



# ALPACAS AUSTRALIA

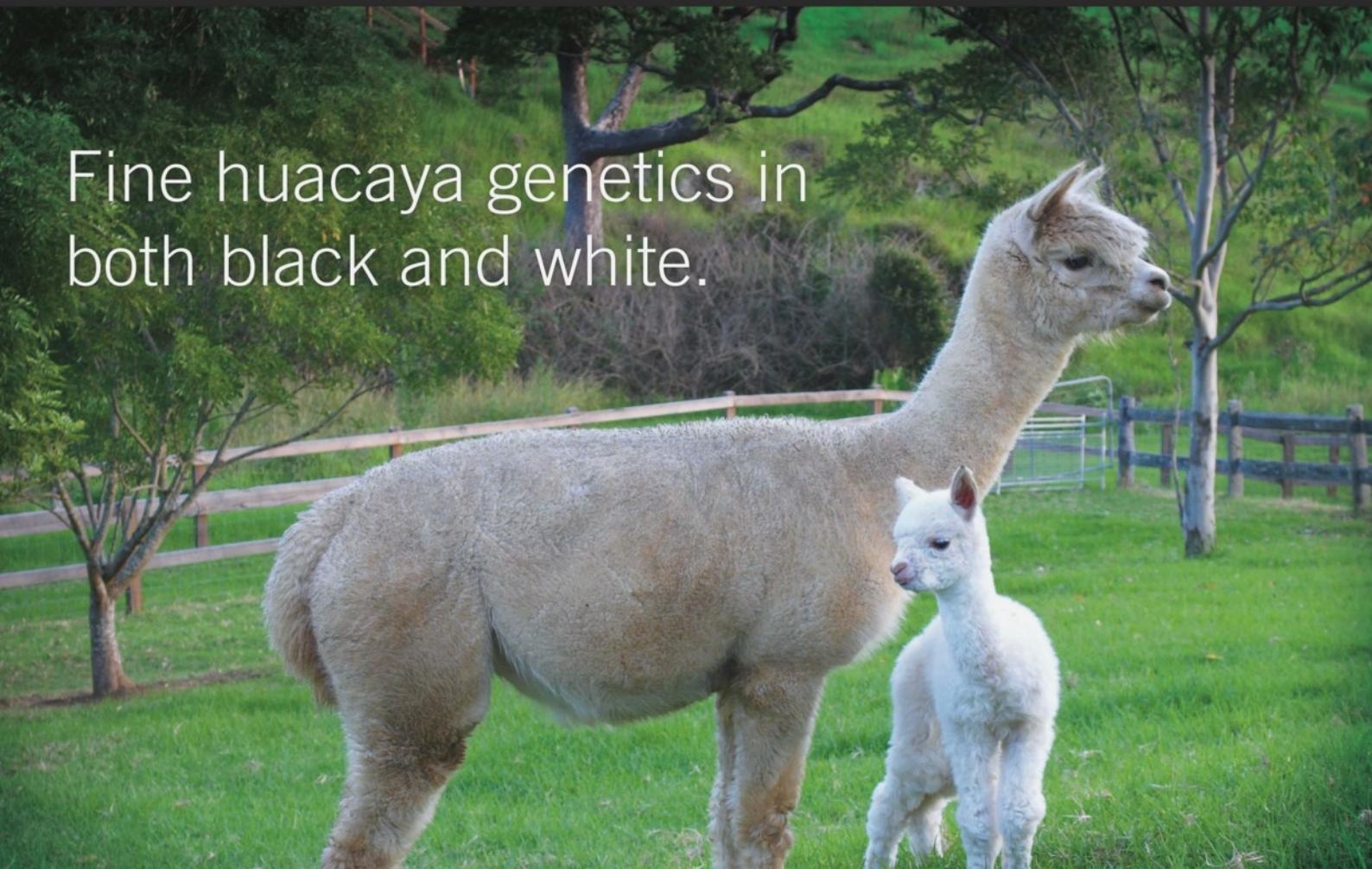
The official publication of the Australian Alpaca Association Ltd



Included in this issue

- ❖ Twins - Congratulations or commiserations?
- ❖ Exporting Alpacas - Is it for you?
- ❖ Dung Beetles

Fine huacaya genetics in both black and white.



## FEATURED STUD MALES



**BANKSIA PARK  
MYSTIC CHALLENGE ET**

Millpaca Alpaca Stud are proud to own this true to type male. His brilliant show record confirms he has perfect conformation with a beautiful soft, dense fleece with excellent structure.

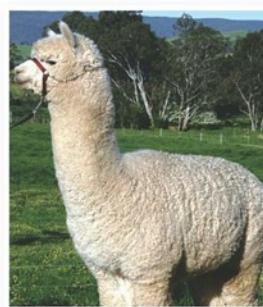
2012 - Mic 28.9 - SD 5.7 - CV 19.8



**KOORANA PARK  
BLACK KNIGHT**

Black Knight was again placed 1st in his class at the national show. He has the fleece characteristics of a seedstock (wool) stud male. Black Knight is a true to type blue/black male with fleece demonstrating fibre diameter uniformity, good density, lustre and soft handle.

2012 - Mic 27.4 - SD 4.8 - CV 17.6



**SHANBROOKE  
ACCOYO INVINCIBLE**

Invincible carries an incredible bright lustrous fleece that handles like silk. His fleece character is a bold bundling deep amplitude crimp that peels open into individual staples. He has good width of chest on a large frame with sound bone. His follicular density is 63.1 with a secondary to primary ratio of 11.

2012 - Mic 24 - SD 4.7 - CV 19.8  
Fleece weight 6.1kg



**CANCHONES  
YATAGAN ET**

Canchones Yatagan is a blue black male with exceptional substance of bone, luster and handle. Due to his quality and follicular density he is a SRS recommended male.

2012 - Mic 29.9 - SD 6.5 - CV 21.8

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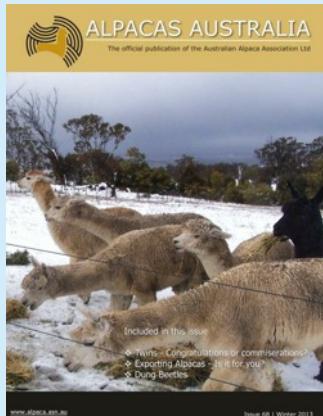
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**Cover:** Photo by Penny Pittard  
Currabungle Alpacas NSW

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# President's Message

The cooler months are well and truly upon us, and we have had ample opportunity to utilise our alpaca homewares – blankets, throws, pillows and quilts – to stay warm and sleep well at night. Our alpaca garments – socks, scarves, gloves, jumpers and coats – have also been given a workout as we go about our business, on farm and further afield. Not using or wearing alpaca products – why not??? The fibre our alpacas produce is known for its soft, luxurious handle, practical (and natural) colour options, and its thermal properties. It is estimated that the Australian herd produces around 450,000kg of fleece per year, yet only a fraction of that clip is made available to producers. Why? We need to think of ourselves as fibre growers who have a product that is saleable – providing we present it to prospective purchasers as something worthy of their consideration, and suitably prepared for their desired use.

There will only be a competitive market for alpaca fibre in Australia if we create the demand for its use, by ensuring it is available in quantities that make it viable for processors to produce their goods with a consistent finish in appearance and handle. While our alpacas certainly aren't ready to be shorn just yet, now is the time to plan what you will do with this years clip – how you will prepare it, where you will send it, who you will work with, so that you have a product that will provide you with a financial return.



Of course, the alpaca industry in Australia is about more than just the fleece. Our advancement in breeding over the past 20+ years has led to excellence that is recognised worldwide, and we have bloodlines that are highly sought after. Export opportunities are opening up into Asia, and it isn't just the large, higher profile breeders who are selling animals to overseas buyers. However, as with fleece it is important to know what you have, and ensure that it is what the purchaser wants; not to mention bringing that fact to their attention. Across Australia there have been numerous shows, both large and small, and various field days and promotional events that provide the opportunity to showcase the alpaca industry.

The Sydney Royal Easter Show attracts thousands of visitors from city and country, many of whom follow the 'Animal Walk' on its meandering path across the showground, including through the Alpaca Showcase where all aspects of alpaca production were on display, and through the Alpaca pavilion, where alpacas could be led (with assistance) through a range of obstacles, photographed, or simply admired. Seating was often at capacity throughout the course of Judging, with onlookers applauding the competitors as they led their alpacas through the course during the Paraders event; keenly observing the animals in the led classes; and listening intently as the Junior Judging entrants awarded their placings and presented their remarks on the class.

There have been field days in more 'rural' areas, where there is interest in the commercial aspects of alpaca production, in addition to the benefits of using alpacas with the appropriate age and temperament to work as herd guards. There have been hundreds of Open Farm Days during National Alpaca Week, when members opened their farms to visitors who ranged from simply curious to extremely interested.

Our new website was launched in late March, and while there were some functional issues initially, the new look has been well received. The content of the website will continue to be a work in progress, and the aim is to build on the information available to both visitors and AAA members. This year we also created the website [www.nationalalpacaweek.com.au](http://www.nationalalpacaweek.com.au) to promote National Alpaca Week events, and participating members were given access to a range of press releases and advertising templates online.

In March it was determined that there should be some certainty regarding the Alpacas Australia magazine, and it was agreed to continue publishing the magazine on a quarterly basis for the next three years, taking us to June 2016. We trust that our members will support this decision by contributing articles for publication, giving due consideration to the advertisers and their products or services, and recommending it to potential subscribers.

Happy reading!

Michelle Malt  
AAA Ltd President



# News & Views

**THE ALPACA FLOCK.**—The 'Herald' of the 13th, in its summary for England, describes the introduction of the Alpaca flock by Mr. Ledger, the attempts made in various ways to sell them, and the final purchases of the flock by the Government rather than the animals should be lost to the colony. And it adds the following information. "About a fortnight ago the animals were handed over by Mr. Ledger to the Government, and they are now, therefore, the property of the country. The government have wisely retained Mr. Ledger's services to take charge of the flock, now numbering about three hundred, for the purpose of choosing the locality best suited to the habits of the animal, and most analogous to the place from which they came. In the meantime the same are depasturing at Collingwood, about twenty miles from Sydney, and have, since their arrival, much improved in condition, as well as increased in number. Experience hitherto has proved the climate and the pasturage well adapted for their growth and propagation. It was expected that Mr. Ledger would have started earlier, so as to have the alpacas removed before the winter set in, which is an unsuitable season for driving stock; but, although he will start in the course of a few days, the flock must now remain at Collingwood during the winter. \* \* \* The sum of £15,000 voted for the purchase of the alpacas has, during the past week, been handed over to a gentleman representing the House to which Mr. Ledger was indebted to that amount, so that Mr. Ledger finds himself, after seven years of severe labour, and the outlay of £7000, utterly unrewarded except by the moderate salary attaching to the office of Superintendent of Alpacas. Although few people are prepared to doubt the importance of this addition to our resources, there is a natural tendency amongst the Commercial classes to depreciate the value of new enterprises until the tangible results are before them. However, there can be no doubt that when alpaca wool begins to arrive in the Sydney produce sales, and to make a respectful figure in our exports, Mr. Ledger's intrepid service, as well as the direct pecuniary losses, will be properly and substantially recompensed."

Interesting Alpaca related newspaper clipping from yesteryear - Lyttelton Times, 22 June 1859

## New in the World of Science

Camelids appear to offer what researchers are calling a "game changer" in the quest for treating Alzheimer's disease. A study published in the Journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology reports that a serum from these animals "could enhance brain imaging and help drugs pass through the blood-brain barrier." The blood-brain barrier (BBB) is a separation of circulating blood from the extracellular fluid that bathes the brain in the central nervous system. The BBB restricts the diffusion of larger molecules and microscopic objects such as bacteria from entering the brain. Smaller molecules such as oxygen and carbon dioxide can diffuse across the BBB.

