



# ALPACAS AUSTRALIA

The official publication of the Australian Alpaca Association Ltd





Fine huacaya genetics in both black and white.



## FEATURED STUD MALES



### ENCANTADOR SIR GALAHAD

Sir Galahad is an excellent well conformed ultra fine, ultra soft handle fleece animal, with the fantastic pedigree and excellent genetics of Jolimont Warrior, Blue Grass Centurion, Purumbete Ledgers Dream, Windsong Valley Royal Inca and Purumbete Highlander all in the mix.

2007 Mic 16.1 SD 3.1 CV 19.4 CF 100%  
2008 Mic 16.1 SD 3.1 CV 19.4 CF 100%  
2010 Mic 22.1 SD 3.9 CV 17.6 CF 96.5%



### JOLIMONT ALESSIO

Alessio is a "Pure Accoyo". His sire is well known Peruvian Accoyo Jolimont Sculptor. His dam Jolimont Palma is also an Accoyo female. Alessio displays a perfect conformation carrying a superior fleece in density, lustre and crimp definition.

2002 Mic 21.71 SD 3.9 CV 17.97  
Fleece weight 7.64kg  
2004/5 Mic 24.20 SD 4.1 CV 16.9  
2007 Mic 27.60 SD 4.2 CV 25.7  
2010 Mic 29.2 SD 5.0 CV 17.2 CF 66.2a



### ACCAPACCA SHARIFFE

True to type, solid black male with exception fleece density and length. Shariffe is maintaining his softness through to his 4th fleece. His show results are a testament to his excellent confirmation and fleece style. A male worthy to any coloured breeders.

2010 Mic 23 SD 4.3 CV 18.9% CF 94.1%



### BANKSIA PARK TESK CENTAUR ET

2010 National Show Reserve Champion senior male with a beautiful ultra soft lustrous and dense fleece with extreme crimp definition. The son of Banksia Park Khan, he is a fine, conformationally correct, hard working male that will further the breeding program of any stud.

2010 Mic 19.2 SD 4.1 CV 20.2 CF 98.2

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**Cover:** Photo by Penelope Beveridge  
Penelope Beveridge photography

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# President's Message

As this will be my final President's piece for the AAA magazine, I would like to take the opportunity to reinforce to our readers that the Australian Alpaca Association has not only much to be proud of but much to offer.

The AAA is a vibrant organisation which regularly hosts quality events around all of our 13 Regions and the recently held National Show and Sale in Adelaide was no exception. Members from across Australia took the opportunity to showcase their animals, fleeces, art, crafts, photographs and merchandise and the event was certainly a testament to member dedication and belief that this industry is here to stay.

I congratulate and sincerely thank the 2012 NS&S Convenors, Sarah and Perry Wheeler and their very enthusiastic and hard working Committee, for their determined and tireless efforts and organisation that ensured we had access to facilities which enabled such camaraderie and goodwill to prevail.

The AAA has successfully staged National Shows for 19 years. All have their own uniqueness but the common thread is that we have a core of our membership who unreservedly give of their time to making sure this annual event is a highly successful one. Without such members the National Shows would simply not eventuate. This year's Committee has again proved that we as a membership have volunteers who are at the forefront of the AAA's endeavours and resulting achievements.

Awareness of the potential of our industry across all livestock enterprises is an important ongoing priority. It is pleasing to note that more and more members are taking the opportunity to attend and showcase at local Agricultural Shows. Every State has numerous shows that are operated by the local agricultural societies. They are always looking for livestock to promote agriculture in its many forms. Right now is the time for us, as either Regions or individual members, to take up their offers and promote the industry and the AAA as a membership which offers much. Why? Because the industry has many Australian made end products which clearly demonstrate that we can indeed be viable; the AAA leads the way in providing information and resources to existing and potential new members and we can demonstrate that Australia has some of the best genetics in the world.

Advancing our industry is the responsibility of all. As members we have the prerequisites to do that at our fingertips and the AAA Board, I have no doubt over the coming months, will continue to provide leadership with that advancement.

I wish the incoming President, Michelle Malt and the new Board of Directors all the very best for the future and trust that the AAA will continue to be an organisation of which you and I will be proud to be members.

Kind regards,

*Jenny McAuliffe*

Jenny McAuliffe  
AAA Ltd. President





# Introducing our new President

I am honoured to have been elected as President at the recent AGM in Adelaide. The Board welcomes four new Directors, and I look forward to working alongside them and the four continuing Directors to represent the interests of all members.

The Australian Alpaca Association is the peak industry body representing and promoting the alpaca industry at all levels both here in Australia and overseas.

In this area I believe we have much to offer our members. With 13 Regions around Australia, a range of opportunities are available for members to show their animals and fleeces, benchmarking their breeding decisions and advancement, and providing the opportunity to market their stud; to attend workshops and educational seminars to learn new skills and share experiences; and to network with others who share a common interest in alpacas.

Each of us has a part to play in advancing the alpaca industry in Australia, and despite our busy lifestyles we can all contribute something, even if it is only to assist with one local display, attend one regional show, participate in an educational workshop, or open our farm during National Alpaca Week. I would encourage each of our members to find the time to participate in at least one activity during the coming year.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of our outgoing President, Jenny McAuliffe, and Vice President, Ian Vanderbeek, whose contribution to the AAA over the past few years has been significant. It has been my pleasure to serve with them on the Board for the previous two years, and I assure you that I will work closely with my fellow Directors to continue the forward momentum necessary for the alpaca industry to be seen as a viable, successful part of Australian agriculture.

Kind regards

Michelle Malt



## Workshops for new breeders.

### *The Program.*

Includes classroom and hands-on sessions in the barn, working with alpacas. Learn how to select quality alpacas - recognise good conformation and desirable fleece traits. Understand pedigrees, and fleece reports.

Learn how to trim toe-nails, give vaccinations, drench, body condition scoring, weigh and shear your alpaca. Matings, spit-offs, birthing, new cria care. Train alpacas to walk on a lead.

Discover how to breed to succeed. What animals should I start with? Do I need my own stud male? What facilities will be needed? Farm layout - fencing, laneways, catch pens.

Learn how to establish a successful alpaca business plan.

### *The Venue.*

CountryPlace, in the Dandenongs, is an award-winning, residential, retreat. Stay in luxury accommodation. Enjoy fabulous food.

The individual price is \$425 (\$625 couple). The package includes en-suite accommodation for Saturday night, breakfast, morning teas,

Saturday and Sunday lunch, Saturday night dinner, and workshop materials.

### *Bookings.*

All details and booking forms are at [www.flowerdalealpacas.net](http://www.flowerdalealpacas.net)  
Or phone Jen on 03 9728 7070.





# News & Views

## Book Review

A Place for Alpacas - By Cilla Taylor

The title of this book says it all. If you are reading this review then you obviously have a place for alpacas.

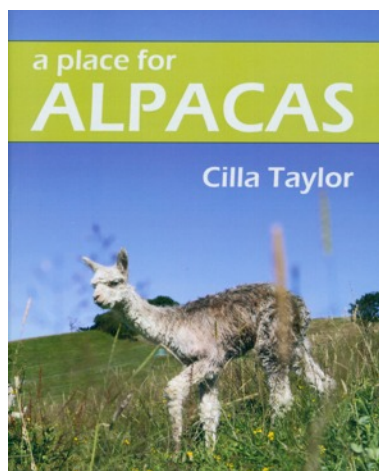
Cilla Taylor, a New Zealand alpaca farmer, started her herd now numbering over 100 alpaca with just 2 females in November 2001. Her herd now contains huacayas and suris. I recently met Cilla in New Zealand and can testify that this book is truly a work of one's experience in raising these wonderful animals along with the many opinions one gathers through the time involved.

The farming environment covered by Cilla is New Zealand, her farm is north of Auckland. The book covers the obvious chapters including Background and history, Behaviour, The farm environment, Health and breeding. There are at least three chapters which are not found in other introduction to alpaca books. These are Photographing your alpacas, Visitors to the paddock and Using the fleece. This last chapter covers skinning, washing, carding, spinning and felting. There is also an index which is always handy and a Notes and a telephone numbers page.

The chapter on Using the fleece should certainly be of interest for the beginner or buyers and breeders interested in craft and value adding.

The photographs in this book are very informative and among some of the best I've seen in my short association with the alpaca, especially the image of the cria snacking on a Scotch thistle.

The author acknowledges that her book is intended as an introduction to alpacas and is neither a technical or veterinary manual. I thoroughly recommend this book as a title that belongs on the bookshelves of all those who love alpacas.



Full colour, 110 pages, paperback, self-published.

Available on line from Amazon \$US 34.95.

Reviewed by Alan Fisher,

Greyleaves Alpacas

Interesting Alpaca related newspaper clipping from yesteryear - Sydney Morning Herald 26 July 1851.

**COMMITTALS.**—Dennis M'Carty was yesterday committed to take his trial for stealing three pieces of alpaca cloth, value £4 5s., from the door of Mr. Chisholm's shop, in Pitt-street, where they were exposed for sale. Constable Watson saw M'Carty proceeding along Market-street towards the Racecourse with the cloth under his arm, and thinking that there was something suspicious in his manner, stopped and interrogated him. He said he was taking them home to his master's; but on Watson intimating that he must go to the watch-house, M'Carty dropped the goods, resisted, and attempted to make his escape. Just as the prisoner was secured, Mr. Swindell, from Mr. Chisholm's shop, came up and identified the goods as having been shortly before stolen. The prisoner was then walked off to durance. —Joseph Barnett Joseph was committed to take his trial at the Quarter Sessions, for stealing one bucket, the property of one Bolster; and one bucket, the property of a female named Fleming. —John Williams was brought up for further evidence on the charge of stealing a case of gin from Mr. Pyke's public-house, on Wednesday evening, after which he was committed for trial.

## British Alpaca Futurity 2013

Planned for the 15/16 March 2013

Venue NEC Birmingham

The British Alpaca Futurity is designed to be the showpiece for all British Alpaca breeders, large or small. Highlights include alpaca halter classes with over 300 animals being shown, a select live auction and celebration dinner, a plethora of trade stands and our unique Fibre Arts Village featuring end products made from fleeces of British bred alpacas.

You can also see these skilled craftspeople at work as live demonstrations take place throughout the show. We look forward to seeing you there!

For more up to date information visit [www.britishalpacafturity.com](http://www.britishalpacafturity.com)



## Deadline for articles & advertising Issue 67

8th January 2013

Magazine Due – Early March 2013

All editorial contributions should be typed and preferably submitted electronically as a "Word" document. Photographs should be digital, high resolution, sent as attachments, to ensure good reproduction.



# Christmas Gift Ideas



## **Christmas Alpaca Cookies**

Cookie cutters available from:

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

Price: \$13.95 for Suri or Huacaya  
Also cria Huacaya for \$9.95



## **Spin your own luxury alpaca yarns ... wherever you go.**

Spindle spinning is very portable, and very simple. There's no need to own a spinning wheel, or to carry cumbersome equipment.

Learn to spin the simplest way, still used by thousands of people in Peru and throughout the world. knitalpaca spindle kits contain all you need to get spinning: a hand made drop spindle; leader yarn; and approximately 75 grams of soft, natural coloured alpaca tops ready to go. In addition, you have simple, easy to follow instructions to get you started. Now go on, spin yourself some luxury!

Available from [www.knitalpaca.com](http://www.knitalpaca.com) Price: \$35.00



## **Medicine and Surgery of Camelids Third Edition**

Murray E Fowler Wiley-Blackwell, USA

First published in 1989, Murray E. Fowler's book, "Medicine and Surgery of Camelids" became the veterinary bible for the alpaca community world-wide.

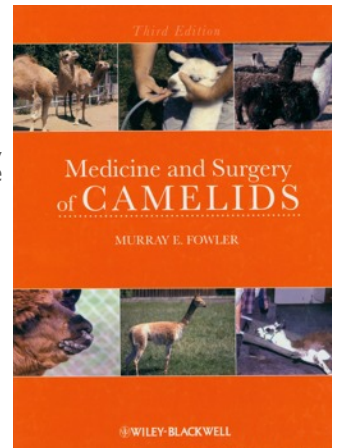
A second edition was published in 1998 and now a third edition is available. The scope of this edition has broadened materially, information on old world camelids has been added. While much of the anatomy and medical is applicable to all camelids, where specific differences occur they are discussed more fully. Hundreds of new citations from the world literature provide details for the interested reader. References from sources that are less readily available to most readers have been deleted.

The quantity and quality of research on camelid medical challenges have expanded exponentially since the publication of the first edition of Fowler. A significant milestone in camelid research is the completion of the alpaca genome project, which has great potential for genetic studies. Colour has been added to this edition and there are more than 500 colour images and 250 black and white photos and diagrams. The author's aim is to provide medical information on all camelids for clinical veterinarians, research scientists, students and others interested in the health and well-being of these special animals.

Although expensive this book is recommended to all alpaca breeders who want to have a reliable veterinary reference readily to hand. Needless to say, your local veterinarian should be aware of this new edition. I purchased my copy from Alpaca Dynamics. Published by John Wiley-Blackwell.

Recommended retail \$200.00

*Reviewed by Alan Fisher,  
Greyleaves Alpacas*



## **Alpacas Join The Mainstream**

Schleich is loved by kids around the world. Schleich founded in Germany in 1935, with its collection of life-like animal figurines making its first appearance in the 1950s.

Parents, children and teachers work collaboratively with Schleich to ensure the animal designs look as realistic as possible and can be easily handled by little hands. For almost 80 years, the company has held onto its commitment to educate children about the natural world, while creating toys that are non-harmful and pass the strictest safety tests with flying colours.

Price: Variable - available from toy stores nationally.



Life Membership of the Australian Alpaca Association is bestowed upon a member for the outstanding and highly honourable contribution they have made to our organisation.

The contribution and involvement by the member must be exceptional.

The following members of the Australian Alpaca Association Ltd. have been awarded life membership of the Association in recognition of their services to the Association and the Australian alpaca industry.

2000 Allan Jinks

2001 Ken Allston [Deceased]

2001 William (Bill) Plunkett [Deceased]

2002 Roger Haldane

2005 Graeme Dickson

2006 Richard Dixon [Deceased]

2009 Robert (Bob) Richardson

2011 Dianne Condon [Deceased]

2011 Kerry Dwyer

Two more names have been added to this illustrious list and those presentations were made at the recent AGM in Adelaide.

Sincere congratulations are extended to Mr Paul Haslin and Mr Cameron Holt.



L-R Paul Haslin, Jenny McAuliffe and Cameron Holt



L-R Paul Haslin with award presenter, Ian Vanderbeek

## Paul Haslin

Paul Haslin, together with his wife Frances, owns and operates Elysion Alpacas in NSW and first joined the AAA in 1996, over 16 years ago.

Paul's substantial role as a volunteer within the alpaca industry has covered an extensive period during which time he served as President of the NSW Southern Region from 2001 to 2004 and chair of the AAA Showing & Judging Sub-Committee from 2007 to 2008. His love affair with the National Show & Sale started in 2001 in Canberra and he convened the 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2008 National Show & Sale in Canberra.

