAS IN AUSTRALIA*.

Owners and breeders are invited to contribute short histories of studs and interesting short incidents they have experienced for possible inclusion. Quality colour and b/w photographs will be considered but all material MUST bear sender's full name, stud name and address, which must also be placed on back of photographs. Please send only COPIES of photographs. Stud numbers are important.

All material to:

Lorna Howlett,  
30 Jupiter Street, Gerringong, 2534.



## THE CLASS OF '93

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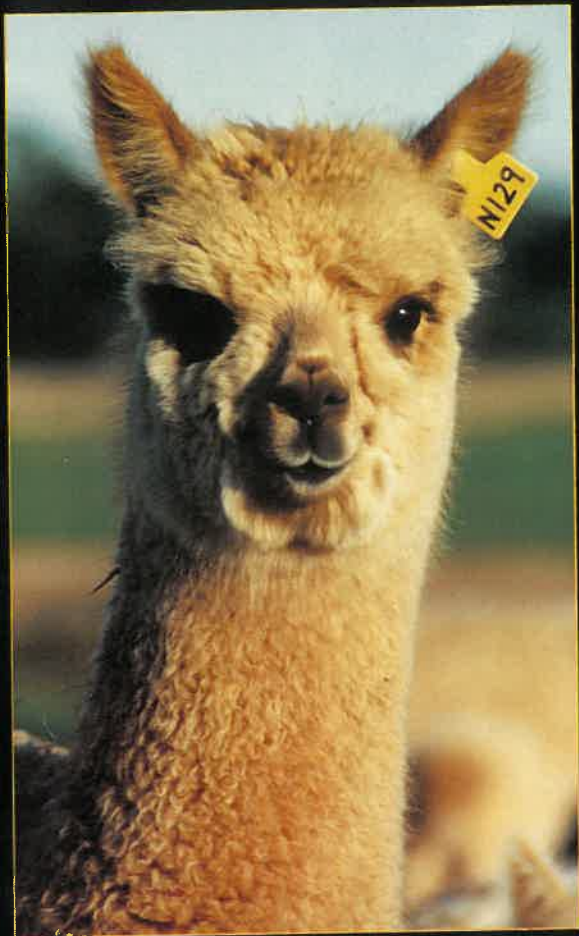


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