The paper describes an entirely new class of antibody discovered in the camelid genus that can cross the blood-brain barrier, diffuse into brain tissue, and reach specific targets. Lafaye and colleagues studied alpacas and discovered an antibody naturally able to cross the BBB without need for chemical modification. Then, additional research showed that after these antibodies entered the brain successfully, they diffused into the brain tissue to reach a target, which in this study was a type of cell called astrocytes. This study shows, for the first time, an antibody penetrated into the brain in a living brain, under normal physiological conditions. In addition to the obvious clinical applications of this finding, it opens the doors to new research involving the body's systems for recognizing self v. "non-self." Such recognition of self vs non-self is the basis of the body's immune system.

Pierre Lafaye, Ph.D., a researcher from the Institut Pasteur in Paris, is quoted in a release from the publisher as saying, "This basic biological investigation opens new pathways toward innovative therapeutic solutions for intractable diseases such as Alzheimer's disease or brain tumours." The discovery may lead to enhanced imaging of, and improved drug delivery to the brain. These antibodies, which are naturally available in camelids, may have a huge impact in improving the outcomes for people with brain diseases that are poorly diagnosed and treated using today's tools.

The release also quotes Gerald Weissmann, M.D., Editor-in-Chief of The FASEB Journal, as saying, "Camels may be most famous for helping people travel to the outermost reaches of the desert, but soon they could be also known for helping us reach the innermost parts of our brains. It appears that these prized animals are far more capable of helping get to hard-to-reach places than we ever could have imagined." "The importance of this study is the hope that this novel approach may be a useful tool in crossing the blood brain barrier for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes," added Babbette Weksler, MD, Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, NY, another author of the study and editorial board member of The FASEB Journal.

Reference: T. Li, J.-P. Bourgeois, S. Celli, F. Glacial, A.-M. Le Sourd, S. Mecheri, B. Weksler, I. Romero, P.-O. Couraud, F. Rougeon, P. Lafaye. Cell-penetrating anti-GFAP VHH and corresponding fluorescent fusion protein VHH-GFP spontaneously cross the blood-brain barrier and specifically recognize astrocytes: application to brain imaging. *The FASEB Journal*, 2012; 26 (10): 3969

Thanks to Sarah Busby AANZ for the above information

## Deadline for articles & advertising Issue 69

15th July 2013

Magazine Due – Early September 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.

# Not Just A Funny Haircut

By Esme Graham & Penny Pittard

Gone are the days when shearing was a necessary chore just to get the fleece off the animal. The end market will pay the best price for the cleanest, best prepared fleeces available with the specifications the end user requires

Several years ago our very experienced vet came to do some ultrasounds. She hopped out of her vehicle and dissolved into peals of laughter when she saw a whole paddock of newly shorn alpacas. Apparently she had never seen shorn alpacas en masse and the sight continued to amuse her for her whole visit.

However as Cameron Holt points out in the *Australian Alpaca Fleece Industry Shearing Shed and Pre-Classing Code of Practice* - "The preparation of the alpaca clip for sale is the culmination of the year's work". Often, shearing is the culmination of many years of careful breeding and while we all smile to see our very bare looking animals, and have trouble recognizing individuals, we know that shearing is a serious business and requires some thought to ensure the best possible outcome.

## Pre-shearing

Preferably graze your alpacas on clean grassy paddocks free from burrs and other contaminents in the months/weeks before shearing and if you can find the time, trim tips off animals that have burrs, vegetable matter or the brown tips on black animals – easier while the fleece is on the animal than trying to remove it later.

Remember that your shearer is a professional and deserves to be treated as such. You expect a good shearing job so make sure you are well prepared and organized with sufficient people to help. It is not your shearers job to run around paddocks collecting animals. Communicate with your shearer about his and your requirements before shearing commences.  
Is he shearing on a table or on the floor? What equipment are you required to supply? What jobs will the shearer or his helper do and what labour do you have to supply?

## Veterinary Maintenance

Most shearers will trim toenails and teeth at the time of shearing – check your shearer will do this. Is it included in his price or an extra? If you wish to do it yourself is he happy you will not be holding him up? The same applies to routine vaccinations. Doing these jobs at shearing time saves valuable time but be aware of the importance of not contaminating fleece with toenail cuttings.

Penny Pittard from Currabungla Alpacas & Alpaca Ultimate has a wealth of experience when it comes to evaluating fleece. Penny sees the end results of breeders shearing and has the following advice to help you improve your returns:

Since skirting and testing fleeces for Alpaca Ultimate, I have realised that a number of breeders lose value in their fleeces by poor preparation and not skirting fleeces properly.

I have put together the following procedure to help breeders get better value for their fleece.

- Take midside fleece samples at least 3 weeks before shearing to have the results at hand on the day – take the samples midway down the side to make sure you are getting a realistic test. Too high and it can be finer than the bulk of the saddle. By knowing your fleeces midside test results at shearing it makes it very easy to put aside fleeces that may be suitable for special purposes e.g. showing or selling to fleece purchasers requiring certain microns.
- Buy fleece bags ahead of time to make sure you have the right sizes for necks, legs, saddle (only buy biodegradable bags if you intend sending your fleece for processing immediately otherwise they can break down and ruin the fleece).
- Bags with holes punched in them press down better than bags without.
- Don't tie the tops of the bags so tightly it is hard to undo them. We have had bags that have been impossible to undo and they have to be cut.
- Clean shed of all contaminates - feathers, baling twine, toe nails, etc and vacuum thoroughly.
- Have a covering on the floor that can be swept and vacuumed easily- no dirt or rough concrete.
- Have plenty of old towels to mop up any accidents, puddles or spitting. Do not bag up wet fleece.
- A washing basket on digital scales set on a table makes for easy weighing of fleeces.
- Set up equipment for smooth operation, saddle fleece to skirting table, a wool pack for skirtings next to the table so pieces are put straight into it, weighing table with work sheet to write weights, etc
- Have storage areas designated for fleeces of certain micron - superfine, fine, medium, strong and also into colour groups. Otherwise write mid side test results on bags so they are easy to identify later. This makes for easy sorting later when bagging up for processing. If a fleece is obviously too short for processing put it straight in the pieces bag.



The night before shearing have all animals that will be shorn the next day under cover.

**No water or feed** to be available to them during the night – reduces puddles, spitting etc. Ruminates have plenty to carry them through and will “not starve to death” as many think.

On shearing days, skirting, weighing and sorting as you go means when shearing is finished, most of the work is finished – if it is not done at the time, many find it extremely hard to get back to it and consequently fleece gets left in sheds forever. Organise enough people to help on the day.

People required for shearing – the shearer, an alpaca handler, a person to organise the fleece as it comes off the animal (experienced in separating the hairy leg and belly pieces away from the saddle as I know this is where a huge amount of contamination occurs) to pick up the saddle and put it on the skirting table, an experienced skirter at the table, a person to get bags labelled and to weigh the fleeces and record details. An efficient team is more productive than heaps of inexperienced friends and relations.

Shear in colour groups, all white together etc and from fine micron to coarse micron if possible.

Sweep mat clean between every animal to avoid guard hair contamination etc and always vacuum between colours groups to eliminate colour contamination.

Skirting immediately before bagging saves so much contamination of the saddle – if stronger micron fibres get into the main saddle it will downgrade the saddle – grid testing shows this and can mean a lot less dollars for your fleece. This cannot be stressed enough as we come across it time and time again. Hairy fleeces, in other words fleeces with primary fibres longer than the secondary fibres through the main saddle are not suitable for making good quality products – this is something that needs to be watched in breeding alpacas.

If there is not quite enough time to skirt properly put a sheet of paper over the whole fleece and roll it with the paper in the middle, this way the edge pieces do not contaminate the saddle. Careful treatment of your fleece at shearing time can make a huge difference in dollar value.



### Record Keeping

Do you note the fleece weights and results from the testing laboratory for each animal? This is important so you can see from year to year which animals are holding their micron and which are blowing out. All part of your breeding decisions!

### Smart Shearing

Remember that we are shearing to obtain a particular outcome. Textile manufacturers all have particular requirements and we need to keep this in mind. As we become more sophisticated with our markets so shearers will become more conscious of what they need to do and their techniques will improve and become more strategic. ☺





# Conference

The Australian Alpaca Association 2014 National Conference offers you a valuable opportunity to share knowledge and network with others who share your passion and goals.

Session themes for the conference will cover a rich and diverse range of topics to discuss a broad range of questions of common interest. It will also provide a platform to establish new business relationships.

**9-11th  
May 2014**

Be there!



Energised

**Save the date now!**

**Adelaide  
2014**

ADELAIDE  
CONVENTION  
CENTRE



Australian Alpaca  
ASSOCIATION



# AAA National Conference

Alpaca Excellence - The business of farming alpacas

## Featured speakers

**Speaker: DR LAURA HARDEFELDT**

**Topic 1: Assessing the sick neonatal cria**

**Topic 2: Weight loss & Ill thrift in young Camelids**

Laura graduated from Murdoch University in 2003. She worked in mixed practice in Northern Victoria and then in Gippsland for 2 ½ years before completing an internship in Equine Medicine and Surgery at Sydney University. Following this, Laura successfully completed a 3 year residency in Large Animal Internal Medicine at the University of Wisconsin Madison. It was here that she developed an interest in Camelid medicine, with a significant portion of the caseload being Alpacas and Llamas.

After becoming a specialist, Laura returned to Australia and worked at Adelaide University as a Lecturer in Equine Medicine for 1 year. For the past 2 years she has managed the medicine department at Goulburn Valley Equine Hospital. After having 4 months overseas in 2013, Laura now runs a consulting service - Equine Medicine Consulting, but don't let the name fool you, she is still very interested in Camelid medicine!



## Trade Stands

Expressions of interest are now sought from anyone wishing to book trade stands for the conference. Competitively priced, single booths (3m x 3m) will cost \$550 inc GST, and double booths (6m x 3m) will cost \$880 inc GST.

These prices include standard fascia name board, two spotlights and one power point. A wide variety of furniture and display options are available to hire from the trade stand contractors.

Trade stands will be positioned in the central conference area which will host the opening night cocktail party, all morning and afternoon teas as well as lunches throughout the conference. Trade stands must be set up early on Friday 4th May and dismantled late on Sunday 6th May.

Enquiries to: shandara@westnet.com.au or telephone Nick on 0418 224 886.

**Speaker: BRYAN MCLEOD**

**Topic: Soil, Plant and Animal Nutrition**

Graduated Massey University, NZ 1962. Principal of Pro Ag Consulting Australia, established in 1987, and Pro Ag Associates NZ established in 1980. Pro Ag Consulting is now represented in Japan and New Zealand as well as Australia.

Bryan has been consulting for 35 years, specialising in identifying limiting factors in soil mineral balance, plant/pasture and animal production and nutrition. Not only the effects on pasture and fruit quality, but also the side effects on animal health and performance as a result of both poor soil and plant nutrition. Bryan has experience in most forms of agriculture, concentrating on soil nutrition, pasture nutrition and associated animal health issues. Pro Ag Consulting through APAL Laboratory, now offers a complete soil and plant analysis service with independent fertiliser programs and plans of action aimed not only for pasture production but also all aspects of stock health and production. Problem solving and identifying on farm productivity issues have been a big part of his consulting service.

Bryan working with APAL Laboratory has as their objective not only the processing of soils, plant tissue, water etc, but also education in agriculture. This includes the teaching of farmers to understand their soils, their plants and animal requirements allowing them to make more educated evaluations and decisions on both fertiliser and animal health programmes.

Bryan is a much sought after presenter at agricultural seminars and educational workshops throughout Australia.

## Conference registration

Registration will be open from 1st October. Earlybird registration closes 31st January. Full registration closes 14th April. ☺

Type	Earlybird	Full
Single (for 3 days)	\$350	\$400
Couples/Stud rate (for 2 people)	\$650	\$750
Students (for 3 days)	\$200	\$250
1 day registration	\$150	\$180
Dinner tickets (Saturday)	\$80	
Cocktail Party (Friday)	\$60	

# Alpaca To Dye For

By Kim DeVos-Brooks

What's your favourite colour? If you are like people the world over, chances are you would say blue. Two out of every five people love the colour blue. The next most popular colour is purple. Think about it and I am sure you will give a nod to the affirmative.

Now, we alpaca breeders, we love the natural colours of alpaca, the fawns, the greys, the rose greys, yum! Why might that be? Because they are different! White, or off white, is hands down, the least popular colour, breeders and consumers alike. If you asked a handful of people what their favourite colour is, chances are good you wouldn't get white, brown, grey or fawn as their answer.