Paul was also co-Convenor of the 2011 National Show & Sale at Homebush and an adviser to the 2009 and 2010 National Show & Sale Committees.

Not satisfied with just convening the National Show Paul, together with Fran, accepted the challenge of convening the alpaca section at the Sydney RAS in 2007 and he has continued to do so every year since. During this time the alpaca section has seen a steady growth in numbers and popularity with exhibitors due to the high standard of organisation set by Paul.

Sydney Royal attracts breeders from all states and is now generally considered to be the leading Royal Show in Australia. The relationship with the RAS is such that over the last couple of years they have contracted out the organisation for the whole alpaca section to the AAA, specifically under Paul's guidance.



Paul also served as a director on the Alpaca Cooperative Board from 2001 to 2004 and, as a founding Director, was involved in the sometimes difficult transition to AAFL. More recently he has headed up the Working Party to provide input into a new on-line Showing System for the AAA.

In his "spare" time Paul has assisted in the organisation and presentation of papers at various new breeder seminars presented by AAA Regions and a collective of private breeders. His mentor role in the industry is well known and he has been responsible for introducing and nurturing a large number of alpaca breeders.

Not content with his many volunteer roles for the AAA, and with a keen community spirit at the fore, Paul is also a qualified NSW Ambulance Service Community First Responder where, in conjunction with the NSW State Emergency Service, he provides critical first response emergency medical treatment in his local Canyonleigh area.

It is through the tireless contribution and leadership of volunteers like Paul that our industry is able to command a position in the forefront as a vital, emerging agricultural industry and the Australian Alpaca Association is delighted to recognise Paul's achievements by bestowing upon him Life Membership.

## Cameron Holt

The Board of the Australian Alpaca Association is pleased to advise that Cameron has been awarded a Life Membership of the AAA Ltd for the services he has provided to the industry over the last twenty two years.

Cameron first became involved with the Australian alpaca industry when working as head of the Wool and Fibre Department, College of Textiles at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in Victoria.

Because of his background and long association with wool, mohair and cashmere industries, Cameron was asked by the founding fathers of the Australian Alpaca Association to advise and set up standards for both the testing and judging of alpaca fleece.

The research work commenced about 1990 initially using the Purumbete alpaca herd of Roger Haldane and Cameron was working in this research with Dr Ian Stapleton of Latrobe University.

Throughout the next decade Cameron spent countless weekends educating alpaca breeders about the qualities of alpaca via a series of workshops all around Australia, while continuing to conduct valuable research.

Cameron was always willing to share his knowledge about fleece and many of the earlier breeders who were thirsty for that knowledge will recall dinner-time conversations that stretched well into the wee small hours while he was bombarded with questions.



L-R Cameron Holt with award presenter, Graeme Dickson

More than twenty years later, he proudly lays claim to being the ring steward at the first ever alpaca show in Melbourne 1991, which was judged by the well-known Peruvian vet, Dr Walter Bravo.

Cameron's wide-ranging knowledge in commercial fleece and textile matters, combined with his practical research into alpaca characteristics has led to his being sought after by Alpaca Associations all around the world.

He has been instrumental in setting up the judging standards for alpaca fleece, not only here in Australia but in the USA, UK, Canada and New Zealand. He has provided education on fleece matters and judging criteria to alpaca breeders in all these countries and worked extensively with the AAA to initially implement and then re-evaluate our fleece standards as required. Cameron has consistently given his time as a trainer and presenter for all our judges at every AAA Showing & Judging Workshop since 1995.

In more recent times Cameron has been the main contributor to two documents written and published exclusively for the AAA. These are:

- ❖ The Shearing Shed & Pre Classing Code of Practice, originally produced in 2006 and revised in 2011
- ❖ The Alpaca Classing Code of Practice, the first such standard for alpaca developed anywhere in the world and just completed this year.

This award is the Association's way of saying thank you to Cameron for the ongoing service he continues to offer to our industry.❖



# A Year in the life...

## 2011 Victorian Rural Woman of the Year

Who would ever have thought that being a guest speaker at a regional bank function would see you in 18 months time dining in the Great Hall at Parliament House in Canberra, with our very own National President, after a wonderful week of networking and completing the Company Directors Course and doing it all as the RIRDC 2011 Victorian Rural Woman of the Year? But that is precisely what happened to me and as I look back on a year which was very full and quite remarkable, I sometimes have to pinch myself as I would never have believed that such wonderful things could happen to one person in such a short space of time.

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award is an amazing award which is open to women of all ages who work in agriculture or the area of natural resource management and it offers the support and the networking to extend your leadership aspirations, receive a bursary of \$10,000 to work on your nominated project, undertake the company director's course and in my case, travel around your state speaking at functions and meeting so many remarkable, resilient and fascinating women. Occasionally you met some men too!

I was encouraged, or should I say, forced, to nominate for the Victorian award in the middle of 2010 as a group of business women in Gippsland, where I live, had decided that I had the best chance of the women they knew to bring the trophy home for Gippsland. I, on the other hand, had never heard of the award so took some convincing that I could actually do it and I am so thrilled, nearing the end of 2012 and my ride is still continuing, that they thought of me.

As I move around the state of Victoria, I encourage all women to have a go and enter the award.



The application process and the interview, by a panel of five judges in my case, was a little intimidating, but if you have a project which you believe in, and are passionate about agriculture and rural life, then it does seem to flow quite naturally.

The project I submitted was based around the alpaca industry and those of us who produce wonderful wearable art which could hold its own in any gallery around the world. Then to take this work and use my background in importing and exporting to ascertain as to whether or not there would be a market in China for the garments. The project is coming along nicely and I have received huge support from so many areas; Government and Non Government including the Chinese Government and I look forward to travelling to China in 2013 to finish off the first part of the bursary funded project.





The remainder of my year as the Victorian Rural Woman was spent travelling around Victoria speaking at dinners and functions, over thirty five in total, and meeting some amazing women and espousing to all the attributes of the wonderful world of alpacas and how dynamic our alpaca industry actually is.

This can be a little challenging sometimes as there always seems to be more Merino breeders in the room than alpaca breeders, as you would expect. To convince them alpacas are worth more than the value of a herd guard is often challenging, but a challenge I enjoy!

They often change their tune when I speak about the amount of money I can make from one of my fleeces when I have produced garments that I then sell in my agritourism business, Nickelby At Darnum in West Gippsland.

The other benefits from winning the award are that I often have the ear of the politicians, from State Premier to Agricultural Minister; I dine with CEOs of financial institutions, and sit on State Government Agricultural advisory panels advising the Minister on anything from agricultural education in schools to rural funding for new farmers.

I am often asked what the award has done for my alpaca tourism business which I operate on my 67 acre farm in Darnum, West Gippsland. It is difficult to put a dollar value on the sales directly attributed to my winning the award, however, I have certainly met some wonderful people who have shopped at Nickelby At Darnum. Would they have found me anyway? I don't know but I doubt it. I received a huge amount of media coverage from print to TV and to National radio. The flow on from this advertising we know can continue for many years.

I do know that a small tourism business such as mine would not be of interest to many financial institutions, let alone their CEOs but I have served up coffee and cake in my café to many of these individuals as they have heard about my business either via colleagues or from hearing me speak, so for the future growth of my business winning the award hasn't hurt.

From a local perspective I have a shire/council that is very proud to have me as a resident and again this is only helping as I look to the next expansion of my business in the early part of 2013 and need their assistance.

As I write this I have arrived home from visiting the Bendigo region and speaking at an Elmore Field Day dinner where eight local women were acknowledged for their work in their rural community.

I have come back inspired to bring a similar event to my own region. I have set up meetings with heavyweights in the political and financial sectors and I have been energised by meeting so many wonderful rural women.

If I could do it all again and renominate, would I? Absolutely!!! ❖



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# An English Perspective

*The story of Houghton Hall Alpacas, UK*



*We are very honoured and delighted to share our experiences in the Alpaca world with all of our friends and colleagues 'down under'. We hope you enjoy our story.*

*Mick and Liz met in January 2007 and married in 2010. This was when Liz became truly acquainted with Mick's unusual yet wonderful hobby. Together they now run a herd of over 700 alpacas, being one of the largest breeders in the UK.*

Houghton Hall Alpacas is a bespoke Alpaca Farm with top class facilities set in approximately 120 acres around our home. We also have several other grazing locations away from the farm. This is either land waiting to be quarried or restored land as my day job is owning and running a waste and quarrying company thus providing us with ample grazing.

## **Where it began:**

Some 10 years ago I became smitten with alpacas when I saw them at an agricultural show and decided they would be just the job to help mow the lawn. I purchased my first four female alpacas in the UK and my passion for these amazing creatures had begun. There was no going back; I became completely addicted to their charm.

**"As I researched more and more about the animals I soon knew that I wanted to build this herd up with some outstanding genetics. I also knew these genetics could be best found across the big pond in Australia."**

My first trip was 2005 and I successfully purchased 17 animals, a mix of males and females; some have since been sold on, but some are still playing a big part in our breeding programme. The majority of these were from Cedar House, which included Brave Heart, Escobar and Snowmass offspring.

I spent many an evening talking to Wendy and Pete and picking their brains of what was going on in Australia and where to source our first animals. I knew that to keep up with the big breeders I needed to purchase the best genetics and use different bloodlines to enhance and improve the herd.

In 2006 on my second trip to Australia at the Canberra National, I purchased two of our best breeding females through pure chance. I was in a breeder's pen but there was some sort of a marital dispute going on, so I hot footed it out of their pen and sought refuge in the next available one which just happened to be Shorty and Dee's pen. Shorty invited me in to look at his animals and within ten minutes I had made a purchase from Alpacas Chaparrel! These girls have gone on to produce amazing crias, especially when bred to the Cedar House Brave Heart lines. Both these girls have been heavily used in our ET programme and we have a number of cria due from them in 2013 which we are really excited about. Without fail these girls always produce champion fawns. Above all we have also cemented a fabulous friendship with Shorty and Dee and six years on we are now looking forward to sharing in Shorty's special birthday celebrations with a trip to Peru and The Galapagos Islands early in 2013.







Back to 2006 and it was a busy year as I financed the import of the last Peruvian export coming to the UK via Switzerland, consisting of 252 females and 11 males. The herd was then split into two with one half being sold off, although I kept and still have most of this elite herd today.

2006 definitely proved to be an investment year, with a chocolate brown female catching my eye at an auction resulting in a handsome sum being paid. By this time we had developed a herd of over 100 Huacaya alpacas. We still hadn't discovered the beautiful Suris, but it wasn't long before we did and so 2008 saw a trip back to Australia. The Suri alpacas beguiled us and we fell in love in an instant. We purchased several top quality Suri females from Angela and Ian of Surilana and became great friends. We have gone on to produce some outstanding cria with these girls, all of which has been backed up by our excellent show results.

Bringing these Suri girls back meant one thing; we needed a top stud male to cover them. We were in luck as we found just the chap we needed at a UK Suri Stud and so Suri Storm joined Houghton Hall Alpacas. We wanted to grow our Suri herd and use the same techniques we'd applied to the Huacayas, so it wasn't long before we were looking for new genetics. We decided to source a stunning male from New Zealand and so Travatore from Surico became our first purchase from this beautiful country. Travatore's offspring are just falling now, so we are really excited to see how he has performed.

We suppose the crown of all our purchases was a white Huacaya male which we first spotted at the UK National Show. However, we had to go to Australia, as Matt Lloyd says 'to twist their arms' to purchase this elite animal. Our very special boy is Navigator, son of Spartacus. Navigator's offspring continue to 'wow' in the show ring and he himself is a nine times undefeated Supreme Champion. Navigator continues to cover elite females with his outstanding genetics. Navigator will put density on a grape! When he covers some of our Australian ladies, pure magic is achieved, especially on the Brave Heart daughters. He has definitely been worth every penny. We went on to purchase from EP Cambridge some of their Accoyo Remarque daughters, who have



been covered by our Brave Heart lines; we are expecting some stunning results.

We have since gone on to support the Australian National in recent years as we believe it is one of the top alpaca shows in the world. We love to see the passion Australians have for their animals and the industry; travelling for days to support the National Show and rarely do you hear a moan about it. We thoroughly enjoy the show. We have not only purchased animals from most of the National Show auctions, but we have also purchased a couple of superb paintings, one of a Huacaya and one of a Suri, which we just couldn't resist – thanks Shorty.

We have also supported many of the private auctions and in doing so been able to select some outstanding alpacas to enhance our ever growing herd. These have included Halcyon, Ambersun, Parrindi and Wyterrica sales. We love the country, the people, the hospitality we receive from all over and have formed many great friendships from our annual pilgrimage. So thank you to everyone who has welcomed us with open arms and allowed us to look at your herds, often at short notice! This year we flew into Perth to finally visit our WA fellow breeders and their beautiful countryside and travelled across country with them for the big Adelaide show.

We will continue looking for elite alpacas of all colours, both Suri and Huacaya. We are always striving to enhance our herd with outstanding genetics.

Our door has always, and will always, be open to the many friends we have made through our hobby and would welcome you as you have us. Mick and Liz George. ❖

Richard Bowden  
Chairman, Australian Alpaca Fleece Ltd

Three years ago the outlook for AAFL was bleak.

It had never made a profit since its formation and losses were in the region of \$1.3 million. It had no money and was losing customers who could import tops cheaper than AAFL could sell local processed Alpaca fibre to them.

## That is now history. So what has happened at AAFL in the past three years?

The first thing was to get back to basics. The business model was reviewed, costs cut and tight budget controls put in place.

The business has been turned around and in the last two years AAFL has made a profit. The company can look to and plan for the future. The key has been to get the building blocks in place to facilitate the implementation of a well thought out strategy.

AAFL was lucky to persuade two Australian citizens of Peruvian background to join the company, Eduardo Casapia as General Manager and Monica Polar to manage the product side. They, together with other staff members, have worked hard to put the company in a position to look to the future with confidence.

## So, how does AAFL see that future?

AAFL is well aware that it was formed out of the old growers' co-operative and is, and wants to remain, an integral part of the Alpaca Industry in Australia. It must look also to the changing trends in the Australian retail industry.

AAFL has two distinct, but complementary, divisions – Alpaca Fleece and Alpaca Product. The fleece division is buying, and will continue to buy, Australian alpaca fleece. We are working with some Australian manufacturers to produce a range of quality alpaca garments from Australian fibre carrying the "Made in Australia" tag. We have one manufacturer based in Melbourne already producing garments for AAFL.

Incalpaca Group in Peru have agreed, provided AAFL can ship fleece in sufficient quantities, to process our Australian fibre separately and the garments, whilst made in Peru, will be labelled "Made from Australian Alpaca Fibre". The first shipment of these items should arrive early in the new year.

This is an exciting development but for it to really take off AAFL needs Australian grown fleece. What better way to promote our Australian industry than to put high quality alpaca product on the market.



L-R Robert (Bob) Richardson (Secretary), Richard Bowden (Chairman), Monica Polar (Brand & Sales Manager), Peter McDonald (Director), Eduardo Casapia (Operations Manager)



The AAFL Board is aware that the internet has become an increasingly important player in the retail market place. With this in mind, the AAFL website has been redesigned separating fleece /grower information and corporate affairs from alpaca product. In addition AAFL has a number of domain sites with linkage to the AAFL website.

