

Q-ALPACA PROGRAM

FORM Q5 – GUIDELINES FOR APPRAISAL OF PROPERTY AND HERD MANAGEMENT

Overseeing veterinarians are strongly encouraged to undertake an initial appraisal on farm with owners, soon after they enquire about enrolling in the Q-Alpaca Program.

Q-Alpaca Program aims at protecting alpaca herds against a wide range of infectious diseases. It is in the interests of both parties, and the Program in general, that owners clearly understand their obligations under the Program and that overseeing veterinarians have direct knowledge of the property and herd management that they may be about to supervise and certify. The veterinarian must be confident that the herd and the owner are able to maintain the Program status.

A similar, although less detailed appraisal of the property and management is required annually to ensure the standard is being maintained.

Identity of the Herd

- Record the names and address of the owner, herd and property (-ies). These details must be included with the herd management plan. Describe the numbers of eligible animals that comprise the herd. This includes all agisted animals in the herd.
- Identify the land to which the herd will be confined (hereafter called the land) and the whole property on which it is located.
- Identify areas for mating, quarantine or shearing.
- Determine if the land comprises a number of separate blocks.
- Obtain a plan clearly showing the land, its subdivision into paddocks, watering points and stock handling facilities. Clearly identify any parts of the property that will not be included in the land on which the herd is run. This plan is to be included in the management program.
- Record the type of construction of boundary fences and evaluate their security. Advise where the upgrading of fences is necessary.
- Record neighbouring properties and determine whether they run alpaca or other animals classed as eligible species in the Q-Alpaca Program.
- Identify any sites that would allow entry of potentially contaminated water or faeces. Assess what barriers to such movement exist and make recommendations where existing barriers are not appropriate to the risk.
- Where changes are necessary, the overseeing veterinarian must be satisfied that the improvements are made before the herd progresses to membership of the Program.

Eligible animals

- Record the number of alpaca and other eligible species on the land.
- Determine the origin of the herd and how long it has been established.
- Determine how animals in the Program herd will be separated from other eligible animals on the property.
- Determine what feral animals run on the land and the risk they present (for example, to fences).

Management of the herd

- Determine a method of individual animal identification which ensures permanent identification of each animal. IAR ear tags are recommended.
- Record the general management system in the herd, for example shearing, joining, weaning and weaner management, selling and agistment policies, etc.
- Determine what alpaca have normally been introduced into the herd in the past.
- Review quarantine policy, including worming and vaccination.
- If land consists of more than one block, determine how eligible animals could be moved between them with a low risk of becoming infected.
- Determine whether alpaca in the herd are reared or run on any other land (for example, agistment, group rearing, etc).
- Determine what barriers are necessary to prevent exposure of animals to potentially contaminated areas.
- If animals are to be moved onto or off the property for supervised mating, overnight stays or shearing, describe the mating, quarantine or shearing area(s) and management that will be undertaken to minimise the risk of infection.
- Review worm control programs, including liver fluke: faecal egg counts pre and/or post-treatment, routine or strategic treatments, chemicals used, chemical rotation, pasture rotation, etc
- Review ectoparasite control programs, especially lice.
- Review vaccination policy: vaccines used, pre-delivery vaccinations, vaccine storage.

Records

- Review current property and animal records and determine whether improvements would be needed to comply with the Program.

Owner's Understanding and Consent

- Ensure that the owner is provided with a copy of these rules and guidelines and understands the principles of the Q-Alpaca Program, especially concepts of risk management, eligible species, the importance of maintaining the integrity of the herd, and the use of this Program as a bio-security tool.
- Review the agreement between the herd owner and approved veterinarian (Form Q2).