Here is a list of the top three most and least favourite colours by gender.

- Female Favourite Colours: Blue, Purple, Green
- Female Least Favourite Colours: Orange, Brown, Grey
- Male Favourite Colours: Blue, Green, Black
- Male Least Favourite Colours: Brown, Orange, Purple

Colour captures us, it surrounds us and it motivates us. A grey day, we want to nest; orange sunset, we feel all romantic; a green lush forest makes us peaceful. Colour is the number one motivator, besides money but, for what it's worth, money has a colour too - green.

The business of colour and the psychology behind it, is a multi-billion dollar industry. Why - because we react to it! Colour powerfully, internally, drives us, without us even being aware that we are being driven.

So, you may say, "What does this have to do with alpaca?" You probably don't have red or orange or blue alpacas in the field, right? We (me included) get all wrapped up in the lovely natural shades of alpaca and long to showcase these hues in clothing and accessories. Unfortunately, the general public, unless we explain to them, and actually sell them on the fact that these colours are rare and unique, don't embrace the natural shades as we do. Remember who you are selling to, the consumer.

## Colour Sells!

Ever wonder why all of a sudden you see nothing but orange in ads, in stores, when before you didn't? Get ready, you're going to see more. Orange or rather, "Tangerine" was the colour forecasted for 2012, with a shelf life throughout 2014. Who says so? Pantone says so! If you don't know Pantone, you should - they have been motivating you for years.

Pantone is the foremost authority on colour. Not only do they specialize in all aspects of colour - textiles, fashion, paint as well as print and graphics - they forecast colours. The Pantone View Colour Planner is a biannual trend-forecasting tool that offers seasonal colour direction and inspiration twenty-four months in advance for multiple usages, including men's wear, women's wear, active wear, cosmetics and industrial design.

So, knowing this, do we run to the pasture with paint in our hands and start changing the colours of alpacas? No, we don't have to. There is a reason 80% of Peru's population of alpacas is white, it's because alpaca dyes beautifully and people buy colour. When you are looking for merchandise to put in your store, consider a good mix of multi coloured, solid coloured and natural shades. The key however, with your neutrals is to make them "pop" with colour.



In painting, neutrals are made by mixing disparate colours together. Mixing red and green paint together will give you a brown, mixing red, yellow, and blue together will push you towards black, and so on. The fact that neutrals actually contain many colours is part of what allows them to look good next to any colour.

Set up complete outfits, at least one on a dress form. People have a hard time visualizing what an item, even an item that is right in front of them, will go with. Will it go with the other things they have in their closet? They just don't know. Think about the last time you were in a clothing store... did you see the outfits they had on display? They do this so that people get hooked by not only the look, but by the colour, and buy the whole outfit. They see the outfit and see it on them.



Everyone has a favourite colour, something that they "ooh and ahh" over. Studies show this colour is formed in childhood. Perhaps it was a room or a chair that gave them comfort or a sibling that they mimicked that instilled the memory. Or perhaps it was a compliment, "Oh you look so lovely in periwinkle" that stuck (and still lives) in the core of a memory. Most of us lose the connection with the passing of time, but maintain the love for the colour and variations thereof. One thing is for sure, our colour is rarely any shade of white, brown, grey or black.

I love orange. I know most ladies don't go for it, but I love, love, love it. I have more orange dresses than I can wear at any given time. I just bought another, I had to have it. Orange, that's my hot button.

Pantone has deemed 2013 the year of Emerald. Think about it. How many emerald things do you have in your closet? Not many I bet, because that colour hasn't been featured for many years. Now folks when they see emerald everywhere go, "Oh, I don't have that! I need that!"

Okay, back to the whole outfit. Showcase an outfit, pants, shirt, sweater, scarf, and jewellery. I know, we sell "Alpaca", but the other pieces, if done properly will help you sell your alpaca goods. Remember colour, pattern, texture and shine; they draw the eye and then people see, actually see, what you are selling. Add a scarf, tuck a pair of gloves in the pocket of the pants, put a pair of socks by the shoes. Your job is to get them thinking, thinking about how they need, and want what they see in front of them. Don't just grab a pair of your old jeans. Take some time, think about the styles that you see and like today. (I know, you spend time in the barn, not at the mall. I get it; I've been there. I bet you get magazines, don't you? Go through them. See the colours and how they put one colour with another? Do that, it's your homework!) Use those ideas to put your display together. It doesn't have to be exact, but use it as a general colour reference. Use a colourful shirt under the sweater, put on a bangle or a necklace. By making your display similar to what is seen in the marketplace, it instils confidence in the buyer, it is hitting their familiarity and comfort zones.

Make sure you don't use a favourite shirt or a necklace you love from Aunt Gertrude. If someone wants the whole outfit, sell it to them. Be resourceful. Go to a resale shop and get a few pieces of clothing and jewellery you like, but wouldn't be sad if someone purchased. Don't spend a bunch of money, remember this is icing. If it sells, great! If not - no big. These are tools as much as a dress form or a table.

By displaying merchandise in an appealing and orderly fashion, for instance putting similar items in close proximity to each other, your customer will find it easier to shop. This is visual merchandising and it helps the shopper to quickly see product options in a comprehensive way.

Hang a sweater over a shirt, drop on a necklace, and get it up on a wall or at least on a stand at eye level. Folded items rarely get unfolded so people can see the entire piece. Remember mom said, "Don't touch!"

This is scorched into our memories and we have to be really, really interested in something before we touch it, pick it up and look at it.

Visual merchandising can give shoppers new ideas by presenting combinations and options. It can give them ideas on how to pair things with the garment you are selling. Your customer will gain insights on how pieces can be matched or mixed to create a working outfit from your, or their, available choices at home. Effective visual merchandising can create product awareness, boost sales and contribute to the overall effect of shopping in your store. It will draw attention to your loved natural alpaca shades and cause your shopper to not only look and see what you are offering, but also realize that for them, the alpaca piece your are selling "is to die for." CQ

## Spring 2013 On Trend Neutral Pop

Pantone Spring 2013 Colors

### About the Author

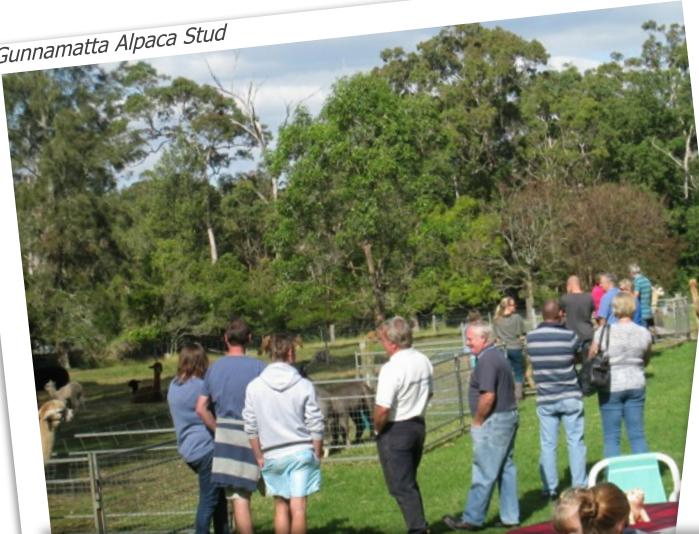
Kim DeVos-Brooks began with alpacas in 1997 as a breeder and began Inca Fashions, an online alpaca boutique, in 1999. Coming from a background in design she created her own brand of contemporary yet timeless apparel in alpaca. She currently designs for Inca Fashions, as well as other boutiques and private label brands. She has served on the AOBA Marketing Committee, AOBA Fiber Committee and AFCNA. She served as a MAPACA BOD member and an AOBA BOD member from 2006-2009. She feels that it is an honour and a privilege to be of service and the best way to give thanks is by giving back. She has served as a judge for the Student Design Competition, produced several fashion shows and is clearly focused on alpaca fibre and the advancement of the alpaca industry as a whole. Kim lives in California with husband Jack. ☺

*This article was originally published in the March 2013 issue of The International Camelid Quarterly and is republished here with the permission of the author and CQ.*

# Alpaca Week

Weekend 1  
2013

Gunnamatta Alpaca Stud



Paltarra Park Alpacas



Miajai Alpacas



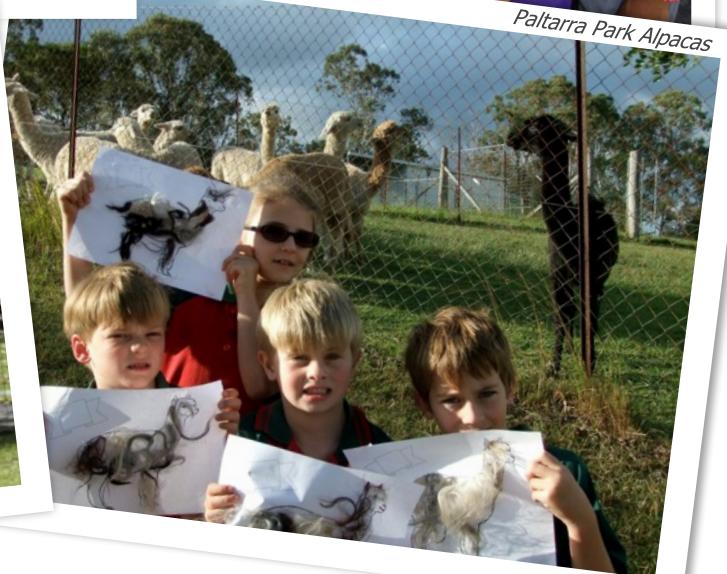
Sharalander Park Alpacas



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# Farm Biosecurity is Everyone's Business

By the AAA Animal Health & Welfare Panel

As the peak national industry body for alpaca producers or owners, the Australian Alpaca Association seeks to provide leadership and education in the area of biosecurity for all alpaca owners - whether they be commercial producers, stud enterprises, pet or herd guard owners.

The Association is a member of Animal Health Australia (AHA) - see [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au). This membership enables our industry to keep up to date with matters affecting farm biosecurity as well as other issues impacting on animal health and welfare.

Some key issues to consider in securing your farm are provided below. This material is summarised from the website of Farm Biosecurity - see [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au). Farm Biosecurity is a joint initiative of Animal Health Australia (AHA) and Plant Health Australia (PHA) both of which have a significant stake in preventing pests and diseases taking hold in Australia.

## What is biosecurity?

The term biosecurity refers to the management of risks to the nation's economy, the environment, and the community, of pests and diseases entering, emerging, establishing or spreading.

Biosecurity measures can be implemented off-shore (eg through the activities of government agencies), at Australia's borders and on-farm.

Australia's geographic isolation has, to a large degree, provided protection from many of the pests and diseases that affect agricultural industries overseas. Freedom from these exotic pests and diseases is a vital part of the future profitability and sustainability of Australian agriculture.

## What is farm biosecurity?

Farm biosecurity is a set of measures designed to protect a property from the entry and spread of pests, diseases and weeds. Farm biosecurity is your responsibility, and that of every person visiting or working on your property.

Producers play a key role in protecting Australian plant and livestock industries from pests and diseases by implementing sound biosecurity measures on-farm. If a new pest or disease becomes established on your farm, it will affect your business through increased costs (for monitoring, production practices, additional chemical use and labour), reduced productivity (in yield and/or quality) or loss of markets.

Early detection and immediate reporting of an exotic pest or disease increases the chance of effective and efficient eradication. The Farm Biosecurity Program is an important part of Australia's emergency animal disease and exotic plant pest surveillance systems. Surveillance allows us to preserve existing trade opportunities and provides evidence of Australia's pest and animal disease status to support access to international markets.

By implementing the recommended measures in your day-to-day operations, you will improve your own biosecurity and that of your region, while minimising production losses and unnecessary costs.

## What does Farm Biosecurity mean for alpaca growers/owners?

Alpacas (and other South American camelids, including llamas) are susceptible to a number of endemic diseases (eg the bovine strain of Johnes' disease) as well as exotic emergency animal diseases, the latter including foot and mouth disease, FMD.