The Board and staff at AAFL believe the Australian Alpaca Industry has an exciting future and between us we can make that belief a reality. I have to admit that AAFL has made many mistakes along the way, but I believe it is now on track to deliver a quality alpaca product made from Australian alpaca fibre. It has been a long time in the making, with your help we will complete the journey.



Finally, leaving fleece in sheds or throwing it away does not help build a sustainable industry.

Please put it to better use and help build a vibrant Australian Alpaca Industry. ❖



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## Showing your alpacas - continued....

### Preparation leading up to the show

Leading up to the show planning will be required as to how will you get your alpacas to the show. Remember to allow plenty of room for them to travel safely and comfortably. Also calculate the time that will be required to get to the show. Allow some extra time for stops along the way. Ensure that you have adequate ventilation in your transport. As part of your planning, make sure you know the weather forecast and adjust your travel times accordingly.

It is good practice to have a thorough check of the entries to confirm that they are in a healthy condition. It is also good practice to have a quick check of the main conformation aspects, tails, teeth, ears, eyes, testes, toes to ensure there are no conformational faults that would make your animal ineligible to be shown.

Also have a check that the IAR tag is still in the ear and legible. If not, clean the tag with steel wool or a pan scrubber as a courtesy for the inspection stewards as the brass tags are often difficult to read when dirty.

The IAR tag needs to be present for the alpaca to be shown. If it is not present, have you tagged the alpaca in the first place, if not do so now. If it has been lost, contact the AAA office immediately, order and pay for a new one. You will receive a letter from the AAA office stating that the tag has been lost and a new one ordered. Show this letter to the Inspection Steward and your alpaca will still be able to be exhibited.



Check teeth are correctly aligned



### What will you need to take to the show?

There are some basics that you will need to take to the show. These are as follow:

- ❖ Halters and leads
- ❖ Bins for feed and water
- ❖ Feed
- ❖ Fans can be useful. Check if electricity is available?
- ❖ White coats
- ❖ Show First Aid Kit (just in case animal rips a toe or needs disinfectant e.g. Betadine)
- ❖ Pens, highlighter and permanent texta
- ❖ Nail clippers
- ❖ Zippy ties

Copies of pedigrees and show paperwork should also be taken to the show.

Make sure you read the show schedule. This will list:

- ❖ Approximate starting times
- ❖ When you need to have your alpacas penned
- ❖ When you should be able to leave the show
- ❖ Dress code



## Show Inspections

Once you have your alpacas penned, before they can be shown they need to be inspected. As soon as you are settled, check with the show organisers (Show Convenor or Chief Steward) as they will have your show entry tags to be worn into the ring as well as a copy of the show catalogue.

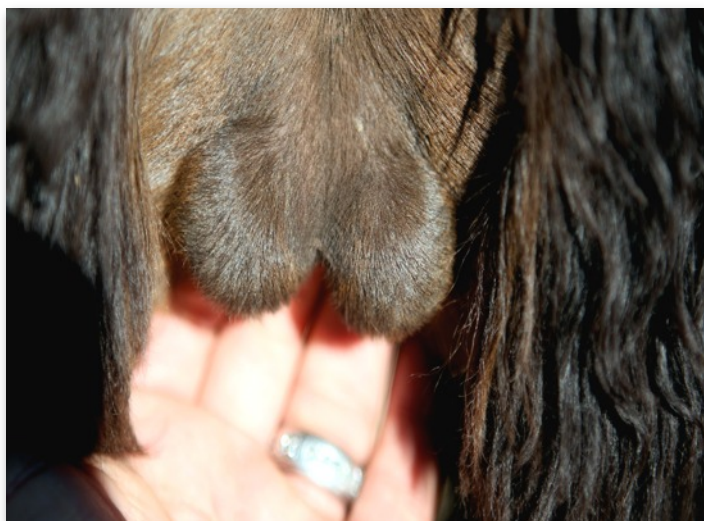
Check your show tags - they should have the age of the alpaca in months as well as the age of the fleece (in months).

The Inspection Steward will confirm that your alpaca is correct to be shown and entered into the right class.

The Inspection Steward and assistant will look at the following:

- ❖ Confirm the IAR number for the alpaca (in its ear) against the entry details
- ❖ Colour - will be checked to confirm they are in the correct class.
- ❖ Correctness of conformation:
  - Tail - not bent
  - Teeth - correctly aligned
  - Ears - not fused
  - Toes - two correctly formed toes
  - Testes - should be present in the scrotum

Once inspections are completed, changes may occur to the class entries. Be aware of these changes so that you do not miss your class. The class changes will be mentioned at the exhibitors' meeting before the start of the show or may be written on a noticeboard for all to see.



Testes should be present in the scrotum

## Show time

Once the show starts keep an eye on how the classes are progressing so that you are at the gate and prepared to enter your class with plenty of time. It is important that you are aware of how the show ring is operating, so you enter in the correct manner.

The Marshaling Steward will assist you with this information. The Judge will direct how they want the animals to enter. This will take the shape of the show ring into account to enable them to assess the conformation of the alpacas. Watch the Ring Steward who will guide you to make sure you follow the set pattern.

Remember that you are there to present your alpaca as best you can. Pay attention to where the Judge is standing and try and present your animal to the Judge. Remember also that the Judge is assessing your alpacas against the others in the class and on average has between two and three minutes for each alpaca in the class, so paying attention and always presenting your alpaca well may be an advantage.

Hopefully your alpaca will behave in the ring. If you need some extra help don't hesitate to ask the Ring Steward for help and if you know that your alpaca has some difficult habits e.g. kicking or spitting, let the Judges and Ring Steward know so they can be prepared.

Make sure that you are confident in handling your alpaca. If you do not feel that you will be able to control it, you should arrange another handler. Also, if you have more animals coming into the ring than you can manage, (this sometimes happens if classes are adjusted to go into the ring together) just ask the stewards as there are always other breeders who will be happy to help you out.

You will need to show the alpaca's teeth to the Judge so make sure you practice before entering the ring. If you are not sure how to do this ask a friend or another exhibitor to show you how to do it effectively.

Also keep your conversations to a minimum. There should be little conversation between yourself and other exhibitors while your alpacas are being judged. Also you should only talk to the Judges in answering a question they have asked.

If you place first or second remember that you will have to be available for the judging of the championships (either colour or age based) so stay close to the show ring.

Also if you are lucky enough to gain a championship, remember that you will need to be available for the Supreme line up.

Whether you place or not, listen to the Judge's oral reasons as they will set out why the alpacas have placed as they did.

## Sportsmanship

Remember that your alpaca is not the only one on exhibit. People will also be looking at your behaviour and will be drawing conclusions about you based on what they see. Shows are an important marketing tool for yourself and your stud so remember to always be polite and act in a professional way.

You have entered your alpaca to get the Judge's opinion, so even if you do not get the results you were hoping for, listen to their reasonings and try to learn. You should respect the Judges opinions bearing in mind that they are able to compare all of the alpacas in the class, which as an exhibitor you are unable to do.

All the officials and personnel that work to get the show running are volunteers (including the Judges), so treat all people with respect and if things go wrong remember that they are all freely giving of their time to make the show as successful as possible and the ultimate aim is to make it a fun and educational experience for all participants.

## Marketing and Promotion

Shows play an important role in promoting not only your own stud and breeding programs but also the industry as a whole. Many breeders first saw alpacas at a show and at some stage made the choice to join the industry. Therefore always remember to maximise the benefits of being part of the show. It is a very cost effective way of marketing your alpaca business to other breeders as well as the general public.

Think about having promotional material available at your pens. Business cards and brochures should be available.

Signage can be displayed but needs to be done so within the heights allowed as per the show schedule.

Manning your pen and talking to people as they pass your pen and stop to ask questions is an important part of marketing. You do not know how interested they are in purchasing alpacas and most people will buy from those they have a positive relationship with. So remember to be polite to the general public, treat them as a potential alpaca owner and take the time to answer their questions.

Shows are also an important way of marketing your alpacas to other breeders. It may be a useful way of learning more about available genetics. It is a good idea to have a look at all the alpacas of your fleece type and colour that are being shown. Ask to inspect those alpacas that place higher than you as well as those that place lower down. Use the show as an opportunity to learn more and form your own opinions. Learn what others are looking to breed for and use this to review your own plans.

Invite the other breeders to have a look at your animals, discuss your breeding plans and goals and you never know where it could lead. Always remember that you may have animals available that are no longer critical to your breeding program that could be suitable for others.

Of course, you may have other services that you offer, make sure that you have examples of these available and displayed where possible. Think about taking a trade stand if they are available and you have product or services that you want to promote to others.

Sponsorship can also be an effective promotional tool. Not only does your sponsorship help to make the show possible but you have the chance of getting promotional opportunities throughout the show.

Advertising may also be available in the show catalogue or show website that can be an effective and targeted marketing opportunity.

## Get involved

Showing your alpacas is a great way of marketing your business and getting more involved in the industry. With showing you only get out of it what you put into it so volunteer and get to know others in the industry. There are plenty of roles that you can be involved in, no matter what level of experience you have. The Convenors, Stewards and Exhibitors Course which is available in each Region is a good way to learn showing rules and the various roles of running an animal or fleece show. Ask your Regional President for more information.

Above all, have fun, listen and learn and make new friends. ❖





# Iconic Tourist Attraction

*Alpacas at the 'Big Pineapple'*

After being closed for several years the Sunshine Coast's iconic Big Pineapple has new owners and a big renovation is underway.

The signature big pineapple at the front of the property has had a facelift and holiday makers can once again climb to the top. Old favourite attractions are being reopened and new ones added. Many of the visitors, with grandchildren in tow, have fond memories of visiting many years before with their own children.

The historic passenger cane train is running and pineapple plots are being replanted. An undercover weekend market with local produce, fine food and artisan activities is well worth a visit and David and Katrina White of White Ridge Alpacas have opened an animal farm with an emphasis on alpacas.

They are making the animal farm as interactive as possible with the barn working as an educational hub for families and schools with displays on the animals and their products.

They have also developed an exchange program with the Ag. Science Faculty at Nambour High School to provide employment opportunities for students and for the school to showcase their animals.



There is also support for local schools with visits by the farm animals to some of their classes.

White Ridge Stud started out farming alpacas about ten years ago and have gradually grown the farm to include a range of animals. The little stars of the farm seem to be Ebony, a little black alpaca and Babe, the miniature razorback pig who thinks she is a dog. Ebony was orphaned at one day old and bottle raised and is a firm favourite.

Both suri and huacaya alpacas are represented and the Qld. Region of the Australian Alpaca Association has provided The Big Pineapple with material to market the industry to the 1,000 or so visitors who come to visit the farm each weekend.

More information – [www.whiteridgefarm.com.au](http://www.whiteridgefarm.com.au) or [www.bigpineapple.com.au](http://www.bigpineapple.com.au) ❖





The ultrafine bale Premium Alpaca produced, which broke the world record for finest alpaca bale, was sold recently for the world's highest price for an alpaca bale.

The 112 kilo bale of fibre which core tested at 17.8 microns, sold for \$7,000 to Waiheke Alpaca of New Zealand. The main bit of news is that the agreement includes the ongoing supply of ultrafine consignments, with prices up to \$70 per kilo.

While much of the information regarding final product is still being kept under wraps, we can say that it will be used for 100% alpaca, luxury apparel under a design label.

A key factor in Waiheke Alpaca purchasing the ultrafine bale is due to the strict quality assurance (QA) protocols in place for collecting and consigning the fleeces. It is for this reason that contributors are asked to attend one of the fleece preparation workshops.



L-R Keenan Scott being congratulated by Paul Vallely of Australian Alpaca Fibre Testing.



### Premium Alpaca Collection Days

One of the main principles behind the Premium Alpaca concept is to recognise the need to meet customers' requirements when consigning fleeces, rather than install our own sets of values and standards.

It has been made very clear during our discussions and dealings with fleece buyers, that issues such as contamination, excessive variation in diameter and length, and evidence of coarse fibres, would not be tolerated. This is particularly important if we are pursuing price maximisation for our fleeces.

One aspect of Premium Alpaca that has enabled the concept to achieve relative success in sourcing markets is to demonstrate an effective and realistic set of QA protocols. The fact the protocols have been operating for at least 4 years has shown the protocols are achievable.

### Dust in fleeces

We have had some feedback from one of our processors that dust in alpaca fleeces is becoming a problem. While it is possible to process with a lot of dust, it can slow the process down to a degree where considerable costs are incurred. The message is to try to reduce dust/dirt in fleeces.

While this problem will be difficult to overcome in the paddock, giving the fleeces a good shake after initial skirting will assist. In case of excessive dust, a face mask might be in order.





## Coloured Fleeces

Premium Alpaca is currently talking to European processors in the hope of getting interest in processing a black fine bale and one other colour. At this stage, we have a clear intent from one processor in Europe to process a bale of black fibre in the vicinity of 21 microns. While there is the need for further talks, we hope to announce the venture in the next month. Dennis and Lorraine Rothe are assisting with the set-up phase and coordination of the project.

## Suri Fleeces

New Zealand have progressed significantly with the processing of suri fleeces on a trial basis. Last month, they agreed to allow Australian breeders to be involved. A bale of white suri of between 22 to 24 microns with length of 90 to 140mm is now being collected. At this stage we have had almost 30 suri breeders express their intention to be involved in the trial, with midside samples now being taken to indicate likely volume. Fiona Vanderbeek is assisting with coordination of the project.



## China

We currently have two streams of potential for entering the Chinese market. One has progressed beyond a satisfactory review of fibre samples sent to Shanghai, the other has not even reached the stage of first meeting.

Trying to set up a new market with China is complex and can be extremely protracted - but well and truly worth the effort. I should add that China is well able to produce very high quality apparel and is now responsible for a very high proportion of the world's luxury textile processing.

## Workshops and Collection days

We hope to keep an updated list of these events on the website at [www.aaft.com.au](http://www.aaft.com.au). At the end of this year, it appears we will have six Premium Alpaca groups around Australia with many new groups at the 'expression of interest' stage.

The list of "breeders helping breeders" is growing rapidly which has necessitated the creation of the following Regional and project co-ordinators. ❖



## Regional and project co-ordinators

**Western Australia:** Darryl and Anne Sherman  
Mobile 0401 710 063

**South Australia:** Sarah Wheeler  
Mobile 0434 982 760

**New South Wales:** Andrew and Bronwyn Munn  
Mobile 0408 410 281

**Victoria:** Annette and Keate Woodgate  
Mobile 0419 550 826

**Black Bale Project:** Dennis & Lorraine Rothe  
Mobile 0427 751 026

**Ultrafine Bale Project:** Kim Lauko  
Mobile 0416 286 685

**Suri Fleece Processing Trial:** Fiona Vanderbeek  
Mobile 0417 850 374

QLD and TAS will hopefully join in the near future.

The following interview is an extract from the June 2012 issue of the recently launched American industry magazine 'ALPACA CULTURE'.

Nick Hahn, Founder - Hahn International, Ltd. Established in 1997, Hahn International is a global consulting and advisory firm, concentrating on cotton supply chain management and competitive solutions through cluster creation and association building in developing and emerging economies. Nick is a strategist, facilitator and association specialist. He co-founded Cotton Incorporated, a leading non-profit trade association created to enhance the competitiveness of the U.S. cotton farmers and the upstream segments of the textile sector's value chain.

*A.C: Compare the alpaca fibre industry with other natural fibre industries now. Where is it in comparison to where cotton or another natural fibre is?*

Nick Hahn - The U.S. Alpaca Fibre industry really hasn't grown up yet nor, in my opinion, do they (as an industry) know what they want to be when they grow up, for example, a strong cottage/hobby business or a commercial textile business with a viable supply chain from farm to mill.

The latter requires investment and technology to produce, harvest, process and ship fibre in commercial quantities with acceptable quality metrics. As it stands now, you have a cottage industry with a value added business model requiring hand processing into yarn, fabric and consumer products sold, by and large, from farm stores, farmer markets, industry show events and to a lesser degree, farm websites.

This is not a "fibre sales" model where the value added processing is left up to the textile mills and garment manufacturers with deep knowledge and experience in manufacturing, design, colour, packaging, branding and consumer marketing.

Wool and cotton are commercially viable "fibre sales" models that sell their commodities on the open market to the highest bidder based upon market futures or an open outcry auction process. The whole question of "price" has not been addressed by U.S. Alpaca, there is no fair and equitable system in place for "price discovery" between buyer and seller which usually means the seller gets the short end of the deal as they're forced to accept whatever the buyer offers just to get the fibre out of their barn, basement or garage. This is hardly a sustainable model in the long run.

This should change with the introduction of the Campbell Fibre Sales Company (CFS) and their exclusive arrangement with the Roswell Wool Auction Company. The CFS tagline says it well: "The Fibre to Fashion Connection".

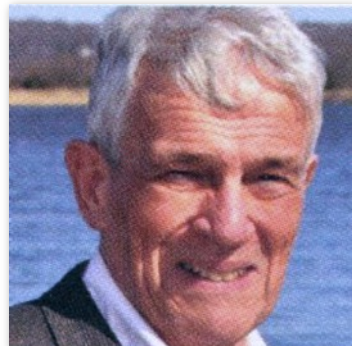
In my view, no one should sell their valuable fibre outside of an auction process, it is the only way a fair market price can be established. Wool has been sold at auction for generations as had cotton prior to its entry to the futures market early in the 20th century.

*A.C: What needs to happen to make alpaca as big as cotton or wool?*

Nick Hahn - I can't think of anything happening that would result in alpaca fibre even coming close to the volumes and processing technology of cotton. As an enormous row crop grown in the southern regions world-wide, it dominates the fibre landscape as the largest single fibre used for textile products including all synthetics. Alpaca has but a tiny fraction of the luxury end of the market competing with cashmere, which is also very small, compared to wool or cotton.

Wool is smaller and in some respects similar to alpaca in that it is spun on the woollen system but the relative size of production between the two makes wool, as a raw fibre, more desirable to commercial mills.

The best comparison would be to cashmere from a point of view of processing and end product performance but again, cashmere is a commercially viable raw fibre with the supply chain links in place to satisfy commercial mills.





*A.C.: Why is alpaca a superior natural fibre?*

Nick Hahn - It is light as a feather, warmer than cashmere, soft to the touch and blends well with other natural fibres like silk, wool and cotton.

*A.C.: What is the best way to educate people about alpaca fibre?*

Nick Hahn - Alpaca United has been established to do just that and is well on its way, branding and promoting the fibre with consumer and trade publicity, fashion websites, a strong social media presence and a robust speaking program to inform and educate farmers and ranchers. This should be continued and supported by the industry as the most efficient means available to build demand for the fibre, which translates into supply chain enhancement.

*Readers wishing to discover more regarding the American industry can contact Alpaca Culture magazine [www.alpacaculture.com](http://www.alpacaculture.com)*

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*A.C.: Please add anything else you'd like to about alpaca fibre.*

Nick Hahn - At the end of the day, the industry is owned and operated by non-textile people who are experienced and skilled in their respective professions of law, medicine, finance, technology, education etcetera, but not knowledgeable about textiles - they need to raise money to hire professionals in the textile fibre field to guide their growth and advise them on the necessary steps to get in the same commercial game as wool, cashmere, silk and cotton.

The alternative, of course, is to remain a hand produced cottage industry where the net per units are higher but the volumes don't come close to absorbing the entire U.S. clip.

What is needed is strong leadership from within the industry to step up, take the hits and move the collective thinking from cottage to commercial. Not, incidentally, meaning to "replace" cottage as there will always be a market for beautiful handmade products but rather to supplement cottage with a viable raw fibre alternative. ❖



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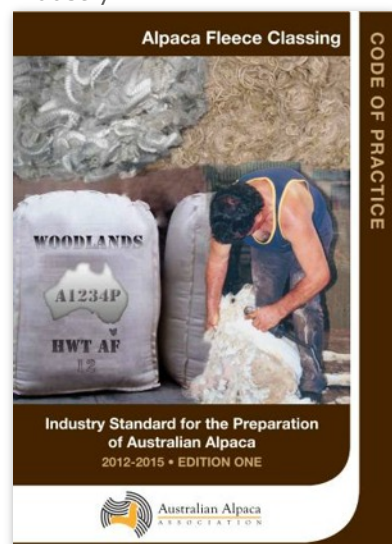
The biggest challenge facing Australian alpaca fleece growers is the lack of an organized collection system to bring their annual fleece production to market.

There is not a shortage of fleece out there but there is a shortage of fleece being offered for sale. From an industry perspective we need to be able to present a quantity of alpaca fleece for sale which meets a set of standards to satisfy the expectations of textile processors, both in Australia and around the world.

To assist alpaca farmers redress this situation the Australian Alpaca Association has taken the initiative to formalize a set of industry classing standards to which all registered alpaca classers will be trained.

In a milestone development, the AAA as the peak industry body, has signed a contract with AWEX (Australian Wool Exchange Limited) to provide a formal control mechanism that will ensure a level of consistency in the preparation, packaging and branding of Australian Alpaca.

For the past twenty years AWEX has represented the interests of commercial buyers and sellers of Australian merino by managing and administering wool marketing arrangements in the Australian wool industry. Part of this management includes the registration and maintenance of standards for qualified wool classers and a similar arrangement has now been established for alpaca classers. The alpaca industry is indeed fortunate to have achieved a partnership of such significance for our industry.



The first step in this process was to prepare the Australian Alpaca Classing Code of Practice (COP).

This publication is now available for purchase from the AAA and we recommend that all Growers purchase a copy. The first edition, as shown, contains standards agreed to by growers, buyers, processors and experienced classers from both the alpaca and wool industries.

The initial concept has been to adopt a minimalist approach to the number of micron groups, colours and lengths. These lines can be expanded as the quantity of fleece increases or specific lines can be classed to a processor's individual requirement.

The COP will be reviewed every three years to accommodate market requirements and the growth in the supply chain. An example of the lines for both Huacaya and Suri in micron and colour are shown below.

#### 4.1 Huacaya Colour Groups

COLOUR			
Blended Colour	Code	Ingredients	Comments
White	WT	White, off white (no contaminating colour)	Colour blends (no contaminating colour in the white lines)
Light Fawn	LF	Light Fawn (white & off white with odd fawn/brown fibres throughout) are included	
Fawn	FN	Medium Fawn	On farm bales (full weights) only. Classer may select from full colour range.
Brown	BR	Light and Medium Brown, Dark Fawn	
Dark Brown	DB	Dark Brown, Red Brown	
Brown Black	BB	Brown Black	
Grey	GY	Light and Medium Grey	
Dark Grey	DG	Dark Grey	
Rose Grey	RG	Rose Grey	
Black	BK	Black	

The publication will also contain the new Registration Colour Chart. This new chart contains 16 actual samples of alpaca fleece making it easier to identify the actual colour of your alpaca. This chart is now used by USA, Canada & New Zealand. There is a slight change to the colour coding in that all colours will be identified by two alphas, for example White is WT and Black is BK. This has been approved by ABRI.

#### Training to become an Alpaca Classer

Training of Alpaca classers will be available through Registered Training Organizations (RTOs). These RTOs will mainly be TAFE Colleges using their existing courses as well as two new additional alpaca specific units.

The courses that may be undertaken are as follows:-

1) To become qualified as an Owner Classer (AO) you will need to successfully complete,

Certificate III in Wool Clip Preparation, or

Certificate III in Agriculture PLUS

A unit in "Basic Skirting of Alpaca Fleece" and

a unit in "Class Alpaca Fleece"



An Owner Classifier can only be registered to “class alpaca fleece from the herd they own and/or manage.”

2) To become qualified as a Professional Classifier (AP) you will need to successfully complete,

Certificate IV in Wool Classing, or

Certificate IV in Agriculture PLUS

a unit in “Basic Skirting of Alpaca Fleece”

a unit in “Class Alpaca Fleece”

A Professional Classifier is “registered to class alpaca fleece from any flock on farm, and shall be able to aggregate alpaca fleece across multiple flocks (in a cluster scenario) in a non corporate/commercial environment.”

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and/or Industry Experience will be taken into account and could be used as a credit for individual units.

A list of participating TAFE colleges will be published on the AAA web site.

## How the Registration System Works

In order to qualify as a classer in the Quality Assured Alpaca Classing Scheme it will be necessary to apply to the Australian Wool Exchange Ltd (AWEX). The AAA has appointed AWEX to register, manage and audit alpaca classers for an initial period of three years. Classers will be required to sign a contract for this three year period, pay the necessary fee and be subject to audit by AWEX.

In return AWEX will supply each classer with a unique number and stencil appropriate to the classer’s grading. The stencil when marked on a bale of alpaca will indicate that the contents have been classed according to Australian Industry Standards. An alpaca stencil can only be used on alpaca and a wool stencil can only be used on wool.

To enable growers of small flocks to sell their fleece in marketable quantities, a Professional Classifier (AP) can aggregate small lots from various growers into butt or bale lots. These lots will bear the AP stencil.

In addition to this system a Registered Classing House (AC), often a wool broker, can further aggregate the classed fleece into larger units. This Classing House is required to have a Registered Professional Alpaca Classifier as their technical officer and will brand the bales with their unique AC stencil.

At all times the fleece is under the AAA Quality Assured Scheme. At this point we will then be able to present a QA Australian Alpaca (QAAA©) product to the market which has consistency in classing, packaging and branding.

## Sale by Auction

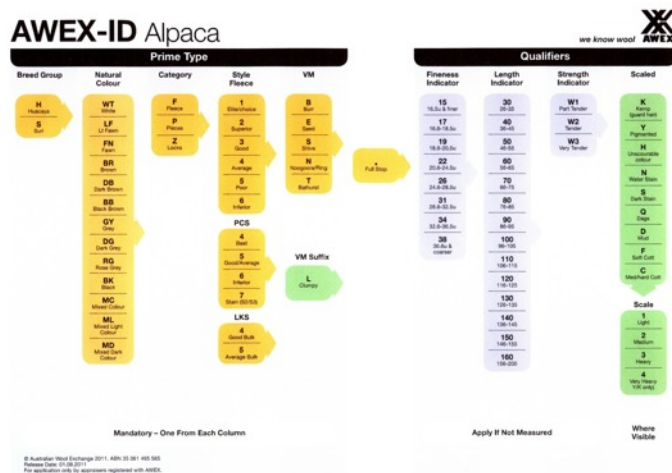
Growers have several avenues to market their fleece; through the auction system, by private treaty or to the craft market. To maximise the return, the auction system is recommended.

Like any auction the vendor has the right to set the price and while the vendor may negotiate that price with the buyer, it allows the vendor to be a price-setter and not just a price taker.

Although the classer will prepare the lot in accordance with the COP standards, buyers require additional information to meet the criteria set by their customers - the processors.

To meet these requirements all bales need to be core tested by an accredited laboratory. The AAA has reached an agreement with the Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) to supply a test certificate covering all the tests required by processors.

The AWTA is the only laboratory in Australia accredited by the International Wool Testing Organization (IWTO) to provide such a certificate. Core testing needs to be conducted under AWTA testing conditions and the results are published in the auction catalogue. In addition AWEX in conjunction with the AAA have developed their Alpaca - ID descriptions for non measured characteristics. These descriptions are an integral part of the auction catalogue.



To all Australian alpaca breeders – our industry needs you to start thinking of yourselves as growers and sellers of alpaca fleece – not just breeders (despite the fact that we are jolly good breeders!).

Your alpacas play their important role in producing the fleece. Animal welfare requirements dictate that you shear them annually. Closing the loop in selling your animal production is the next stage of our industry.

Please accept your responsibility as a fleece grower to present this magnificent natural fleece - one of the most beautiful, rare natural fibres on the planet - to the world. As an alpaca grower, the fleece you are producing annually must be presented to buyers at an acceptable, professional standard. The Australian Alpaca Association has now set in place the mechanism for this to happen; it is up to you - the grower - to take up the challenge. ❖

*Acknowledgements; The implementation of this project has been possible due to contributions from Geoff Redelman, Cameron Holt, David Williams and Graeme Dickson.*

*The AAA would also like to thank Mark Grave, CEO AWEX, David Cother AWEX Wool Service Manager and Tim Steere AWTA, Sampling Operations Manager Melbourne, for their assistance and support.*

# Felting Workshop

*Value add by making felted products*

South Queensland Northern NSW Region, held an Education Course, at Wahgunurru Alpacas on the skills of felting alpaca. The weekend proved to be very popular and plans are in place for a second weekend in 2013.

Three textile artists Di Smart, Chris Timmins and Pauline Glasser tutored over the two days instructing participants who travelled long distances to attend, on the basics of felting, dying fibres and using embellishing machines.

## Day ONE - Felting basics

Participants learnt the basics of felting using carded fleece prepared by Humminghills Alpacas. The principles of using a variety of dying types and hand carding dyed fleece was demonstrated. Silk was used to make beautiful scarves using the nuno felting technique.

### Basics of making felt

The basics of felting is to rub fibres together which causes friction that mats the fibres together.



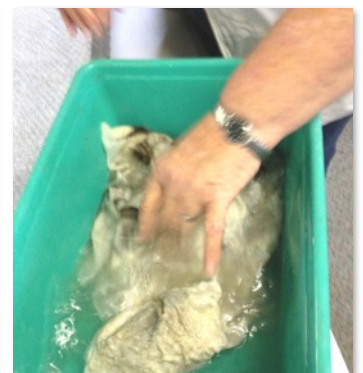
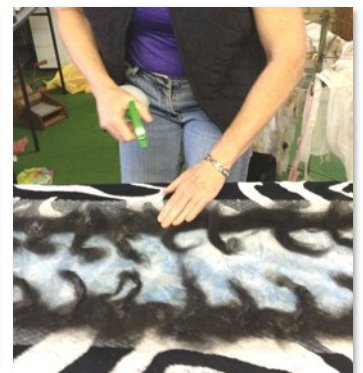
## Day TWO – Using dyes and the embellishing machine

On the second day, participants continued with their learning by experimenting with their felted projects. Silk and cotton scarves were dyed using environmentally friendly dyes.