An awareness of the biosecurity risks to our evolving industry and the risks alpacas themselves may pose to other grazing livestock industries, led to the Australian Alpaca Association's early engagement with AHA and government authorities to develop biosecurity programs for our industry, including Q-Alpaca and AlpacaMAP and continuing work on a National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) for Alpaca. However, every alpaca grower/owner needs to be aware of biosecurity, their legal responsibilities, and measures they can take to protect their own properties, animals, businesses and lifestyle.

It is a legal requirement in all Australian states and territories for properties on which one or more alpacas are kept to have a unique Property Identification Code, or PIC. PICs provide one of the foundations for efficient and effective livestock traceability systems such as NLIS. For more information on requirements in your locality, visit the website of your state/territory primary industry department or equivalent. These sites and the Farm Biosecurity website (see [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au)) contain a wealth of information to assist producers in plant and animal industries.



## Farm Biosecurity Essentials and Farm Biosecurity Toolkit

The best defence against pests and diseases is to implement sound biosecurity practices on your farm. Quick and simple measures built into everyday practice will help protect your farm and your future. These can be categorised under the following headings:

- Farm inputs
- People, vehicles and equipment
- Production practices (eg routine vaccinations, paddock management, etc)
- Feral animals, pests and weeds
- Farm outputs
- Training, plans and record keeping

A few things to consider and pointers to good practice on each of these areas are covered below. Where applicable, reference is also made to resources (eg standard templates/forms) available and downloadable from the Toolkit menu of the Farm Biosecurity website - see [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au).

### Farm inputs

Anything moved onto your property can be a source of pests and diseases. Monitor animals, plant materials, sources of water, feed and fertiliser that enter the property.

You have an important role to play in protecting your region and the entire industry from biosecurity threats. Keep records of all farm inputs (and outputs) so that you can trace-back or trace-forward in the event of a pest incursion or disease outbreak. For example, when purchasing feed, ensure you know the expiry date and use it before that date or dispose of it safely. Inspect purchased feed to ensure it does not contain a high ratio of weed seeds that could propagate on your property. Keep feed in a clean, dry storage area as poor food storage encourages pests and diseases which may contaminate the feed, reduce its usefulness or even harbour disease organisms that may harm your livestock.

### People, vehicles and equipment

Anything that moves can carry diseases, pests and weeds. People, vehicles and equipment pose a high biosecurity risk and should be managed. Visitors and workers can unintentionally carry diseases, pests and weeds. Anyone visiting your property including suppliers, vets, transporters, stock agents, itinerant workers, researchers, contractors and social guests as well as anyone who lives on the property can pose a risk.

Signs may be used to inform visitors of your biosecurity status and what you require from them. You cannot assume that visitors know the appropriate biosecurity measures for your property. A farm gate sign is now available for purchase from AHA and can be a valuable part of your *farm biosecurity toolkit*. See [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au) for details of how to obtain one of these signs for your property. Knowing who has entered your property allows possible sources of diseases, pests or weeds to be tracked.

# VISITORS

## PLEASE RESPECT FARM BIOSECURITY

Please contact the manager before entering.



Do not enter property without prior approval.  
Keep to roadways and laneways.



farmbiosecurity



Also, limiting the number of vehicle access points to your property will limit the potential disease, pest and weed entry sites and allow you to monitor these areas closely. Another essential part of your farm biosecurity toolkit should be a well maintained *Visitor Register*. A register of visitors to your property can be complemented by use of the *Visitor/Staff Risk Assessment* form to aid identification of high risk movements. *Visitor Register* and *Risk Assessment* templates can both be downloaded from the *Toolkit* section of the **Farm Biosecurity** website

### Production (farm management) practices

You can reduce the risk of spreading pests and diseases by implementing simple biosecurity measures as part of your everyday farm management practices. Matters to be considered under this heading include but are not limited to:

- Fencing - ensure fencing, particularly boundary fencing is in good order. Work with neighbours to resolve any boundary fencing and straying stock issues.
- Vaccinations and drenching - keep records of all animal treatments to ensure a herd health history and information on any changes. You should ensure that your own and your workers' tetanus immunisation status is up-to-date. Shearing time in particular may pose a greater than usual tetanus risk when handling large numbers of animals/fleeces.
- Quarantine or dedicated areas should be maintained for introduction of new stock (purchased or on agistment), and for stud stock visiting for joining purposes.
- Chemicals should be stored and used appropriately and records kept of all chemical use on farm.

### Feral animals, pests and weeds

Feral animals, plant pests and weeds are a widespread nuisance and can harm your business, so they need to be actively controlled.

Wildlife and feral animals can mix with your livestock and cause disease. Work with neighbours in developing a control plan for unwelcome vermin including pigs and foxes.



Weed species are significant biosecurity problems in their own right, as well as having the potential to make livestock sick (eg Patterson's curse, St John's wort, fireweed).

Property and land destruction through fire, flood, storms etc can provide an opportunity for pests and weeds to become established, and for feral animals to enter. To ensure this does not become an issue, regularly inspect your property for the presence of diseases, pests, weeds and ferals, particularly any areas that have been recently landscaped (eg new roads or dams) or affected by flood/fire resulting in damage to fences, etc.

## Farm outputs

You have a responsibility to ensure things that leave your property do not pose a biosecurity risk.

The measures in place on your property support biosecurity in the industry and broader community. You have an important role to play in protecting your region, the alpaca and other livestock industries from biosecurity threats. Within a region, every farm may be affected in the event of a pest incursion or disease outbreak. Good biosecurity practice will help protect your reputation and your business. Things to consider and manage when moving animals off your property include:

- If the animals are showing signs of disease, don't spread it further;
- Ensure animals are fit for travel before loading;
- Keep a record of where your stock have gone;
- Supply a National Vendor Declaration (NVD) and stock health statement where applicable;
- Seek advice from your vet on the best way to assess livestock health;
- Be aware of cleaning and hygiene practices of transport providers;
- After taking animals to shows and sales, isolate returning stock for 10 days. This will allow time for anything they may have picked up to show symptoms/signs and thus mitigate the risk of transferring disease to your other stock.

## Train, plan and record

You should ensure everyone who works on your farm is trained in regard to biosecurity risks and responses, and also that you can trace where animals, plants and visitors come and go. Keeping good records of training, animal or feed or water purchases, sales and movements is an essential component of farm biosecurity. Regular monitoring of your property, crops and/or livestock gives you the best chance of identifying a new pest or disease before it becomes established on your property.

Make sure you are familiar with common diseases, pests and weeds so you can tell if you see something different. Seek out expert assistance if required. Promptly report anything unusual or worrying to the appropriate authorities (eg relevant primary industry department, local council or livestock health and pest authority).

A property owner or manager should be able to 'trace back' and 'trace forward' if there is a disease, pest or weed incursion on the property.

A **biosecurity action plan** will help you prioritise the implementation of biosecurity practices relevant to your property. After you have ranked your priorities, you may also like to consider which ones you can achieve in the short and long term. As a guide, *short-term* activities can:

- be planned and conducted within 12 months
- help your business comply with regulatory requirements
- be financially feasible in the short-term
- fit in with the time commitments of your enterprise.

On the other hand, *long-term* activities:

- are planned and conducted over more than one year.
- need additional financial or personnel resources that are not currently available.
- enhance the overall quality of service, aesthetics and reportable administrative procedures.

To further assist you in developing your farm biosecurity action plan, a useful acronym to remember is "SMART" - i.e. actions to be taken should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

While the discussion above covers many of the issues alpaca owners should be aware of and consider, it is by no means complete. For more details on how to compile a biosecurity action plan for your farm, see [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au). While the concept of implementing farm biosecurity may seem burdensome at first, once thought through and actions prioritised as suggested above, they should readily fit in to your farm/property routines.

Biosecurity not only protects your investment and business but is every alpaca owner's responsibility. As recent experiences with communicable diseases in human as well as animal populations have shown, there's no room for complacency when it comes to biosecurity. ☺



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# Royal Canberra 2013

## The big country show in a shed!

By Susan Nielson, Convenor

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of the 2013 show, it was a great weekend. Once again we had our regular exhibitors with a mix of new exhibitors all who had something to be happy about, for the first time ever the alpaca section was completely under the one roof. Entry numbers were good in animals a little low in fleeces but there is always next year.

The judges Jenny Jackson and Angela Preuss worked together well, with an ease that kept the animals flowing smoothly in and out of the ring. The standard was high and a few classes had them taking their time. Once again the professionalism the judges' displayed speaks highly of the AAA.

### **Supreme Champion Huacaya:**

Coolaroo Ice Angel - Coolaroo

### **Supreme Champion Suri:**

Bumble Hill Chakri - Bumble Hill

Best in colour - Huacaya was once again a success, with the following awards:

Best in White - Lillyfield Gaughin - Lillyfield

Best in Light Fawn - Coolaroo Ice Angel - Coolaroo

Best in Med/Dark Fawn - Forestglen Kimba - Forestglen

Best in Brown - Bardella Park Invincible - Bardella Park

Best in Grey - Kibworth Park Tresco - Kibworth Park

Best in Black - Bywong Jamaica ET - Bywong

Most Successful Huacaya Exhibitor award:

Grand Flowerdale Alpacas

Best in colour - Suri is now at Canberra Royal to stay and the following awards were presented:

Best in White - Bumble Hill Chakri - Bumble Hill

Best in Light Fawn - Baarooka The Mrs - Baarooka

Best in Med/Dark Fawn - Baarooka Ultimate Groove - Baarooka

Best in Brown - Baarooka Durango's Foreign Affair - Baarooka

Best in Grey - Baarooka Ultimate Granite - Baarooka

Best in Black - Tularosa Kamikaze ET - Tularosa

Most Successful Suri Exhibitor award:

Baarooka Alpacas

Lyn Dickson was the fleece judge this year and the team enjoyed working with her. The team was excellent as always, the fleeces laid out on the tables for judging were a sight to behold. This year, for the first time to my knowledge, we had one stud who won 5 of the 6 Huacaya Fleece championships and then took Supreme Huacaya Fleece, congratulations Monga Alpacas you have certainly set the bar high for next year!

### **Supreme Champion Huacaya Fleece**

Monga Ambrose - Monga Alpacas

Most Successful Huacaya Fleece Exhibitor:

Monga Alpacas



*Supreme Champion Suri - Bumble Hill Chakri with Annalisa Tomich*

### **Most Commercial Huacaya Fleece**

Alani Blade - Aingeal Ridge II

### **Supreme Champion Suri Fleece**

Bumble Hill Magus ET- Bumble Hill

Most Successful Suri Fleece Exhibitor:

Baarooka Alpacas

The 2012 RNCAS Alpaca Fleece Region of the year was won by the Southern Region NSW who received \$500.00 and an annual trophy. It would be great to see more regions competing, a way to see what each region is producing, so come on breeders next year at shearing have a look at your fleeces and think which ones should come to the RNCAS to compete.

This year we had a first, we shared a marquee with the wool section, this worked to everyone's advantage. In this tent there was information regarding alpaca, alpacas on display, our Champion Fleeces with some merchandise and lastly Illawarra Prime Meat. All potential aspects of the Alpaca were on display. It was a huge success with the public lined up to get in, next year we already have plans underway to make it bigger and better. The marquee will hopefully be named FOCUS to draw attention to all our industry can be on every level.

Sponsors and volunteer stewards are often forgotten, because they work behind the scenes. The sponsors help pay the bills, the stewards work hard for many days not just at the show. Without either of these people there would not be any show. At Canberra there is a small dedicated group of Stewards without these people I would not be able to convene the show, so a personal thanks to all of you.

Included in that is the loyal sponsors who support every year, you people enable the show year after year.

I know I keep re-using the paragraph below each year, I just can't come up with better words so here we go again!

Exhibitors are the reason all the above effort is required, without you there simply would not be a show, some travel long hours, we all spend time halter training and preparing our animals.

While the ribbons we win are lovely the opportunity to see other animals, see what other studs are producing, pine over the animal we would love to have bred, catch up with friends old and new from other shows adds to the draw of attending. So thank-you exhibitors for making the effort, making the show what it is, and I hope to see you all again next year in 2014. ☺

*Supreme Huacaya Coolaroo Ice Angel - Coolaroo*

*Left to right: Judges Angela Preuss & Jenny Jackson,  
handler Caitlin Anson - Graham*



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# Alpaca Exports

## Not just for the big guys...

By Julie McClen - Oak Grove Alpacas, NSW

If you are a small to medium size alpaca stud like us, you may think that exporting alpacas overseas is not something you could see yourself doing.