Several embellishing machines were used to add coloured fibre and threads to the felted fabric. Participants then used their embellished felted fabric to make notebook covers, table runners and photos frames.

### THE PROCESS

1. A thick towel laid on a solid table
2. Lay down a strip of bubble wrap – smooth side up
3. Place alpaca fibres in layers all over bubble wrap, criss cross to give texture and allow the fibres to felt together
4. Wet fibres by spraying with a mixture of detergent and water – wet fibres well
5. Place a strip of bubble wrap over top
6. Using the towel roll up bubble wrap
7. Roll the towel backwards and forwards at least 100 times, check work regularly to see felting process occurring
8. Test fibres – ready when fibres matted and holding together
9. Once fibres are matted roll out of bubble wrap
10. Plunge into boiling water and then cold water
11. Hang to dry







### Try this bag project

This bag is made in one go – edges felted to eliminate stitching.

#### Process

1. Build up layers of fibres for the bag – 4th layer is the outside.
2. After the 4th layer insert a piece of bubble wrap which has been cut to the shape of the bag.
3. Seams extend past edge of bubble wrap.
4. Build up another 4 layers – 1st layer is the outside of the bag.
5. Wet with detergent mix roll up and felt.
6. Once felting begins to occur turn right side out insert bubble wrap into centre of bag. Continue to roll to felt the seam allowance to inside of the bag. ❖



"I went to the felting weekend with enthusiasm and some expectations and I was not disappointed. It was a fun filled and informative workshop...brilliant teachers...fantastic food and I felt I left with great ideas and could not wait to get home and try projects myself! Thanks to all and I hope there are more in the future!"

"I have tried so many things at home now...bought an embellishing machine....just love it!"

Cheers, Esther Sanders





The premier event on the Australian Alpaca Calendar.



L - R. Matthew Lloyd, Natasha Clark (judge), Cathy Lloyd, Peter Kennedy ((judge), Ian Preuss, Angela Preuss  
Supreme Champion Huacaya, EP Cambridge Invictus and Supreme Champion Suri, Surilana Surpass

Another year and another National Show. We'd like to think that we put together a good one. There were highs and there were lows but overall, people seemed to have a good time.

And that was our aim for 2012. Yes, the National is a serious business – we bring together the cream of our industry and put breeders and animals under the microscope, it's high-pressure and reputations are at stake. But that doesn't mean that it shouldn't also be fun. Right from the start, we set out to try to ensure that our exhibitors would be able to leave on the Sunday with a smile on their face, some good memories and a positive feeling about the future of our industry.

### So, what went well?

The show itself. Our hard-working judges – Natasha Clark and Peter Kennedy, stewards, marshals and other helpers made sure that the show ring ran smoothly. They kept to a very tight schedule without anyone ever feeling rushed.

**The Sale** - Lots of us felt that this year was make or break for this format of the National Sale. Thankfully a combination of a good range of excellent animals, the confidence given to buyers by a judge selection process and auctioneers at the top of their game meant that the auction was a resounding success.



**Tasting Alpaca** - Our main sponsors, Millpaca, together with Illawarra Prime offered exhibitors and visitors mouth-watering samples of alpaca meat in burgers, Indian-style kebabs, sausages and an unbelievably good smoked cold meat.

**Our MC** - After seeing it work at a National in New Zealand, we decided to engage a professional MC for the show. We got Jason 'Snowy' Carter from Mix 102.3 and Channel 9. Snowy has a real interest in the industry and, once he got the knack of pronouncing huacaya correctly, was a huge asset both in terms of presentation and in getting media coverage – even if we did lose our outside broadcasts to the sudden, unexpected arrival in Adelaide of the Prime Minister.

**The Venue** - Lots of room, a good vibe around the show ring and terrific air conditioning.

**The Social Events** - I don't know about anyone else, but I'll remember that bowls night for a long time.

**The Saturday Dinner** - was a long-overdue chance to put on the tux or posh frock and enjoy a good meal with a great band – I don't think that there were many there who didn't get up and dance at some point.

**What were the lessons learned, what would we do differently another time?**

**The Bedding** - We've said enough about it. It was awful, it was not what we ordered but, when it arrived it was too late to do anything about it.

The only good points were that it was a level playing field, everyone was in the same position and (as we've found with our junior brown boy who was very badly affected) it did come out after a shower and a dust bath or two.



Top priced auction animal - Ambersun Gold Class sold to Canchones Alpaca Stud.







Grand Champion Fleece & Bill Plunkett Trophy winner and Supreme Champion Suri Fleece - Kurrawa Man About Town ET - Owned by Kurrawa Alpacas & Shanbrooke Alpacas



Most Valuable Commercial Fleece - Gumbarwil Ricardo owned by Richard Hermon of Gumbarwil Alpacas



Supreme Champion Huacaya Fleece - Softfoot Aphrodite GM Owned by Gary & Sandy Retallick of Softfoot Alpacas

## Fleece

It was a good fleece show but in future we need to make sure that the exhibit is opened up earlier in the show so that everyone can see who has done what. Paul Garland from New Zealand did an excellent job with the large number of fleeces entered and was more than happy with the quality of entrants.

## Art

Our thanks to exhibitors, judges and stewards for a well run show and display of art, photography and craft. A growing segment of our National Show.



## Art/Photography Champion Results

**Junior Art** No Entries

**Champion Senior Artwork** - Michelle Duff

**Champion Photograph** - Robyn Harrison





## Craft

Supreme Champion Craft Exhibit was a needle felted 3D Alpaca Sculpture entered by Dina Van Der Gaag and the most successful exhibitor was Cynthia Hall – congratulations ladies.

### AAA 2012 National Show - Craft Section Results Section 1 - Hand Spinning

Champion Hand Spun Yarn Exhibit  
Helen Walters - Hand spun novelty yarn with coils

### Section 2 - Hand Weaving

Champion Weaving Exhibit  
Wilma Bajka-van Veize - Cocoon Jacket

### Section 3 - Hand Knitting or Crocheting

Champion knit/Crochet Exhibit  
Dianne West - Fairisle Knitted Vest

### Section 4 - Felting

Champion Felted Exhibit  
Dina Van Der Gaag - Needle felted 3D Alpaca Sculpture

### Section 5 - Junior

Champion Junior Exhibit  
Jason Synnot - Handspun suri yarn

### Supreme Champion Craft Exhibit:

Needle felted 3D Alpaca Sculpture - Dina Van Der Gaag

**Most Successful Exhibitor:** Cynthia Hall





# 2012 National Show Gala Dinner





“Alpacas - You must be mad!”, they said. “They spit, they're hard to handle and they are sooo expensive.”

Well, yes in 1995 the last point was very relevant but considered the norm for the purchase price of these amazing animals that were starting to make an impact on Australian farms.

And so with these words of “encouragement” Longueville Park embarked on the challenging and exciting journey of breeding pure blue/black alpacas. The breeding objectives were to breed alpacas that:

- ❖ Were true blue/black,
- ❖ Had a micron below 20µm, SD below 5µm and a CF of 95 -99%,
- ❖ Strong conformation
- ❖ Good temperament

The initial herd consisted of three pregnant Chilean girls of debatable age who at their first unpacking at Longueville Park each produced very average males – wethers! So the challenge was now on to source the best males available to achieve a genetic gain to start on this journey and bearing in mind there were very few blacks in the country at this time.

### **The Search Is On!**

Armed with a matrix of ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ characteristics to satisfy our breeding objectives, we headed off to a stud in south western NSW to assess an incredible line up of the State’s best black males – it was a sight to behold! After detailed assessment of each male the ticks and the crosses on the matrix were taking shape towards making some decisions for potential sires. From this line-up we selected the males that would improve upon our girls and fortunately our selections proved to be correct.

From these selections the progeny from the next drop was a quantum leap forward and in 2000 we certified our first stud male and a year later our second stud male.

Both these males were then used within the herd and each provided significant improvement that were then used in our subsequent embryo transfer programs.

It was all happening!



### **Steps Along the Way**

Running parallel with these initiatives we also embarked on the onerous journey of showing. Exhibiting at shows was certainly the way to gain exposure and to see how our animals stacked up against others according to the Judge’s decisions. Initially there were no colour classes, only age classes and when we starting being placed against the lighter colours we were confident the first step in the journey had been achieved.

Using the attendances at the bigger shows was also an ideal opportunity to network with other breeders and learn of their breeding objectives and the outcomes.

Another crucial step along the way is to monitor our fleece criteria using annual histograms – it is very rewarding seeing the micron and standard deviation drop as genetics are improving the fleece quality.

### **Success!!**

Over the years the broad ribbons started to line the office walls but that elusive Supreme always seemed to be just out of grasp. This was to change in 2009 when Longueville Park Brigalow became our first Supreme Champion followed in 2011 by Longueville Park Phoenix Rising and in 2012 by Longueville Park Milo.





Longueville Park Savannah  
Finally our first Supreme at a Royal show

### Lessons Learned Along the Way

There are numerous lessons to be learnt and perhaps the most important of all is to persist with your breeding objectives.

When starting out in the industry don't be in a rush to purchase a stud male - try before you buy!

Careful selection of good stud males can quickly improve upon your 'average' females so don't confine them to the back paddock!

Don't be afraid to try several different bloodlines as the 'Supreme' recipe may well be in one or more of those combinations.

Don't expect every cria born to be a Champion but their progeny may well be!

Finally, enjoy the challenges and share your experiences with your fellow breeders - we are all part of a wonderful journey. ❖

- Cria & Yearling Oilskin coats
- Milk & Colostrum Replacers
- Needles & Syringes, First Aid supplies
- Fibre cleaners, clippers & hand shears
- Digital Scales, biosecurity mats
- Zephyr Halters & Leads
- Satin show fleece bags
- Large range of reference books:  
ABC - Antenatal, Birthing & Cria Care,  
Medicine & Surgery of Camelids (Murray Fowler),  
The Complete Alpaca Book (Eric Hoffman) & more
- Health Support: Hideject ADE, Coforta, Equimax,  
Ivomec, Zolvix, Cydectin, Propaca, Camrosa  
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Alicia Anderson & Cheryl Kosaras (Regal House Alpacas)*



# Alpaca Youth Camp

*Inaugural event*

First arrivals Alex Staples, Casey Munyard and Amber O'Neill tumbled from their car after their long journey the Wednesday prior to the camp in such high spirits that any concern that our alpaca youth group may not have a great time faded instantly.

Their infectious vitality set the mood for the rest of the camp and a new page was written into the Australian Alpaca industry's history book.

In keeping with their optimism Thursday, October 27 saw a fine day dawn in the foothills of the Illawarra escarpment, as some 21 enthusiastic youths gathered at Illawarra Alpacas, in Cambewarra NSW, for their inaugural alpaca youth camp.

Facebook and sms exchanges ran hot in the weeks leading up to the event, planning the programme, arranging speakers and demonstrators, and addressing logistics.

The initiative is aimed at engaging and encouraging all young people, of whatever age, to develop their interest and involvement in the alpaca industry, be they the children of established alpaca breeders, school kids who have an interest in including alpacas in their agricultural curricula, or total newbies who have simply seen and become enchanted with alpacas at their local agricultural shows.

It is a concept already well developed in many other agricultural breeds by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW, in the interest of promoting agriculture and planning succession within their respective industries. Its application to alpacas is a new development, championed by RAS Councilor, Janie Hicks, and supported by the RAS Alpaca Committee as well as its Youth Development arm, and enthusiastically welcomed by the AAA through its Educational reference panel, led by Board Member, Michelle Malt.



Bottom Row: L-R Meg Behler, Mikhala Rollinson, Ruby Williams, Taneisha Rollinson, Aurora Cape, Katy Armson-Graham, Amber O'Neill, Casey Munyard, Karen Williams, Louise Lazarus, Ziggy Davison,

Back Row: L-R Page Cape, Alicia Fritsch, Monty Hicks, Amy Ramsay, Nick Azzopardi, Olivia Hicks, Fiona Devlin, Alex Staples, Zak McGowan-Lay, Alysia Smith, Terry Smith, Janie Hicks, Ian Davison, Celia Cook, Pat Lazarus, and photographer Michelle Malt, along with other attendees, already on the road, Andrew and Stuart Marshall, Mick Williams, Alastair Raynor, Ashley Hvass and Keryn Burns.



The camp was held on the property of past AAA President, Ian Davison, with registrations from Yass, Dubbo, Wingen, Young, Bathurst, Mudgee, central Sydney, and as far as the Victorian Gippsland.

Enquiries came from as far as Queensland, Victoria, and WA. The AAA was represented by Board Member, Michelle Malt from northern NSW, and the RAS by Councillors Hicks and Raynor. About 15 AAA breeders attended and gave their time preparing meals, setting up, and assisting in a variety of ways.

The organising committee of Alicia Fritsch and Olivia Hicks were determined that the programme should be entertaining, educational, relevant and useful, and engaged a variety of experienced speakers and presenters to cover areas like shearing, fleece testing, show preparation and handling, alpaca anatomy, alpaca photography, public speaking, performance course design, and conducting a committee meeting.

Paige who is the Senior RAS Coordinator for Agricultural Development and Youth Initiatives, and Alastair Raynor, a previous RAS rural Young Achiever, were on hand to help and encourage the participants, and to inspire them with their account of the many opportunities existing for the sponsorship and assistance of youth in agriculture. Alastair gave a practical demonstration of the power of social media, entering Tweets on the Alpaca Youth camp, and eliciting almost immediate responses from an Armidale TAFE teacher, a Rockhampton Ag teacher, and an enthusiastic supporter in the United States.

Rotation of small groups of age-matched kids through a range of activities allowed personalized instruction and tuition, with games and competitions to exercise their new knowledge and hone their skills. Each registrant was allocated an alpaca to care for over the two days of the camp, much as one would do for an overnight show, and awards made to junior, intermediate and senior herdsman for excellence in alpaca care. A buddy system was implemented for the older members to mentor and teach the younger ones.

The group were shown staples of known fibre diameter contrasted on black backgrounds to demonstrate the appearance of fibres of different diameter, and then shown staples drawn from different sites across an alpaca fleece. These samples were then tested to demonstrate the variation across the fleece. They were then taught how to take a mid-side sample from their alpaca and



asked to guess the micron, before submitting it for testing, a service generously provided on-site by Kim and Robyn Cartwright of Southern Tablelands Fibre Testing. They saw their fleece sample split into several staples and then tested, and watched as the fleece profile and statistics came up on the OFDA 1000. An award was made for the most accurate estimate of micron.

Several tried their hand at shearing live alpacas, under the watchful eye of Pete Nelson, who explained the parts and workings of a shearing handpiece. Several more had the opportunity to strike a few blows across the carcass of a recently euthanased alpaca, which was then followed by a demonstration of how to skin a pelt from a dead alpaca. Finally, local vet, Dr Garry Bryce, presented a tutorial on alpaca anatomy and their peculiar adaptations, as he conducted the autopsy. Other activities included exercises in speaking without hesitation or repetition, giving an oral description after judging four pairs of work boots, designing an obstacle course that depicts real life challenges for a performance event, applying halters, leading and handling alpacas, and managing the difficult alpaca.

Mealtimes were full of animated discussion, and a hotly contested trivia quiz conducted in front of the fire after the evening meal with age matched teams of the young and the elderly.

At the conclusion of the camp, the registrants joined in committee to elect a President (Alicia Fritsch), Treasurer (Alysia Smith) and Secretary (Olivia Hicks), and Alastair Raynor mentored them in their subsequent deliberations about organising further activities, expanding their membership, and planning next year's camp. "I think now we have a strong dedicated team who really want to be involved with the alpacas and assist in the growth of the future", said Alicia as she confidently took the helm of the Youth group.

Postings made on Facebook as well as personal emails have confirmed the success of the inaugural camp, which was highly valued and greatly enjoyed by all participants, and enthusiastic plans are already afoot for next year's event. Should you, or youths you know of, be interested in attending this camp next year, or in joining the Australian Alpaca Youth Group, please contact them through Facebook, or through the secretary at the following email address: [oliviahicks@live.com.au](mailto:oliviahicks@live.com.au) ❖

*Sponsorship of this event was most generously provided by Skoda of Rockdale through the outstanding support of Karen and Mick Williams and their family, which provided polo shirts to all the kids, and helped defray the costs of putting the weekend together.*



## Royal Adelaide 2012

2012 saw the highest number of competitive entries in the history of the Royal Adelaide Show - 30,495 across the 58 competitions and a very fitting outcome for "The Australian Year of the Farmer". The Alpaca Section contributed to this milestone, with record entries in both Breed and Fleece Sections. Even the weather was kind. The only disappointing aspect was the continued low number of Suri entries.

Fleeces looked spectacular in their new glass fronted cabinets which kept them clean and safe, but at the same time showcased characteristics and style for close public scrutiny. Unfortunately we ran out of cabinet space and not all fleeces were able to be displayed. Additional cabinets are on order for 2013. Special thanks to Vaughan Wilson and his fleece stewards for working through the challenges offered and for presenting such a great display.

Judging day went smoothly under the expertise of popular, well respected judge, Ron Reid who was suitably impressed with the high standard of entries. Thank you to all exhibitors for your valued participation and congratulations to all ribbon and award winners.

No show can be successful without the hard work and support of the many people working behind the scenes, and on behalf of the Society I thank each and every person who contributed in any way. Special mention must go to Lee Sadler (who accepted the unenviable task of judging the record number of 26 Junior Handlers, smartly attired and displaying handling skills to be envied), the Urrbrae 'crew' (a group of dedicated, responsible students, on hand throughout the Show under the guidance of staff, to assist exhibitors, help with cleaning, exercising, pen set up and departure - they did themselves, their school and the industry proud), and the shearing team from Jut Jura Alpaca Stud for shearing those alpacas in the Composite Classes and whose shearing demonstrations attracted large public audiences.

Lea Richens

Royal Adelaide Show Councillor

Supervisor, Alpaca Section



Supreme Champion Huacaya - Ambersun Fortune Seeker



Supreme Champion Suri - Meridian Priya



Junior handlers class



## Royal Melbourne 2012

The 2012 Royal Melbourne Show saw further substantial changes from recent years – every day a new experience!

Alpacas were moved into the livestock pavillion and the competition was moved from the final four days to the first three days of the show.

As in recent years, fleeces were judged pre-show to ensure they could be displayed throughout the 11 days of public access. This year Kylie Martin was both a halter judge and the fleece judge. Judging took place in concert with the judging of other natural fibres generating attention from television and print media and moving a step closer to the RASV's goal of a strong natural fibres show.

Champion fleece winners for 2012 were Camelot Enide (Huacaya) and Surilana Mendelsohn (Suri). Most Valuable Commercial Fleece was also won by Camelot Enide.

Halter Judges, Jenny Jackson and Kylie Martin commented on the quality of animals presented at the show and awarded Supreme Champion Huacaya to Ambersun Fortune Seeker and the Supreme Champion Suri to Kurrawa Just A Rebel

Sire's Progeny winners were Windsong Valley Snow Prince (Huacaya) and Kurrawa Tari Q ET (Suri). Most successful exhibitor awards, won by Softfoot Alpacas (Huacaya) and Surilana (Suri), were presented by Victorian Premier, Ted Baillieu. The Best Prepared and Maintained Team award was won by Classic Alpacas.

Taryan Kotsiakos judged the Junior Handler competition on the Monday with Heather Burn assisting. It was particularly pleasing to have students of the Donvale Christian College participate in this competition, ensuring a large number of entries in the different age groups.

2012 also saw a continued development of the wider promotion of alpaca fibre with links to the extremely popular arts and crafts competitions and displays with classes for alpaca fibre and garments.

Alpaca and alpaca product static displays, including fashion garments by Leslie Shea and others complemented pens of alpacas throughout the show period enabling the half million visiting public to see both the animals and principal goals of the alpaca industry.

Members of the Handweavers and Spinners Guild demonstrated various spinning and weaving techniques. Thanks to our members who brought alpacas and product for the displays and to Marie Williams and members of the Guild who participated so willingly.

Extending the static product displays, Fiona Martin and Leslie Shea ran very popular and well attended alpaca fashion parades. Garments by Leslie Shea, (Suri House), from AAFL, Robyn Fullerton's PCK Designs, and Judy Craig's Becreatif provided an extremely well received window on alpaca fibre and its high-end usage.

Russell Dawe, Chair, RASV Alpaca Committee ❖



Supreme Suri - Kurrawa Just A Rebel



Supreme Huacaya - Ambersun Fortune Seeker



Junior Handler Judge - Taryan Kotsiakos



A simple tunic style top with detail at hem and sleeves, with optional separate cowl collar.



### Materials

10 50g balls of knitalpaca "Luxa" 100% Australian alpaca (for jumper; one additional ball for optional cowl). For a lighter jumper, knitalpaca 'Opula' yarn could be used: adjust needle size to obtain correct tension.

Pair of 4.5 mm knitting needles; pair 3.5mm needles, or 3.5mm circular needle (for neck)

Buttons or similar for optional trim

### Tension

19 stitches and 26 rows to 10 cm in stocking stitch.



### BACK

Cast on 96 stitches. Work 5 rows in stocking stitch.

Next row: k to end. This creates the 'fold line' for the hem. Work 4 more rows in stocking stitch.

Eyelet Grid pattern:

Row 1: K 23, y.o, k2 tog, \*k 22, y.o, k2 tog to end.

Row 2 and all wrong side rows: Purl. Work 20 rows in this manner.

Row 21: K1, \*y.o, k2 tog. to end.

Row 22: Purl.

These 22 rows form the pattern

Continue working in pattern until work measures 70 cm (or desired length), ending with a wrong side row.

### Shape shoulders:

Cast off 10 sts at beginning of next 2 rows, then 7 sts at beginning of following 2 rows. Knit 2 together at the beginning of the next 6 rows. Cast off.

### FRONT

Work as for back until work measures 65 cm, ending with a wrong side row.

Shape neck:

Next row: work pattern for 39 sts; turn. Continue to work in pattern, whilst shaping neck: at neck edge, cast of 3 sts at neck edge twice, then 1st 4 times. Work straight until front measures 70 cm. Shape shoulders as for back. Cast off.

Place the next 18 sts on holder. Work the remaining stitches as above.

### SLEEVES

Cast on 49 sts. Work 5 rows in stocking stitch.

Next row: k to end. This creates the 'fold line' for the hem. Work 4 more rows in stocking stitch.

Continue working in stocking stitch until work measures 5 cm from beginning.

Next row: K1, \*y.o, k2 tog. To end.



Continue working in stocking st, increasing one stitch at each end of next and following 6th right side rows until you have 75 stitches. Continue working in stocking stitch until sleeve measures 40 cm from beginning (this will give you a slightly shortened sleeve length; if you wish full length sleeves, continue working until you reach the desired length). Cast off.

## FINISHING

Darn in ends. Join shoulder seams. Centre top of sleeve to shoulder, and join sleeves to front and back. Sew side seams.

## NECK

With smaller needles, pick up 80 sts around neck, including those on stitch holder, and work 2.5 cm in stocking st.

Change to larger needles and work 2 more rows. Cast off.

If desired, attach buttons or other trim to neck edge.

## COWL

Using 3.5mm circular needle, cast on 120 sts. (\* You may work this piece straight, or in the round.)

Work in k2, p2 rib until work measures 10 cm from beginning. Change to 4.5mm needles and continue in rib until work measures 27 cm. Then change to 6mm needles and continue in rib until work measures 33 cm. Cast off in rib.

Join cowl with flat seam if you have worked the piece flat.  
Darn in ends. ❖



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# Basic Fibre Testing - Part 2

*A guide for alpaca breeders*

## CURVATURE

Fibre curvature is the measure of the fibre crimp frequency and amplitude.

FACT: Curvature is affected by

- ❖ Crimp frequency
- ❖ Micron
- ❖ Character of the crimp (definition/amplitude/alignment)

There is a good correlation between fibre curvature and staple crimp frequency (sheep's wool).

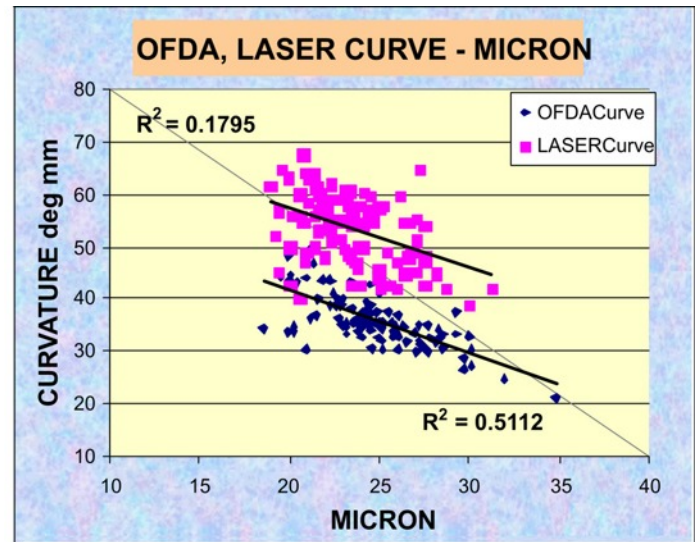
The curvature value is expressed in degrees per mm fibre length.

As the frequency of the crimp increases the curvature value is increased, and conversely the lower the curvature value the lower the staple crimp frequency. Fibre curvature can be measured at all stages of processing e.g. greasy to fabric. The curvature of the fibre influences how the fibre will process, particularly during top making and spinning.

### CURVATURE: SURI & HUACAYA



Curvature (OFDA) values in Suris have tended to give a range from 15 to 35 (some as low as 10) with the Huacaya showing a range from around 25 to 60. It was noted that the coarser the micron, generally the lower the curvature value. Also when the C of V was more variable (higher) the curvature value also tended to be lower.



NOTE: Since the tests for this comparison were taken, the AWTA has altered their solution to a "water base". This has altered how their current laser views the curvature. The data in this study was from a LASER SCAN using a 92% Isopropanol – 8% water formula as its liquid medium.

Other laboratories using a Laserscan are most likely to still be using the isopropanol/water formula, as it is believed the AWTA is the only laboratory at this stage to have gone to this water based solution.

The comparisons between the OFDA and laser for curvature indicated an average difference of 17.4 deg mm (100 huacayas measured in this trial by both machines).

The significance of difference in curvature measurements between machines suggests that meaningful comparisons of fibre curvature between different fleeces can only be made if measured by the same techniques.

NOTE: International standards for the measurement of curvature have been established.

Currently however, not all international "Testing Houses" use the new "standard correction" for the measurement of curvature between the "laser scan" and "OFDA".

- ❖ Interwool labs use a "standard regression" correction factor for both machines.
- ❖ The closeness is to around "just under 5%".



## MEDULLATION (GUARD HAIR)

The medullated fibres called "guard hair" are not desirable in the finished product.

They are stiff and hollow with pointed tips. They reflect light differently to solid fibres and are hard to control when spinning. Medullation (guard hair and continuous medulla) is also considered a disadvantage because of fibre breakage. Partial fragmented medulla has little affect on fibre tenacity. Medullation (guard hair) also creates non-uniformity of colour levels in the dyed fibre. A large number of these fibres are removed during the carding/combing process but a number still remain and these are a contributor to the coarse edge, which gives the "prickle factor" (now known as the "comfort factor") in garments. Being stiff they will protrude from the yarn. A Harris Tweed would welcome this effect.

Breeders can measure the numbers of medullated fibres including those partially medullated, using an O.F.D.A. 100 (white only). This is a useful tool to identify any alpaca (white) which may be more prone to high levels of medulla cells.

Does not identify guard hair separately.



The data below compares two fleece types (micron).

No 5 and 18 (around 22 microns) and No 6 and 15 (around 28 microns). Nos 15 and 18 both exhibit less medullation over the fleece than their counterpart.

Normally alpaca fibre up to around approximately 20 microns (18/22) is solid in structure.

The medulla cells on average tend to occur from 20/22 microns onwards, although in some animals some cells may change at a lower micron and increase with broader microns.

Medullation (except for the last classification) is inherent in alpaca fibre and is not guard hair (Research by Holt/ Stapleton 1993, Tumen Wuliji et.al 1993 and J. Villarroel 1958 confirm these observations).