But exporting alpacas isn't as daunting as you may think, and well within the reach of even the smallest of alpaca breeders.

This story starts late in 2011, when we received an email via our website from Vojko, a man from Slovenia.

Where is Slovenia you may ask? It's a small country in Europe nestled between Austria to the North and Croatia to the South, with the Italian border on it's Western side & the Hungarian border on it's East.

We answered Vojko's questions about our alpacas as we always do for any enquiries, but we were not expecting anything to come from it, he was from the other side of the world after all!

Then about six months later we received another email from Vojko advising us that he had now built a barn and was ready to purchase alpacas. He had decided after looking around at what was on offer in both Europe and the UK, as well as available within Australia that he would purchase from us.

He was looking for what we specialised in, alpacas with very fine fibre that had the ability to stay fine for many years, not just two or three. So this goes to show if you have something that someone else is looking for, and you have a website, the Internet allows them to find you, wherever you are in the world.

So, what to do now? I knew that Wildflower Alpacas were exporters so I gave them a call. They explained the process to me in detail, and for the seller it was not much more complicated than selling to an Australian buyer!

*The girls in quarantine in Victoria with others awaiting export*



*Late Winter 2012, penned at Oak Grove - awaiting collection*

This was the process from our perspective.

### Stage 1 - Australia

We arranged for our client in Slovenia to pay us for the 3 females he had decided to purchase via bank transfer, we had to supply him with our banks Swift number and our bank account details.

We had of course exchanged contracts outlining the terms and conditions of the sale.

Once the alpacas were paid for we arranged for our client to liaise directly with the exporters to pay them for their part in the process.

The transporter advised us of a collection date & we had our girls ready to collect on the agreed date. We needed to supply the exporter with our property PIC number & also sign a declaration as to the health of our property regards known diseases.



Once the alpacas arrived in Victoria at the export facility, they had to pass health checks.

At this stage if the alpacas had failed any test which prevented them from being exported, we would have replaced the animal/s or refunded the client's money. But as expected they passed all tests so were no longer, from our perspective, our responsibility and the client was advised to take out insurance to cover his investments.

The following is a general run down of the export timetable supplied by Wildflower Alpaca Exports, as you can see, it is a long process for the animals, and it was a full year from the time the client had agreed to buy the alpacas to when they actually arrived in Slovenia.

## Export Timetable

- Pre Isolation Vet inspection, treatment and Shearing – 21/08/2012. All alpacas have to be shorn within 14 days prior to entering isolation
- MAF Import Tags Inserted prior to entering isolation
- Entered Isolation– 28/08/2012
- First round testing (Full Faecal Egg Count, Salmonella culture & Oxytet injection) – 07/09/2012
- Second round testing (2nd Salmonella Culture and Q Fever Blood Test) - 18/09/2012
- Final Inspection – 28/09/2012
- Departure Melbourne – 29/09/2012
- Females were all ultrasound scanned in Quarantine – this is required by AQIS within 30 days of export to age gestation of Breeder female. All Breeder female are required to be ultrasound scanned regardless of age and/or pregnancy status.
- Arrived into Auckland NZ - 29/09/2012 and cleared through MPI & Customs by 20.00hrs.
- Collected from Airport by Keenan Scott from Waiheke Alpacas and transported to his property on Waiheke Island where they spend 30 days isolated before they can be introduced with other alpacas.
- 5 months spent holidaying on Waiheke Island and then into isolation again for 42 days prior to departure for Europe.
- Alpacas departed Auckland NZ at 21.15hrs on April 10 2013 on their way to Europe. The alpacas had a transit stop in Melbourne Australia, then Singapore and then Sharjah before landing safely at Heathrow Airport at 19.00hrs 11 April. They cleared through DEFRA at the Animal Reception Centre (Boarder Inspection Post) Facility at Heathrow International Airport – they get to rest here for a 5 hour period with food & water during the inspections. Every animal is inspected, tags and microchips checked against Export Health Certificates from MPI NZ and finally loaded onto trucks for road trip to mainland Europe.
- Road transport takes the alpacas across the ferry from Dover to Calais France, then on to Belgium, Holland and Germany, to our collection point there. The 3 females for Slovenia were rested for a minimum 24 hour period before travelling on to their final destination.

## Keeping in contact

We kept in contact with the client throughout the long wait and answered many questions regards paddock set up, feed, health, breeding and so on.

It is important to support the client if they are new alpaca owners just as any good stud would with clients from within Australia. After many emails back and forward we were confident the alpacas were going to a good home and would be well looked after.

## Pregnancy status of exported alpacas

All our females were empty at the time of final payment and it was decided to leave them this way until they arrived in New Zealand for the middle part of the export process, where they would then be mated.

The reason we decided to send the girls empty was two fold. If we had mated them when the sale had been finalised they would have been too far along in their pregnancy to leave New Zealand on the last leg of the trip, as they are not allowed to travel if they are in the final trimester (250+ days) of their pregnancy.

Also, we didn't want to mate them before departure to quarantine as the drenching regime was quite intense, and we didn't want to put any early developing foetus at risk of the potential ill effects of the chemicals administered.

## Stage 2 - New Zealand

So, the alpacas arrived in New Zealand after their Australian quarantine and were duly mated to males chosen to ensure the resulting cria were likely to be as 'stay fine' as their mothers. It is important to help new clients choose suitable males, as the wrong mating can produce progeny without the specific traits the client chose the females for in the first place.

The alpacas stay in New Zealand for nearly six months until the time arrives for transport to Europe.

## Stage 3 - New Zealand to the UK

The alpacas leave Auckland bound for the UK inside specially constructed crates.



Crate being loaded onto aircraft in Auckland, 4 black funnels for refilling the water troughs during flight are clearly visible



A group of alpacas inside the crate



DEFRA Animal Reception Centre at Heathrow with crate arriving



Our girls at Teutonia Alpacas being inspected by Alex Vogt and watched by our client Vojko at back & Steve Ridout Of Wildflower exports wearing the hat at right.

#### Stage 4 - UK to Germany

Now seasoned travellers the alpacas arrive at Heathrow UK where they rest for 5 hours and get inspected by UK officials.

The girls were then loaded on a truck & taken via Ferry across the English Channel to France, then via Belgium & Holland before arriving in Germany at Teutonia Alpacas, where they stayed for a few days before the road trip to Slovenia and their final destination.

Our client went to Germany for the arrival of the alpacas, where he met them for the first time after waiting a year.

We also contacted Alex Vogt of Teutonia Alpacas for any input on the procedure after the alpacas arrived at his farm. He advised we were the first to ever contact him which was nice and when asked how he found the quality of the females we sent he stated "They really were better in quality and also in better condition" compared to many imported alpacas that pass through his facility in his opinion.

This is pleasing obviously to know our alpacas are seen as good quality from the European perspective, but more so that they managed to maintain their condition, despite the no doubt often very stressful and confusing last 12 months of their lives.

This I believe is due to them leaving here in excellent condition with body scores of around 3 - 4, and I believe anyone considering export should ensure their alpacas are in top condition before sending them off to face what for our girls ended up being:

- 7 Road Trips across 8 countries
- 5 Airplane Flights (take offs & landings)
- 3 Ferry Journeys
- 4 Separate Homes



The export group arrives at Teutonia Alpacas, Germany

## Stage 5 - The final journey to Slovenia

The girls are taken by van from Germany to Slovenia, by Alex of Teutonia Alpacas, a journey of around 1000km's to their new and very swish home in the beautiful Slovenian countryside.

Our client had adapted and extended an existing barn complete with Hansel & Gretel style roof tiles for the girls, the walls were insulated & the barn is heated, even the water troughs have temperture control!

So when Winter hits in Slovenia, these girls will be comfortable out of the weather & the snow when needs be.



*The girls finally arrive at their new home*



*The girls inspect the barn, is it safe to go inside?*

The barn has double doors that are also split so that the girls can be inside but still get good airflow, it also provides shade out front on hot days.

Slovenian temperatures can range from -10 to 30 celsius.

The girls are all due to give birth to hopefully healthy & strong Slovenian alpacas early 2014.

I'm sure the girls will be quite the attraction with Slovenia as yet not having that many alpaca breeders.



*Sitting inside their new digs - very upmarket! The missing fleece patches are from where blood tests were taken during the export process.*

We hope you enjoyed sharing our export experience and are encouraged to give it a go if the opportunity arises.

You don't have to be a big stud to compete in the world market, and hopefully our client will share the news that smaller Australian studs also have high quality animals to offer at affordable prices, thus creating further export opportunities for all those who thought exporting alpacas was only for the big guys! ☺



*The paddock with a view*

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# The Role of Ring Steward

## 3 Different Points Of View

By Pauline Glasser, CSE Co-ordinator - on behalf of Showing & Judging Reference Panel



### The Chief Convenor's Lament – Where to find a good ring steward?

The most difficult job to fill when preparing for a show is the position of Ring Steward. This job has the unique problem that once the judging starts, they are on their own. No one can tell them if they are doing the job right after an alpaca breaks away and jumps out of the ring!

We have to find someone who will work all day, paying full attention to the Judge, the handlers, the alpacas, and be aware of what class or classes are in the ring and what's coming in next. Add to this the ability to deal gently but firmly with the alpaca (and handlers). The Ring Steward needs to know how the particular Judge of the day likes animals presented – some Judges prefer to do their own handling, but this is possibly a result of experiencing ineffective Ring Stewards who can be more of a hindrance than a help.

The best Ring Stewards make sure they understand how the Judge wants the alpacas paraded and lined up. They will ensure that each handler and alpaca has sufficient space to minimise the animals stirring each other up. They will familiarise themselves with the vagaries of lighting to ensure that animals are all being examined to the best advantage but under equal conditions. They will be prepared to restrain alpacas for examination where necessary and will remember the "special" cases when they return to the ring for championship rounds. They will constantly watch the Judge for instructions to move alpacas forward, backward or along the line. They will communicate with the Marshalling Stewards to be able to advise the Judge which class is entering the ring how many in the class and whether more than one class is parading. They will watch for the odd pile of paca poo gently guiding the Judge around it whilst ensuring it is promptly removed. They are very special people and are much revered by Exhibitors, Organisers, Judges and the viewing public.

Paul Haslin – Elysion Alpacas - N.S.W

### The Judges Perspective - A wish List!

From the Judges perspective the Ring Steward can make or break the smooth running of the show. A good Ring Steward makes the Judge's task so much easier and helps the ring proceedings to flow. In my opinion an excellent Ring Steward actually enhances the Judges ability to concentrate on the important decision making process – makes the Judge "look good"! Conversely an inexperienced Ring Steward can make the Judges job more difficult, particularly in a show with a large number of entries.

I'm always surprised that we don't have more people putting themselves forward to learn the ins and outs of being a Ring Steward, because the Ring Steward, alongside the Judge, is in a privileged position of being able to see the quality of the fleeces on the animals in the ring (something that mere spectators will never get to see). They don't always get hands on the fleeces, but they certainly gain a very good understanding of the quality on offer at a particular show, and more than anyone else at any given show are in a position to understand just how difficult the Judges' job can be.

The qualities I like to see in my Ring Stewards are:

COURTESY AND RESPECT towards handlers and alpacas.  
Understanding of how the showing system works.

KNOWLEDGE e.g How many alpacas in this class? Is this a combined class? Do we have three classes in the ring at once to be judged separately, and if so, how many in each class?

RING CRAFT – An ability to organise large numbers of alpacas into areas which are often too small, in a manner which still affords the judge some space to actually see the animals to be judged.

BRAIN NOT BRAUN – An intuitive approach to thinking ahead and anticipating an animals reaction to being examined by the Judge, being on hand to intervene with a difficult animal but not intervening too early thus becoming part of the problem.

STAMINA (and comfortable boots)

If you aspire to become a judge, or if you want to learn more about showing and show quality alpacas or if you are just passionate about alpacas - I can think of no more useful apprenticeship than serving as Ring Steward. The pay is lousy, the hours are long and arduous, the food is often marginal, the workplace conditions dirty, plus all the kicks and scrapes on the shin bones require massage and remedial treatment afterwards. However, the negatives are far outweighed by the fabulous opportunity to see the total showing of quality animals up close and personal!