**Distribution of Medullation Across a Fleece (C Holt & I Stapleton)**

Animal No.	Age (Year)	Average Fleece Diameter	Site	Medulla (Percentages of Fibres)		
				None (1)	Interrupted 2 & 3	Continuous 4 & 5
5	1	21.8 <sub>(micron)</sub>	A	39	30	31
			P	29	56	15
			S	24	46	29
			N	74	18	7
			B	27	57	16
			M	58	33	9
			SP	52	32	14
			MB	84	11	5
6	1	26.9	A	42	31	27
			P	61	16	23
			S	43	27	30
			N	86	8	6
			B	31	42	27
			M	87	10	3
			SP	78	11	11
			MB	*	*	*
15	4	27.8	A	3	12	85
			P	23	62	15
			S	11	38	51
			N	12	50	38
			B	5	48	47
			M	3	48	48
			SP	18	38	44
			MB	25	53	23
18	4	22.6	A	57	21	23
			P	55	24	21
			S	47	38	15
			N	57	24	19
			B	72	20	8
			M	65	24	11
			SP	66	26	7
			MB	73	20	7

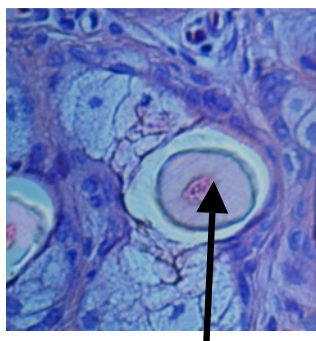
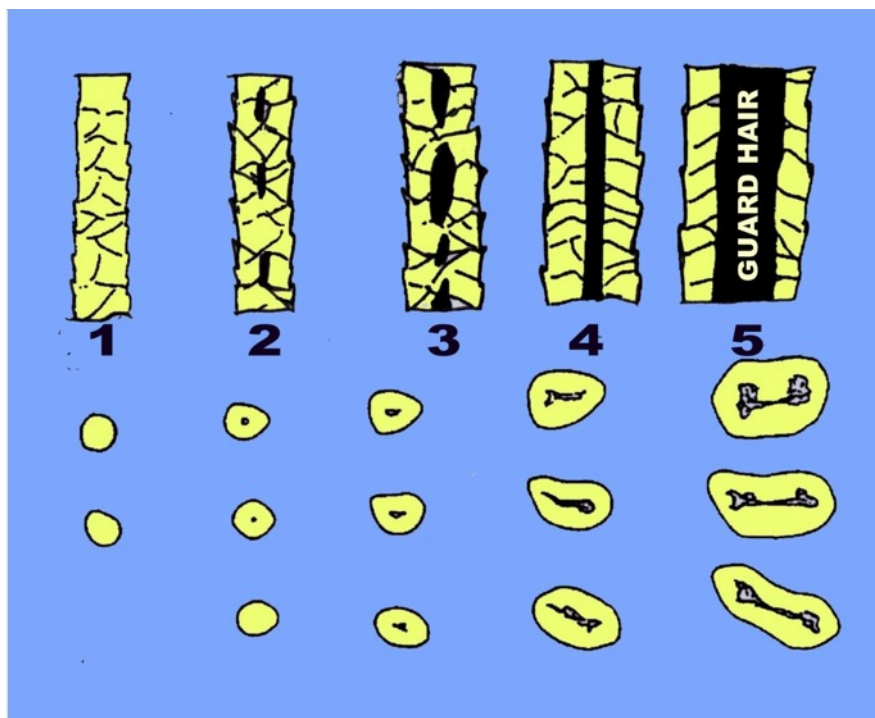
\* Fibre too badly weathered for examination

The diagram at right shows the standard classifications of medullation with the guard hair on the end.

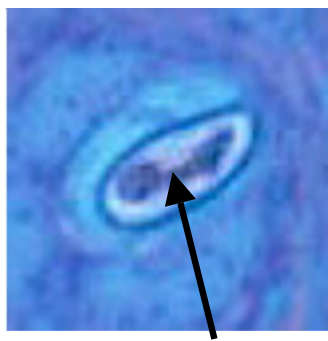
### Types of medulla and typical cross-section shape in white Alpaca fibres.

1. Non medullated fibres, 15-20 micron diameter
2. Fragmented, 20-30 micron diameter
3. Interrupted, 30-40 micron diameter
4. Unbroken medium wide, 40-60 micron diameter
5. Unbroken very wide (near to lattice type), 60 or more micron diameter

Group "5" is undesirable in Alpaca fleece.



Normal Alpaca Fibre



Very coarse guard hair

Dr Werner Von Bergen (1963) states that these fibres can occupy up to as much as 90% of the fibre, which is often dumbbell shaped in the cross section (as above). It is suggested that around 80% medulla constitutes a guard hair type.

Wildman (1954) identifies medulla in various grades of fineness from the finer fibres to the very coarse.

These alpaca photos correspond to some that he identified. If you accept Von Bergen's assessment of kemp then you would have to consider the coarser fibre as guard hair.

In the very coarse 60+ micron various expressions of medulla are identified.

The shape of the fibre (elliptical/cylindrical) may affect the medulla formation.

In alpaca, guard hair can be seen at levels of fineness (even 20 microns) and it is a mistake to believe that guard hair is only coarse.

It would be interesting to see cross sections of these 20 micron guard hairs to see if they have 80% + medulla in them.

This magnified photo is an 18 micron fleece showing guard hair of 27 microns, not as expected in the previous diagram of standard classifications.



Guard Hair

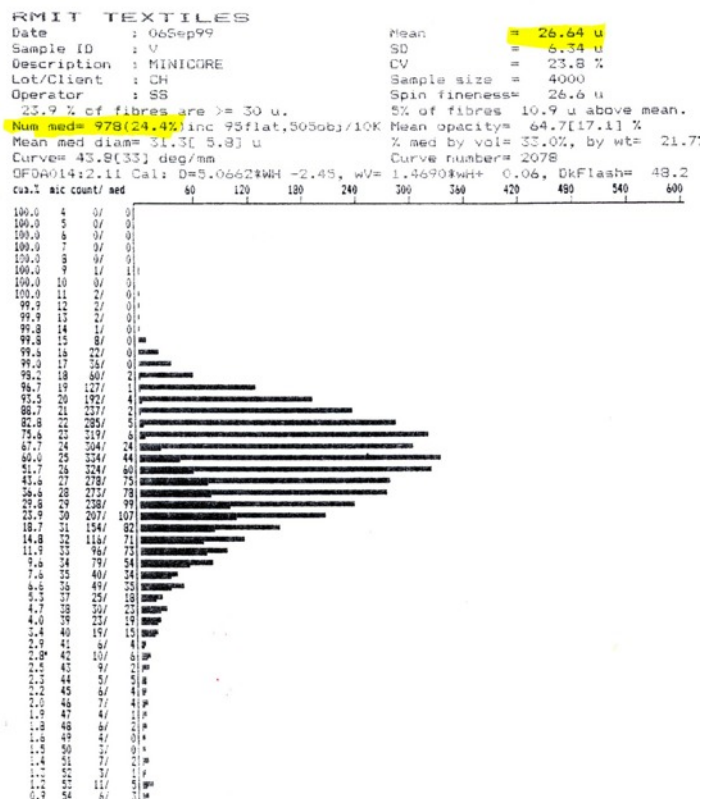
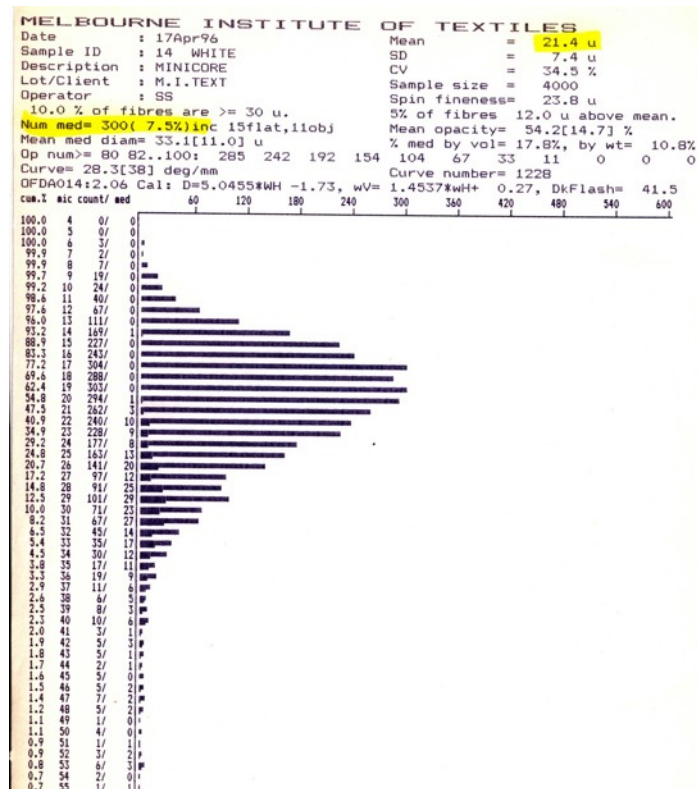
Dr Jim Watts (2009) suggests that if an alpaca has low primary fibre diameter it will have less guard hair and believes that if primary and secondary fibres are around 17 microns there will be no guard hair or medullation in most alpacas.

He suggests that guard hair is at the end of a continuing medullation development.



## Medullation Results

A histogram of medullated fibres is superimposed over the solid fibres and records the various diameters and spread. Dark coloured fibre is more difficult to calculate and results for these colours are not as reliable.

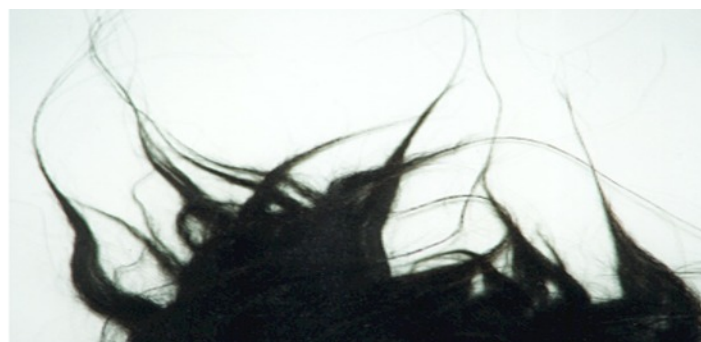


A visual assessment can be made on the coarse guard hair fibres and the fleeces are rated as:

- ❖ Free or nearly free
- ❖ Light
- ❖ Medium
- ❖ Heavy

The shape of the staple will be a help in identifying content of the coarse medullated fibres. These fibres will usually protrude from the tip of the staple and will have the appearance of a spiky tip (see image at right).

It should be noted that medullation in Suri appears lower than that of similar microns for Huacayas. (Holt/Scott 1998). It was noted that as the fibre became stronger in micron there was an increase in medullation, (see below).

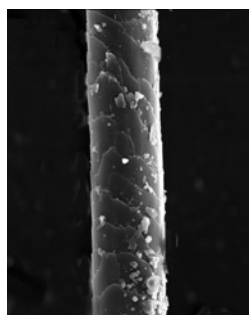


If you look at the photos below you can see the difference between huacaya, suri and guard hair. You will notice the number of scales along the shaft of the fibre. Guard hair is completely different to alpaca fibre.

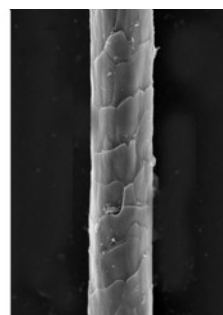
To summarise, simply, guard hair is a different fibre to alpaca.

Micron	Huacaya	Suri
20	12.9%	4.7%
26	36%	16%
36	60%	42.4%

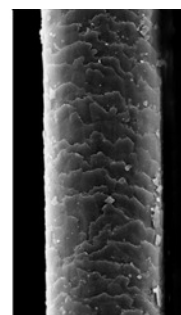
**HUACAYA**  
9/11 MSF



**SURI**  
5/8 MSF



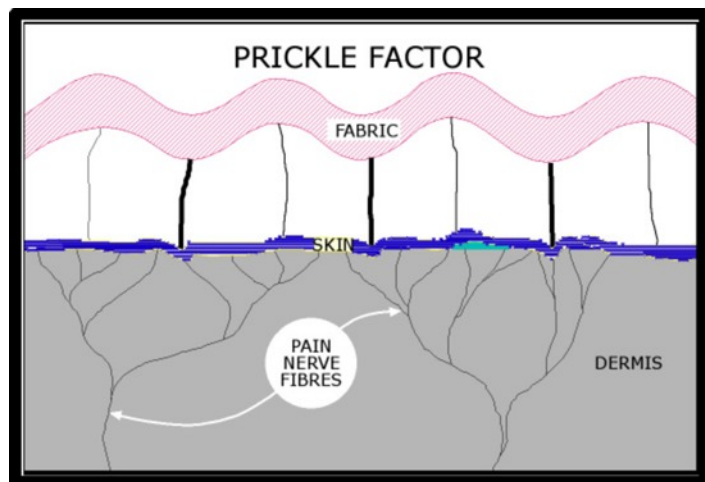
**GUARD HAIR**  
18/19 MSF



(Tillman © 2006)

## PRICKLE FACTOR (%AE30)

“Comfort factor” - this is a term given to the perceived sensations from contact of clothing with the skin.



The main sensation is the itch or prickle that some (few) people identify as giving discomfort. Research suggests that the itch is not an allergy but a response from the pain nerve receptors in the skin to the coarse fibres (over 30 micron) protruding from yarn in the fabric.

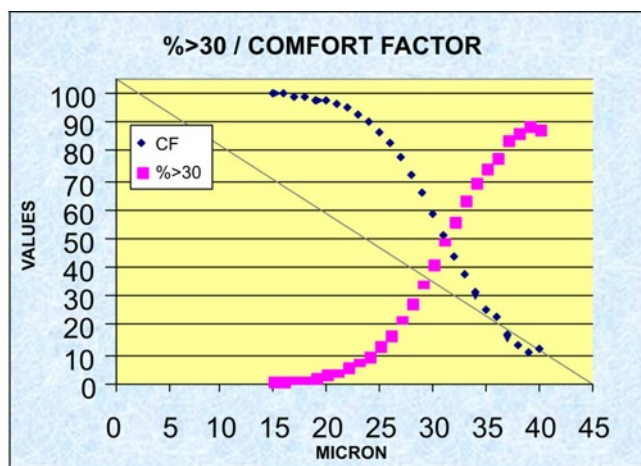
The coarse fibres being the high load supporting fibres that protrude from the fabric exert a force of 100mg or greater. This indents the skin subsequently activating the pain receptors in the dermis. The finer more flexible fibres do not create the same problem.

It is a prickle or itch that is perceived and not a pain.

The offending fibres (Natural or Synthetic) are usually over 30 microns in diameter in particular are those over 40 microns.

Yarn with a high content of coarse medullated fibre will produce a much greater discomfort to the wearer.

It therefore is wise to be aware of the measurement on the histogram indicating the percentage of fibres over 30 microns (greater than 5%). Little difference between Huacaya and Suri fibre could be found for this characteristic. (Holt/Scott 1998)



Micron	Huacaya % AE30	Suri % AE30
20	5.16	6.03
25	19.57	20.06
35	53.76	51.3

Prickle factor is now being quoted as “comfort factor” and is shown in reverse to that of prickle factor, e.g. PF 5.16, would now read CF 94.84. Some of the research being quoted in this article was done when the term “prickle factor” was in use.

Studies have shown that a wool of a mean diameter of 21 microns and a low C.O.V. having less than 5% of fibre over 30 microns should not be perceived as having a prickle (itch) problem. General data alpaca research (Holt 2005) for “%>30” has shown that an alpaca with a mean diameter of 21 / 22 microns should have 5% or less of fibre over 30 microns and like sheep’s wool should not have a prickle problem. (Holt 2005)

MICRON	CF	%>30	CV MIC
15	99.56	0.44	25
16	99.36	0.64	23.7
17	98.9	1.1	24.6
18	98.61	1.39	24
19	97.94	2.09	23.9
20	97.32	2.75	23.2
21	96.07	3.95	23.2
22	94.72	5.3	22.7
23	92.67	7.34	22.5
24	90.36	9.65	22
25	87.06	12.93	21.8
26	83.13	16.86	21.3
27	78.01	21.97	21.3
28	72.03	27.97	21
29	65.52	34.32	20.7
30	58.49	41.51	20.8
31	51.26	48.74	20.7
32	44.06	55.93	20.9
33	37.5	62.54	20.6
34	30.81	69.19	20.7
35	25.69	74.32	20.9
36	22.4	77.6	21.8
37	16.33	83.68	20.6
38	13.71	86.29	21.2
39	11.03	88.97	20.8
40	12.52	87.47	23



So when using the measured data in selection you should take note of % number of fibres over 30 microns, as well as C.O.V. Of course as the micron gets stronger so the % over 30 microns will become greater in number, but if you keep your eye on the C.O.V. you can keep it at its lowest level.

In conclusion remember why you are testing. Are you testing to get a result to sell the animal or are you testing to compare the animals on your farm to see which ones match your breeding objectives?

- ❖ Test for up to 5 years to see which animals are subject to micron blowout.
- ❖ Try to test all the herd at the same time each year.
- ❖ Use the second year results to rank your animals.

Remember, if sampling is not consistent then the ability to compare between animals is impaired.

- ❖ A mid side sample although biased will suffice for herd rankings.
- ❖ Always cut the breeder sample at skin level.
- ❖ A full grid sample is more accurate than a single site sample.
- ❖ A "three site position" will give a good indication of overall evenness across the fleece. Use shoulder and hind pin bones as well as midside for consistency.

From a laboratory point of view,

- ❖ A breeder grid sample should always be mini cored in the laboratory.
- ❖ Select a testing machine that suits your purpose for testing and stick with it for greater precision of results. ❖



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# Alpaca Exports to Europe

*A New Zealand perspective*

This edited article is from a presentation that Kit delivered at the Alpaca Association New Zealand 2012 National Conference at Rotorua. Kit has generously agreed to publish it as an article in *Alpacas Australia*. Pictures and operational details supplied by Wildflower Alpacas Export and Quarantine Services.

After 32 years in the passenger transport and tourism industry, I was ready for a quieter pace of life. I sold my business interests and together with my wife Sheryl purchased a 10 acre block near Kaiapoi, about 20 kilometres north of Christchurch.

We purchased our first alpacas in late 2000 and after extensive research we decided to head to Australia. Names like Inti, Highlander, Ledger's Dream, Sculptor, Brigantine, Conquistador, Warrior and many others had fascinated me and now we had the opportunity of seeing these magnificent animals first hand. This was the start of our first imports from Australia and they have never stopped.

Today Silverstream has a herd of about 230 alpacas on 50 acres spread over 3 properties. In 2006 after several serious inquiries from overseas we built two quarantine facilities and after months of paperwork complying with MPI (Ministry for Primary Industries) regulations, we were granted our PEI (Pre Export Isolation) licence. We have since opened a third facility and are exporting alpacas on a regular basis to most parts of Europe.

I hope to offer some insight into the world of alpaca exports and provide encouragement for others to follow suit.

## So why wouldn't you export to Europe?

Here are some compelling reasons why you should:

1. With the exception of the UK, the overall quality of the European herd is of a lower standard – some individual farms excepted.
2. The spread of Blue Tongue in Europe and Tb in the UK has made European breeders wary of where they purchase their next alpaca. There are also stringent movement controls in place to prevent the spread of these diseases in both Europe and the UK.
3. Importing alpacas from the USA has generally not been an attractive option financially.
4. There is currently no protocol in place for the export of alpacas direct from Australia to the EU. The main access for Australian genetics into the EU is via NZ but this involves a six month isolation period in New Zealand.

New Zealand bred alpacas have been exported to Europe since 2007 and they have enjoyed considerable success in the show ring. We have a good reputation. European alpaca breeders are aware that NZ has a diverse genetic base of Australian and to a lesser extent South and North American genetics.

5. Our registry and male certification programme provide confidence and reassurance to the buyer. They like to see the registration papers proving ownership, date of birth and the pedigree of the animal in question.
6. Show results do have an impact on the selection of animals. European breeders, as a rule, do not inspect the animals first hand relying more on the information furnished by the vendor. Show results become very important. With our large number of shows, they obtain some very useful information from their perspective.
7. New Zealand enjoys an enviable international reputation for its agricultural excellence and relative freedom of disease.
8. Depending on the timing of the purchase, New Zealand bred alpacas can potentially be in Europe within 42 days.
9. A favourable exchange rate has greatly assisted New Zealand exporters and made the cost of NZ animals including export relatively inexpensive.
10. European alpaca breeders are looking for that winning edge over their competitors. They are competitive and they are looking for their next champion. New Zealand is known as a source of top quality animals.





**Australia - How do we compete?** 150,000 alpacas compared to our 25,000 alpacas.

Despite our small size, New Zealand, can export alpacas direct to Europe. This is due to the existence of a signed protocol (last updated 15/05/2011) between the Ministry for Primary Industries and the agricultural officials in the EU. As mentioned earlier, New Zealand is the preferred way for Australians wanting to access the European market. Under the above protocol, any imported animal from Australia must be resident in NZ for a minimum period of six months.

This in turn creates some wonderful opportunities for NZ alpaca breeders to sell into Europe competitively.

1. NZ bred animals can be in Europe from between six weeks and three months depending on the next planned departure date.
2. Alpacas cannot be exported in their last trimester of pregnancy. If one assumes that pregnant females are at least three months pregnant before their arrival into New Zealand, then the female will have to birth in NZ before being exported to Europe, adding to the time and cost of the export.
3. It is currently less expensive to export alpacas from New Zealand to Europe.

As a general rule and assuming the purchase price is the same (allowing for currency conversion), an Australian alpaca will cost approximately NZ\$3,000 more to import into Europe than a similar alpaca being exported from New Zealand.

This added cost is made up of Australian quarantine, air freight to NZ plus NZ quarantine and MPI costs as well as agistment for the six month period. Beware however that terms of trade and the conditions of passage can change at very short notice.

There have also been a large number of Australian alpacas exported to Europe. There is a perception in Europe that the US and Australia have the best animals.

We should be aware that at any time, Australia may develop an export protocol to the EU. There is already a working group in place exploring options to have Australian animals exported direct into Europe.

What are the demographics of the main alpaca nations in the EU?

COUNTRY	POPULATION	ALPACA NOS
United Kingdom	62 million	25000
Germany	82 million	12000
The Netherlands	17 million	5000
France	65 million	5000
Italy	60 million	5000
Belgium	11 million	4000
Switzerland	8 million	4000
Norway	5 million	2500
Sweden	9 million	2000
Austria	8 million	1500
TOTALS	327 million	66000

As a comparison:

COUNTRY	POPULATION	ALPACA NOS
New Zealand	4.5 million	25000
Australia	22 million	150000

With half a billion people in Europe, there is huge potential for more export sales. There are many wealthy people in Europe with large disposable incomes. In New Zealand the trend is for city dwellers to purchase lifestyle properties whereas in Europe many alpaca breeders come from small villages and already own or have access to small parcels of land.

Alpaca shows have only become established in the last three to four years in mainland Europe and new shows are developing all the time. With shows come promotion and publicity of our beloved alpacas.

The potential coming off such a small base is enormous.

### **New Zealand alpaca import and export statistics**

Obtaining accurate import and export data is not easy to come by. For importers and exporters it is commercially sensitive.

Using data from MPI, we come up with the following:

YEAR	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
2005	256	
2006	290	56
2007	168	106
2008	225	353
2009	146	375
2010	344	334
2011	72	404
2012	66	

We do know that there were a number of large alpaca imports from South America from 1987 to 1991 and that a proportion of these animals were exported to Australia after the 1987 share crash. There were also regular imports from Australia from 2000 onwards. Pre 2005 alpacas were not categorized separately in the MPI statistical data.

The above information is also blurred by the fact that from 2010 came the start of the Australian imports ultimately bound for Europe. These animals were imported into NZ for six months and then exported to Europe.

What percentage of the above imports stayed in New Zealand is unknown.

### **So which countries can I export too?**

Before committing to any sale overseas, it is most important that you check to see that there is an export protocol in place for that country. You also need to check the next planned date of departure.

An export protocol is an official agreement between New Zealand and a nominated country for the import to that country of alpacas. The agreement sets out the terms

and conditions in which alpacas can be imported.

There are serious consequences for any breach of a protocol not the least being the cancellation of the export.

There is an Export Protocol in place for the European Union. Countries included in that protocol include:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Slovak Republic and the UK.

Switzerland and Norway whilst not a member of the EU are also covered by the EU Protocol.

There are also separate protocols for Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan and the USA.

To find out more go to:  
[www.biosecurity.govt.nz/exports/animals/search/-/alpacas](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/exports/animals/search/-/alpacas)

### **So what is it going to cost to export?**

Every export is different and it is imperative that you seek a confirmed price in advance of any potential sale.

Crates to the UK and EU are loaded on top of each other as double crates in the aircraft hold. A double crate can hold approximately 24 alpacas but the number will depend on total weight, the sex of the animals and if there are any cria on board. A lesser number of alpacas per crate will invariably increase the rate per alpaca.

Another factor that can affect pricing are changes to airline schedules and amendment to EU regulations.

Until recently animals were offloaded in Brussels, now it is Heathrow. If your animals are bound for the UK that is great news but for mainland Europe there are now extra charges for ground transport.

Assuming that alpaca breeders work together and consolidate their exports and maximize the crate numbers, costs would be approximately:

#### **1. Quarantine - NZ\$1,000 per animal**

Price includes MPI inspections, veterinary attendances, blood samples and testing, micro-chipping, plastic ear tags, Tb testing, agistment, feeding, weighing of animals, transport to Auckland airport and compliancy costs.

#### **2. Air Freight to London – NZ\$2,500 per animal**

Price includes cost of alpaca crate, air freight, airway bill and general compliancy costs. Prices can and do change regularly. The above costs are given as a guideline only.

### **The export process – what happens?**

Any alpaca awaiting export to Europe must be at the property of the PEI (Pre Export Isolation) facility no later than 40 days prior to export.



At 30 days the alpacas enter isolation or the PEI facility. From hereon in, there can be no further contact with other animals other than the animals for export.

Asure Quality will inspect the facility to ensure everything is compliant with the regulations.

Over the next 30 days, the animals will be weighed (airline requirement), microchipped, a plastic ear tag will be inserted (to show country of origin), Tb tested, blood will be taken for testing against any of the diseases described in the export protocol.

At the Silverstream PEI facility the animals receive Matrix and Baycox against parasites and Profos to guard against stress on the long flight to Europe.

During this period there are innumerable forms and declarations to be completed by the Exporter, PEI Facility Owner, MPI, Wildflower Alpaca Exports, SDV Logistics and the Singapore Airlines Cargo.

The animals are then loaded onto a truck with MPI supervision and each bay is sealed with a MPI tag.

The truck has to be cleaned and disinfected before loading and documents signed. The animals are given hay and water for the journey to Auckland. The animals must be at Auckland International Airport at least four hours before departure.



## Arrival at Auckland International Airport

On arrival at Auckland International Airport, the alpacas are offloaded into specially prepared wooden crates, under supervision by an MPI veterinarian. The crates are amply supplied with good quality hay and fresh water for the long journey ahead. The microchips and ear tag numbers are all carefully checked against the documentation before loading into the crates. Each crate has an allocated number of alpacas based on the documentation.

The animals are loaded onto a Singapore Airlines Boeing 747/400 series freighter aircraft for their journey to London.

Steve Ridout (Wildflower Alpacas) after coordinating with MPI, the crate builders, organizing Transit Permits, Load Planning and flight details, flies to Auckland Airport to coordinate the loading of the alpacas. He then travels with the alpacas to feed and water en route to Europe. Steve also ensures that the stocking densities are correct to enable all alpacas to have access to feed and water, with additional space given to females with cria which allows for mums to adequately stand for the cria to drink.

AUCKLAND TO MELBOURNE - 3 hours

2 hour stopover in Melbourne

MELBOURNE TO SINGAPORE – 7.5 hours

2.5 hour stopover in Singapore

SINGAPORE TO SHAJAH – 7.5 hours

1.5 hour stopover in Shajah

SHAJAH TO LONDON - 7 hours

2 hours to unload animals from aircraft

The animals are given water throughout the journey and the air conditioning is left on at all stopovers. The temperature is maintained at 12 degrees.

## Arrival into Heathrow

The animals are unloaded from the aircraft and taken to the DEPHRA Facility at Heathrow Airport. The animals are given fresh water and hay while they are checked over by the British agricultural veterinarians to verify that they are in good health. There will be random blood sampling done just to keep the officials happy that NZ have complied with the regulations.

Microchips and ear tags are checked against the documentation and all documents double-checked to ensure total compliance with the import regulations.

After customs clearance and payment of VAT, the animals are then free to be collected by the owners or loaded onto LOC Transport for their onward journey to mainland European countries.

All imported animals must then have a 30 day isolation period in the UK or Europe before joining other animals.

The isolation can be on the farm of the new owner and as long as other animals cannot come into contact with the recent arrivals, the importer is compliant with the regulations.

Steve Ridout ensures all documentation is forwarded to his European Customs Agents for pre clearance, he liaises with all consignees throughout the export process and hands over all the original Health Certificates on arrival.

The animals are readily identifiable by their distinctive plastic ear tags. Steve also assists with the loading of the animals. He also has the opportunity of making sure that all animals have arrived safely and are correctly delivered to the rightful owner.

To reassure everyone, we have a good record of animals arriving in good health and without complications.

## Conclusion

1. There is a huge market in Europe just waiting to be tapped.
2. Currently there are four or five alpaca breeders from NZ and Australia promoting heavily in Europe. Where are the others – there is huge potential.
3. Instead of being insular, we need to work as a team promoting the benefits of buying in New Zealand. The more NZ breeders we have promoting in Europe, the better it will be for the New Zealand industry. The message needs to be heard again and again and this can only be done with numbers.
4. It should also be noted that both AU and NZ need a joint approach to continually access the European market, as a part of the EU Protocol the requirement is for the same aircraft all the way through to Europe. The airlines in order to offer this service require a certain level of revenue to accommodate us. It's with this that both countries require the numbers being exported to be consolidated through the coordination and management of Wildflower Alpaca Export and Quarantine Services. Without the consolidation service and the withdrawal of many other airline services to Europe both countries exports would not be cost effective.

It does not matter that you only own a few alpacas. Remember your alpaca can join with other export animals and enjoy the same cost benefits.

5. The important thing to remember is to deliver what you promise and more if possible. Word of mouth is a very powerful tool when you are dealing with clients on the other side of the world.
6. An attractive website with detailed descriptions of your animals for sale with good photographs is essential.
7. Importers are not just after high quality alpacas – like us they have varying budgets but want to maximize their budget. Show results and fleece stats will assist in making sales.

The rest is up to you – best of luck. ❖



## This Issue's Winner

' Vertical Integration '  
Anita Neeser  
Dandaloo Alpacas, QLD



' Alfred with a big friendly smile '  
Kerrie Lucy - SamNat Park Alpacas QLD



' Come on Ginger - keep up! '  
Andrea Endacott - Seachange Alpacas WA



' Best Friends '  
Michelle Rose - Balamacho Glen Alpacas QLD



' Hidden Alpacas '  
D & F Laughton - Beavona Lodge Suris QLD



Send us your Paca Pics. Please send your paca pics as high resolution .jpg images to the AAA office via email, as an email attachment. Email: [sandra@alpaca.asn.au](mailto:sandra@alpaca.asn.au)

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# AUSTRALIAN ALPACA ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE



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**Monday 6th May**

**[www.alpaca.asn.au/2013conference](http://www.alpaca.asn.au/2013conference)**