Lyn Dickson – Warralinga Alpaca Stud - N.S.W



## The role of the Ring Steward - A self-confession!

A number of years ago when we decided to start showing there seemed to be a bit of apprehension amongst show goers about ring stewards. It seemed most people were not happy with their animals being "manhandled" causing them to jump around after they had spent so much time working with them so they would stand in the show ring.

My first real show experience was a large show and my animal was grabbed from behind by two Ring Stewards which caused her to leap in the air AND she took me with her. On the other hand at some other shows when you, or the judge needed some help the ring steward was nowhere to be found! There had to be a better way, a method that would be pleasing for the Exhibitors as well as easy for the Judge AND as stress free as possible for the animals.

Speaking with Exhibitors and Judges was important to find out what they thought would be helpful. Upon completion of the AAA Stewards Course, I volunteered to be Ring Steward for my first show – the annual Charles Ledger Show. It was a large show and certainly an initiation as I found myself working with two Judges – an Accredited Judge and an Apprentice! It was a great day and yes I was exhausted at the end, but I knew I had found a method that worked for all participants when so many Exhibitors came up to me after the show and thanked me.

I believe that Ring Stewarding has been successful for me because:

I CARE ABOUT THE ANIMALS - and so I try to make the experience as stress free as possible for them.

I CARE ABOUT THE EXHIBITORS - so they will be confident in knowing that I am there if they need help.

I CARE ABOUT THE JUDGE - It's important that the conditions in the show ring allow them to confidently assess the animals that are presented to them, to enable them to make a true and fair decision.

It isn't always necessary to "manhandle" the animals and if they are a bit jumpy it isn't necessary to restrain them by grabbing their fleece (which is just like pulling their hair). I find that a firm grip over the rear leg with my own leg positioned firmly against their side is often all that is needed. It is vital to keep your eye on the judge at all times (as should exhibitors) and to be there when needed - in a way to "mirror" the judge's movements and be

close enough so the judge can give you instructions to move animals around without getting in his/her way. Also the Ring Steward should move smoothly and quietly amongst the animals and approach them slowly to prevent startling them. To me these are important things to remember.

Quite often the handler is not sure how to hold their animals when the judge approaches. My tip is when standing on the left side of the animal turn and face it. Hold the head in your left arm with your right hand firmly on the withers, place your left leg in front of the alpaca to give you balance. Be prepared, even the best mannered alpacas still get fed up and move around. Don't move forward of the alpaca and just hold the lead. The Judge cannot hold the animal for you and the Ring Steward needs your assistance as well.

I consider it an honour to be asked to be Ring Steward - at all shows large or small. I have been a Ring Steward at Nationals and Sydney Royals not to mention various other shows in NSW and every time it has been fabulous.

A lot of Exhibitors know me now and will tell me if they have a "kicker" - and believe me I certainly appreciate any information like that! I sometimes finish a show with some amazing bruises over my legs!

Being a Ring Steward puts you in the prime position - you have the best view besides the Judge. You get to see the fleece on all the animals that are being shown and you have the opportunity to learn so much from the Judges – I think it's the best seat in the house!

Now for that next step.....hmmmmm.

Alicia Anderson - Regal House Alpacas - NSW. ☺



# DUNG BEETLES

## In Australia

Dr Bernard Doube  
Dung Beetle Solutions Australia  
Bridgewater SA 5155

### History

Deliberate importation of dung beetles to Australia by CSIRO began in the 1960s when Dr George Bornemissza, prompted by memories of dung-free cattle pastures in his native Hungary, gained support for the idea that the accumulation of dung on Australian pastures was due to the absence of a dung beetle fauna that effectively buried cattle dung. Although Australia has 437 species of native dung beetle most of these occur mainly in wooded country and not in pasture. These native beetles do not cope well with the dung of domestic stock grazing open pasture, especially the large, moist pads produced by cattle and horses.

The benefits of effective dung burial were intuitively obvious and include removal of pasture-smothering dung pads, recycling of nutrients, improved soil health and structure, better infiltration of water and reduced run-off. An additional proposed benefit was the biological control of dung-breeding buffalo flies and bush flies.

Biocontrol of the bush fly in southern Australia has been an outstanding success, but the buffalo is still abundant, despite the activity of many dung beetles. Yet there is hope.

Although there was some effort by CSIRO to quantify the value of the benefits of the dung beetle program, it was nearly 40 years before field trials by ex-CSIRO scientist Dr Bernard Doube of Dung Beetle Solutions Australia conclusively quantified an extensive catalogue of beetle benefits in the soil environment. An emerging benefit is increased levels of soil carbon due to dung burial, extra root growth, and the possible incorporation of biochar into dung buried by beetles.

### Different types of dung

Dung beetle species show distinct preferences for particular types of dung, although there is overlap between species and some species are fussier about dung type than others. In Africa there are dung beetle species for every type of dung, with some species using a number of types of dung (eg horse and cow).

Contrasting dung types:

- the coarse textured dung of rhinoceros and elephants
- that of intermediate texture dung e.g. horse and zebra
- ruminants that produce mounds e.g. cattle and buffalo
- ruminants that produce pellets e.g. sheep, giraffe, alpacas
- omnivore dung e.g. humans, the apes
- carnivore dung e.g. lion, hyena
- and cadavers.



### Introduced beetles and domestic stock

The Australian Dung Beetle Program selected beetles that were well adapted to cattle dung but many of these species also colonise other types of dung, and may even prefer these other types. For example, the European beetle *G. spiniger* is about 20 times more abundant in traps baited with fresh horse dung than in those baited with fresh cow dung, while its European compatriot *Bubas bison* is caught in similar numbers in traps baited with horse and cow dung. Yet both species can be very abundant in regions where there are few horses.

The winter-active southern European species *Bubas bison* appears to be quite versatile, colonising and breeding in the dung of cattle and horses, and also the moist 'plops' produced by sheep and goats feeding on lush pasture. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that this species (during winter) is also burying dung from the middens of alpaca in South Australia, and probably elsewhere.

*B. bison* is widespread in the southern parts of Western Australia but *G. spiniger* has failed to establish, despite numerous attempts to introduce it.



**Dung Beetle  
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Dr Bernard Doube





*Bubas bison*

In southern Australia, 13 species of introduced dung beetles (originally from southern Europe and South Africa) are now established. Most of these are found primarily in cow and horse dung in the summer and their activity is responsible for the very low numbers of bush flies seen in many regions of southern Western Australia and elsewhere in the wetter parts of southern Australia. These summer species do not colonise the dry pellets produced by sheep and goats. We are not sure about alpaca dung in summer but need to find out. None of these species will consistently bury dog dung, but some of the summer species will use it when they are very abundant and very hungry.

CSIRO has introduced some species for the summer rainfall regions of northern Australia and yet others for the winter rainfall regions of southern Australia. Few species do well in both environments although there is considerable overlap in the even rainfall regions of eastern Australia.

### Dung beetles and pasture production

Over the past decade Dr Doube has conducted a series of linked trials across southern Australia to test the effect of deep dung burial on pasture production using *B. bison*, *G. spiniger*, and native *Onthophagus* beetles.



*Copris hispanus*

Each experiment compared: three treatments

- no dung or beetles
- dung only
- dung+beetles

Surprisingly, in none of these trials did the dung-only sites produce a statistically significant increase in pasture production. The small pasture growth response to dung on the surface of the soil persisted for only a few months after pad drop.

In marked contrast, the pasture production from the plots in which beetles had been introduced to the dung pads increased by 30% to 100% compared to untreated pasture. However, such percentages can be quite misleading. For example, in three separate trials in pastures the different levels of fertility in the unamended soil (Margaret River, WA, and Kuitpo and Ashbourne, SA) (producing from 1 to 4 tonnes per hectare per year respectively) the absolute increases in dry matter production were similar to each other (1.3, 1.0 and 1.0 tonnes per hectare per year respectively) and yet the per cent increases were 100%, 50% and 20% respectively,. The Margaret River trial showed an average increase in dry matter production of 1.3 tonnes per hectare per year over 2 years in a degraded kikuyu pasture.

Another trial in South Australia has run for more than 7 years, and, even now, each year there is a +30% yield response in pastures treated once by dung beetles 7 years ago.

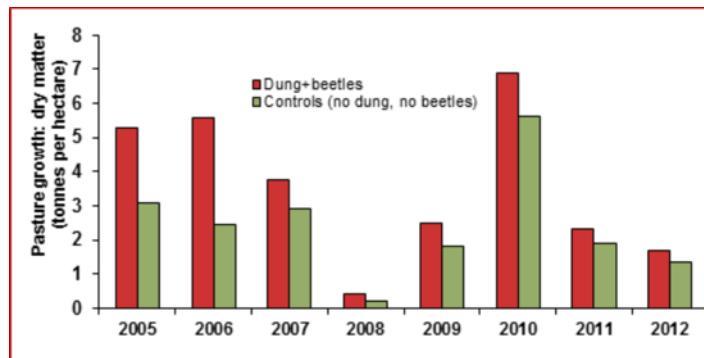
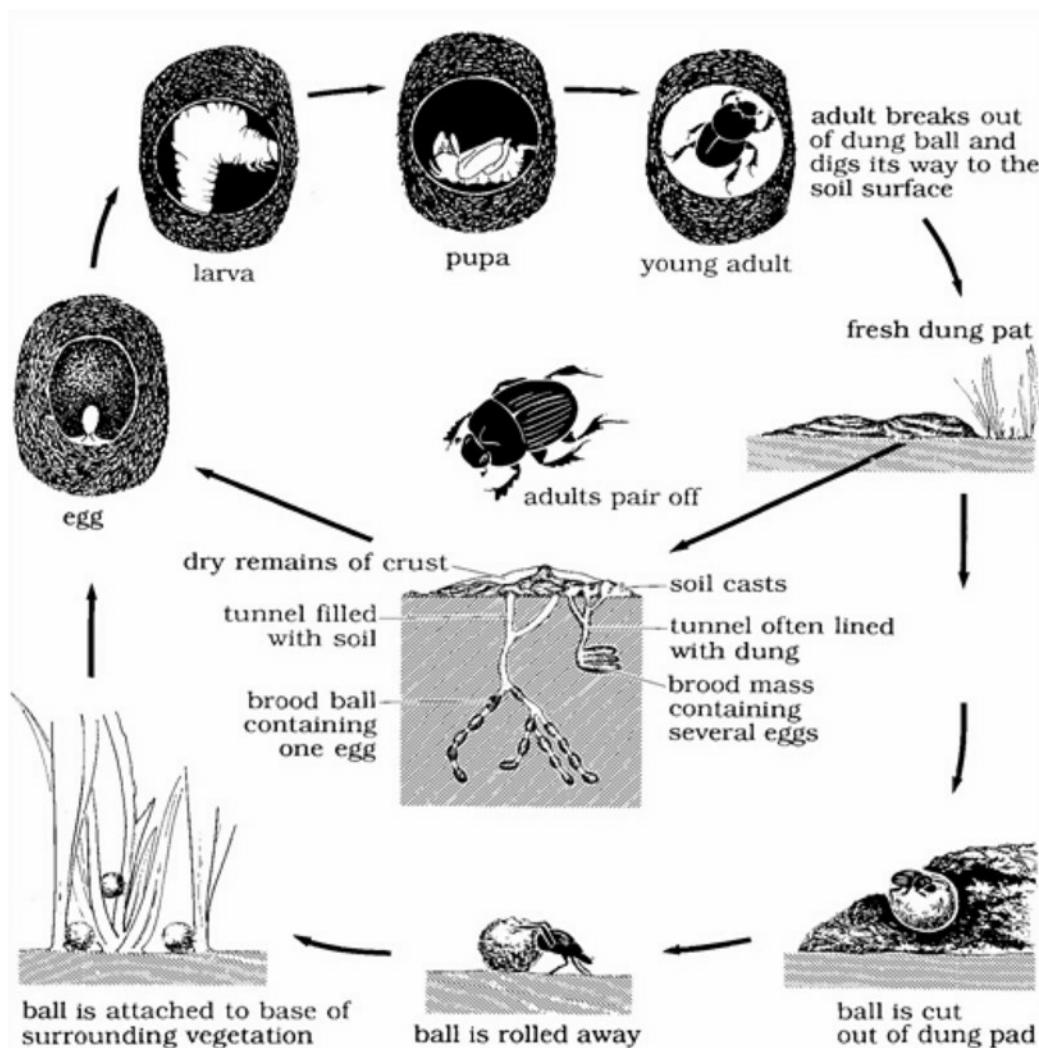


Figure 1: Dung burial by *B. bison* in 2005 increases pasture production for at least the next 7 years



Figure 2: The test plots in South Australia 10 months after adding dung and dung beetles, showing large growth responses in plots nearest the camera.



It is clear from these studies that dung burial by *B. bison* and *G. spiniger* appears to increase pasture production by the equivalent of one or more tonnes per hectare per year when extrapolated to the whole paddock. Since the surface area influenced by dung pads is about 0.5 m<sup>2</sup>, it takes about 5 years for the entire surface of a paddock to be affected by dung beetle activity (at one beast per ha). This benefit has persisted for as long as it has been measured (up to 7 years) in a duplex soil system.

There are likely to be similar production benefits from the activity of all the larger (15 to 25 millimetres long) tunnelling dung beetles that bury dung deep in the soil, although few have been investigated experimentally. This group of deep-tunnelling species includes:

The introduced summer-rainfall species *Onitis alexis*, *Onitis viridulus*, *Onitis caffer*, *Onitis vanderkelleni*, *Copris elphenor* the introduced winter-rainfall species *Bubas bison*, *Geotrupes spiniger*, *Onitis caffer*, *Onitis pecuarius*, *Copris hispanus* and possibly *Onitis aygulus*.

The native winter species *Onthophagus pentacanthus*, *Onthophagus ferox*, *Onthophagus atrox* and the native spring-summer-autumn species *Onthophagus mniszechi*.

More species are on the way!!! In the next article Dr Doube will talk about the two new spring-active species that are currently in quarantine in Canberra. (April, 2013)



Male *Bubas bison*

This article is a modified extract from the 100+page book Dung beetles in Australia: a practical guide by Dr Bernard Doube and Tim Marshall. The book is due out in mid-2013. Pre-publication orders at \$10 per copy can be placed by contacting DBSA through their website. ☺



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# Sydney Royal 2013

## Sydney Royal Diary 2013

By Lyn Dickson

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

Float and car packed, alpacas loaded and into the showground by 8:00pm. Uneventful trip despite drizzle and Sydney peak hour traffic. As usual, the fantastic organisation that we have come to expect from the Sydney Royal alpaca volunteers was in full swing for bump-in to the Munro pavilion; animals were bedded down and camping gear set up in the on-site 'huts' with a minimum of fuss. Already catching up with old friends.

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March

Predicted rain has disappeared, exhibitors are still arriving, alpaca inspections are ongoing and the Sydney crowds arrive in force for the Good Friday holiday at the Easter Show - historically the biggest day for show crowds. Alpacas are high on their priority list of agricultural exhibits to visit; exhibitors in the front line spend hours fielding all the usual alpaca questions and having their alpacas endlessly photographed with every hi-tech mobile device on the market.

Alpaca breeders along with members of the public are drawn to the eye-catching fleece exhibition where all blue ribbon winners and champion fleeces have been strategically presented for maximum impact alongside the main public walkway. Lots of questions are asked about the beautiful alpaca fleeces including some from traditional merino breeders who were among the many admirers of the classy display.

Interstate exhibitors are still arriving and as nightfall approaches, the social aspects of "living in" at Munro are apparent at the many quiet and not-so-quiet clusters of friends getting together for another Sydney Royal.

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March

Inspections are completed and exhibitors take advantage of a little free time to visit the Alpaca Showcase display in a nearby pavilion where, as the name suggests, all manner of alpaca products are being showcased - there are spinners and weavers, alpaca garments, alpaca meat and alpaca carpets and the public are loving it.

Back in Munro in the main alpaca arena our Youth in Agriculture ambassadors, supported and promoted by the RAS are also

*Supreme Champion Huacaya - Hunter Classic Caesar - with owner Narelle Tulip from Hunter Alpacas & Judge Karen Caldwell*



showcasing the alpaca industry, successfully conducting an upgraded version of Junior Handler for most of the day. These events cover Showmanship and Stockmanship classes which consist of several age divisions for handlers aged between 7 and 26 years of age and over 20 juniors from various Sydney area schools plus the kids of alpaca breeders compete throughout the day.

There is also time for more networking among friends old and new and for the more serious competitors among us, time to check out the opposition. The atmosphere reflects a certain buzz of anticipation leading into tomorrow's competition.

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March

Day one of alpaca judging. The judges Karen Caldwell and Rick Hodgson are ready to go and the organising team, led by Paul Haslin breathes a collective sigh of relief as months and months of hard work culminates with the show successfully underway. Suris resplendent with their flowing locks are first into the arena. Unfortunately this year there is only a small suri contingent, however the quality is extremely high, as reflected in the judges' comments.

Surilana Magazine Madonna, a stunning brown adult female is chosen as the Supreme Champion Suri exhibit after being judged the Grand Champion Suri Female, ahead of Surilana Mendacious, a junior white male who was also Grand Champion Suri Male. Both the Grand Champions were exhibited by Surilana from Strathbogie in Victoria. Pinjarra El Nino takes out the Suri Sires Progeny class exhibited by Surilana and Elysion Alpacas. A large Junior Huacaya Female section is completed by lunchtime and the show rolls on, well-supported by spectators in the stands during the judging.

During the lunch break Michelle Malt, our National President launches the latest in alpaca publications - AgGuide; A Practical Handbook for Farming Alpacas, production of which was co-ordinated and supported by the NSW Department of Primary Industries - important recognition for our industry.

Aside from the serious alpaca judging, there is a substantial area designated at the front of the pavilion for Infotainment, where a number of volunteers worked at intervals through the day to introduce the public to alpaca basics and get hands on some super-quiet alpacas specially chosen for their ability to relate to people. A queue of small and not-so-small children waiting to lead these special alpacas is constant throughout the day. Social activities tonight are a little more restrained as exhibitors prepare for another big day of judging tomorrow.

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April

Judging commences with the Intermediate Huacaya Male section and wave after wave of high quality huacyas fill the ring for the rest of the day. The Fleece competition winners are announced and presented with their awards, Supreme Suri Fleece goes to Kurrawa Man About Town, exhibited by Kurrawa Alpacas from Bellbrae in Victoria and Supreme Huacaya Fleece is awarded to Monga Ambrose, exhibited by Monga Alpacas from Braidwood NSW.

Infotainment continues and the queues of city kids wanting to lead an alpaca are never-ending. Back to the main ring where the judges are working well together and their efforts reach the finale when Hunter Classic Caesar, exhibited by Hunter Alpaca Stud from Maitland in NSW is chosen as the Supreme Champion



Supreme Suri - Surilana Magazine Madonna with owner Ian Preuss from Surilana

Huacaya. Hunter Classic Caesar is a white Intermediate Male who was also Grand Champion Male and was chosen over the Grand Champion Female, Sunline Lacey, a white junior exhibited by Sunline Alpacas from Palmwoods in Queensland.

Behind the scenes a parallel competition is running with serious interest from the main contenders; the Point Score Competition for the Most Successful Huacaya Exhibitor in Show with a nail-biting finish as the points go right down to the wire in the judging of the Grand Champions.

The Most Successful Exhibitor for the Huacaya Halter section is won by Millpaca Alpacas NSW narrowly defeating Softfoot Alpacas from SA. The overall Most Successful Exhibitor in Show is Alpha Centauri Alpacas from Jerrawa NSW. This award takes into account halter show prizes combined with fleece show prizes and the winner is awarded the prestigious Harriet Davison Memorial trophy. This is the third year in a row the trophy has been won by Alpha Centauri.

Other Most Successful Exhibitor Awards go to:

Bumble Hill - Most Successful Suri Fleece Exhibitor  
Surilana - Most Successful Suri Halter Exhibitor

Surilana -Most successful Suri Exhibitor

Alpha Centauri - Most Successful Huacaya Fleece Exhibitor  
Huacaya Sires Progeny - Windsong Valley Iceman, exhibited by Coolawarra  
Huacaya Dams Progeny - EP Cambridge Tallulah, exhibited by Softfoot

Monday night is party night and the RAS provides free drinks and savouries for all the alpaca exhibitors. Despite some up-beat music the dancing did not quite reach the same (low) level of previous years, but there was much talking, camaraderie and solving the problems of the world, alpaca and otherwise, into the wee small hours.

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April

Another early start for some of us as the Junior Judging Competition gets underway. Seven youngsters from various parts of the state compete for the title of Champion Junior Judge, won by Amber O'Neil from Cranebrook NSW. The overjudge, Karen Caldwell remarked that all of our senior judges should feel 'threatened' by the quality of the top three contenders coming through the ranks of Junior Judges, as they delivered reasons for their places like total professionals.

Tuesday afternoon sees a quite relaxed session of judging to choose the Champion Colours in Show for both suris and huacayas. The judges alternate with a head-set microphone and speak candidly about what they are seeing as they progress through each line-up. Proud exhibitors enjoy the chance to display their winning stock once again in a competitive but more laid-back forum and a handful of studs are fortunate enough to receive the coveted Sydney Royal tri-colour ribbon plus significant prize-money for all the Champion Colours.

The end of the show brings the dreaded pack up time with staggered exit times for exhibitors. Exhausted but elated breeders share their last drinks and the party and net-working sessions continue long after it is sensible for those needing an early start to drive many hundreds of miles.

Thanks to all those involved in its organisation, Sydney Royal has become an event not to be missed in the alpaca calendar. Even those who are returning home without winning a ribbon vow to return again next year – you see it's not just about the competition as someone quite earnestly explained to me.

There are good-byes to friends all round with everyone promising to reunite same place next Easter to share the total experience that is Sydney Royal.

## Junior Judging

By Amber O'Neill

The alpaca pavilion looked empty and quiet when I arrived on Thursday afternoon, but by 6pm floats filled the walkways as alpacas began to settle into pens. We ticked off the list of exhibitors as we directed vehicles in and out of the pavilion. By 8pm the gates closed and everyone had moved into their super comfy huts; ready for the week to come.

Friday morning and more alpaca friends moved in and out the pavilion, alpacas in their pens and more huts filled with everything you could think of. Inspections began too. Toes, tails, tags, teeth, colour and ears checked on all animals. We got a glimpse of our competition and caught up with some lovely people. Later in the day the Youth Paraders event was held for senior and adult classes. It was heaps of fun and all the stewards, judges and volunteers did such a great job. We took our alpaca through a set of obstacles for stockmanship and presented our alpaca to the judge, answering questions, for showmanship. We were judged on several aspects of safety, handling and training and it was great to see so many competitors. To walk away with a Champion and Grand Champion ribbon was amazing!

Saturday, and inspections continued. Interstate exhibitors arrived after many hours of travelling and those that were already settled in helped out; unloading animals, setting up pens and preparing for show. We caught up with lots of people we hadn't seen in a long time, talking all about alpacas and having a good time. The Alpaca Youth Group, with the help of some wonderful people, ran the junior and intermediate classes of the Youth Paraders event.

Over the past few months, with the help from Cranebrook High School, I have trained a group of kids from Henry Fulton Public School to enter the competition. Many of them had never touched an alpaca prior to our training sessions, so for them it was very exciting. They were taught how to walk, halter and handle alpacas, pick up feet and show teeth and answer all sorts of questions about alpacas. They were all about 10 years of age and walked into the alpaca pavilion with ribbons in their hair, new shiny boots and dressed ready for competition. It was great to see them all walk out of the ring with smiles on their faces, and they were all very excited, especially after they all won a ribbon. Everyone did an exceptional job and it was lots of fun! Once the day was finished I had several of the kids run up to me and beg to be able to do it again next year. It is just amazing to see more and more people getting involved in the best industry alive!



Supreme Suri Fleece - Kurrawa Man About Town, exhibited by Kurrawa



Supreme Huacaya Fleece - Monga Ambrose, exhibited by Monga



*Junior Judges Left to right - Amber O'Neill, Ariana McCauley, Alycia Smith, Daniel Selman, Katy Armonson-Graham, Charlise Raynierse & Adrian Stufana.*

Sunday, and the pavilion was covered in Easter eggs and judging began. Suri's were up first and it was great to be able to help Elysion and Surilana show their animals; really enjoyed being in the showing and learning more about the Suri alpaca. The Huacaya section started soon after and our little show group at Warralinga did really well, collecting several ribbons to take home. The fleece display was set up just behind the showing and looked great. And the infotainment was a hit for all the kids, walking an alpaca and having an experience they would otherwise never have.

Monday morning and we were straight into judging again. I was lucky enough to be able to show a beautiful Longuville Park and Pacofino alpaca and spent a few hours ribbon stewarding in the showing. Cleaning pens and walking alpacas every chance I got was all lots of fun too! Later that night we had a big get together with all the alpaca exhibitors and talked for hours, catching up from last year's show and relaxing after a few days of hard work.

Tuesday, and everyone looked tired from the night before. We fed, watered and cleaned pens for the fifth day and I got ready for the Junior Judging Competition. The judge gave us a briefing and we got under way; judging four fleeces and four animals. It was very scary getting in front of people to talk and is always nervous waiting for the results, but everyone did such a great job and it was amazing to walk away with the Champion ribbon!

Then the Colour Champions began. It was crazy in the marshalling area but the stewards did a great job and everyone got in the ring and presented some beautiful colours. From fawns

to greys to blacks, the showing looked stunning, with top quality alpacas filling the ring. After the showing finished and dinner was done, many of the exhibitors left the pavilion, heading home after a fantastic show. A few of us went outside and learnt to crack a whip (with little success but lots of fun). We watched the rodeo and the fireworks, a great night to end the show.

Wednesday morning and everyone packed up; all their belongings shoved back into cars and alpacas jumping into floats (eager to get back to the paddock). Those that were left helped run a novice stockmanship event, with kids that had never handled alpacas before given the chance to compete. We handed out ribbons and packed everything up. I cleaned the pens and fed the alpacas for the last time and it was goodbye to everyone and the end of an amazing show.

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Mark and Kim Irving  
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## The Alpaca Showcase 2013

The Alpaca Showcase 2013 was once again a successful endeavour; showcasing the splendour and viability of alpacas from the paddock to end product and all their uses in between.

Bill the Alpaca Farmer kept the crowds entertained with five very informative fun filled shows each day, the interest and enjoyment from these shows was substantial.

Dairy Road Alpacas demonstrated skilful spinning and weaving captivating the crowds, the Alpaca Barn was beautifully showcased with luxurious alpaca garments, Millpaca's alpacas and their end product with yarn, quilts and pelts were a huge hit, Illawarra Prime Alpaca had an abundance of interest with their great display on the meat industry, with Chef David Campbell cooking some delicious alpaca recipes on a rolling screen.

Velieries had a stunning display with gorgeous carpets and rugs which were extremely well received, the NSW Spinners and Weavers demonstrated impeccable spinning. Be Creatif and The House of Alpaca provided beautiful static displays and Coolawarra provided lovely placid alpacas for display and the shows.

All this was achieved by some great volunteers who manned the stands including AAA stand, assisted with the shows and the care and welfare of the alpacas on display. A lot of hard work and long hours went into the Showcase and I would like to thank all involved as the alpaca Industry was showcased professionally with tens of thousands of people now thoroughly more educated on the wonderful world of alpacas as a booming viable Industry.

You should be proud!!

By Sharon Dawson ☺



# Blue Eyed White Alpacas

By D. Andrew Merriwether, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Anthropology and Biology  
Director of Graduate Studies Binghamton University and Nyala Farm Alpacas

Many breeders are concerned about breeding blue-eyed white alpacas (BEWs) and don't know if they should be used in their breeding programs. Blue-eyed white alpacas are all-white alpacas, with (fully) blue eyes, which are often, but not always, deaf.

With more than 100 BEW examined so far, over 60% were deaf. Recently some alpaca farmers have suggested that the BEWs should not be used for breeding with the purpose of eliminating this gene from the American alpaca gene pool.

This suggestion reflects some of the misinformation that surrounds the breeding of BEWs. This article will discuss the genetics of BEWs.

There is no registry for eye colour, so it took years of collecting data, but the pattern seems quite clear now. In understanding BEWs, a little background in genetics is necessary.

A phenotype is the physical expression or appearance of a gene and is what you see in the paddock. The genetic code for the phenotype is called the genotype. Alleles are variant forms of a gene. The white-spot gene (suggested by horse colour geneticist Phil Sponnenberg) has many variants (alleles). Allele variants include a white spot at any of the extremities of an animal, white-face, tuxedo, white legs, pinto, etc.. The white spot gene is also responsible for classic grey phenotype alpacas (sometimes called tuxedo greys), but does not actually require the presence of a tuxedo.

These different phenotypes are due to primarily dominant alleles. Each parent passes on one allele from each gene in their gametes (sperm and egg cells). One copy is in the sperm and one copy is in the egg. The fertilized egg ends up with one copy from each parent. Dominant alleles mask (override) recessive alleles.

This means if two alleles are present, only the dominant allele's phenotype is seen. In this case this means an alpaca only needs to get one copy of the white spot gene for the trait to show up in the phenotype. However, an alpaca born with two copies of these dominant alleles (like grey, white faced, tuxedo) produces a new (additive) phenotype, a BEW, or may not be born at all. Indeed, Liz Paul believes grey by grey mating produce a lethal combination 1/4 of the time, and these are aborted (Paul 2003). I am convinced she is correct, which is why I don't recommend breeding classic grey to classic grey.



BEWs occur when a cria receives a white-spot allele from both parents. The only exception to this seems to be when a cria receives two copies of the grey white spot allele, it is never born (lethal). To see what possible outcomes exist for any breeding, it is easiest to create a Punnett Square that shows the possible allele combinations for the offspring of any mating.



Photo courtesy of Rainbows End Alpacas, VIC

In a mating of a white faced black dam and a solid black sire:

S = solid coloured (S/S)

WF = white faced animal (WF/S)

		Female Gamete	
Male Gamete		WF	S
	S	WF/S = white faced	S/S = solid
	S	WF/S = white faced	S/S = solid

So half the offspring will be white-faced and half will be solid coloured. Something different happens when both parents have white-spot alleles. Some offspring will receive two copies of dominant alleles. These will have the blue-eyed white phenotypes.

In a mating of a white faced black dam and a silver grey sire:

S = solid coloured animal (S/S)

WF = white faced animal (WF/S)

G = grey animal (G/S)

		Female Gamete	
Male Gamete		WF	S
	G	WF/G =BEW	S/G =grey
	S	WF/S = white faced	S/S = solid

So 1/4 will be BEWs (WF/G), 1/4 will be grey (S/G), 1/4 will be white-faced (WF/S) and 1/4 will be solid coloured (S/S). That is how BEWs can be created. It is important to note that some all-white animals have white spots on them, but you cannot see white markings on a white animal.

Some animals are also so light coloured that it may not be possible to detect a white spot on them. Also, one version of the white spot gene is an all-white animal (think of it as a white spot that covers the whole body).

So it is possible to get BEWs from all-white's bred to white-spot or grey animals. Also, it is possible that an animal has a TINY white marking that you cannot see, or easily see. I have seen animals that threw a BEW that appeared solid, but upon close examination, a tiny white spot was found between the toes or on the tip of the nose or lip.



Photo courtesy of Rainbows End Alpacas, VIC



Photo courtesy of Chiverton Alpacas, VIC



Photo courtesy of Rainbows End Alpacas, VIC



Photo courtesy of Jalminca Alpacas, QLD



Photo courtesy of Rainbows End Alpacas, VIC

If you mate a BEW to a solid coloured sire you get what we see below. In this case imagine the BEW has a grey allele (G) and a white face allele (WF).  
 BEW = Blue eyed white animal (WF/G)  
 S = solid coloured animal (S/S)

		Female Gamete	
Male Game te		WF	S
	G	WF/S = white face	GS = Solid
	S	WF/S = white face	G/S = grey

The result would be 1/2 white-faced cria, 1/2 grey cria. No BEWs. Remember, apparently solid animals may hide a white spot, and all-white animals often hide white markings or are a white spot variant (all-white) themselves.

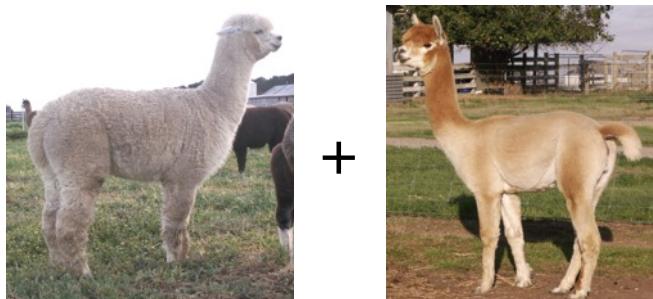
What causes the BEW phenotype? Based upon what we know from other species. We know that most fibre and skin colour is due to the presence of melanin (phaeomelanin and eumelanin) in the tissue. Melanin migrates through the body during development. Melanin is also a critical structural component of cells, including hairs in the cochlea in the inner ear. Failure of melanin to reach these cochlear hairs results in deafness. Similarly, failure of pigment cells to reach the cells that will become the eyes leads to blue eyes. Melanin is distributed by the growing neural crest during embryonic development. Melanin is produced from cells called melanocytes that migrate outward in the expanding neural crest.

Most greys are also white faced (many with tuxedos, white legs, and other patterns). Some greys however have no white markings at all (these are less common, and these greys with no white markings are not a risk to throw BEWs). I believe the white spot gene and the tuxedo grey gene are the same gene, but it is also possible that it involves two genes very close to each other on the same chromosome. They are so close that the alleles of these two different genes are almost always transmitted together (so grey and white faced usually occur together). Occasionally, during meiosis, recombination occurs (crossing over between homologous maternal and paternal chromosomes) and the grey and white spot alleles can be separated, leading to the white faced non-grey animals out of a white faced grey. I have seen this a dozen times or so, so it can happen. They may just be poorly expressed greys or they may truly be white marked animals with no grey. Solid greys have come out of classic white spot greys, but I suspect they are just due to the recessive roan grey gene (unrelated to the white spot gene), rather than being separated from the white spot component of the grey allele of the white spot gene.

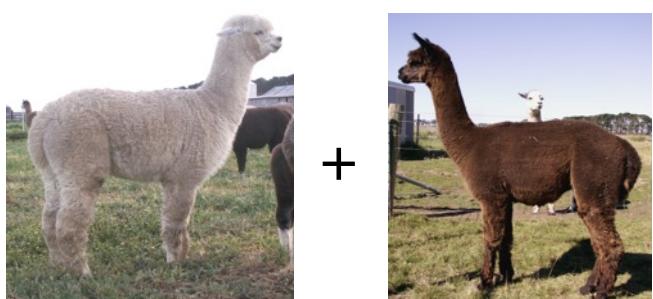
Returning to the risks of using white spot allele and grey animals in the breeding program, BEWs themselves should not produce more BEWs unless they are bred to BEW or white-spot allele animals. To eliminate BEWs from the gene pool completely we would have to eliminate all classic greys, white-spotted animals. Then a good fraction of the white animals would still have white spot alleles. Do we want to eliminate whites, greys, and white spotted animals? I don't.

The key is that white should be at the extremities. This is because during embryonic development, the melanocyte cells that produce melanin migrate along the neural crest, from the core of the body outward along the spine and then out to the extremities and out to the skin. Wherever these melanocyte cells reach are coloured. Where ever they don't reach is white. This is why we see white markings on the bottoms of the leg, and face so often. It is where colour has not migrated from the core. The colour itself is caused by another gene I call the Base Colour Gene.

The question then remains, what happens when you breed a BEW? Should you use one in your breeding program? If the above scenario is correct, then BEWs should always contribute a white-spot allele to a breeding. Therefore, if you breed a BEW to a non-white, solid animal with no white anywhere on the animal (including solid roans, called modern greys in the US show system), you should not get a BEW cria from the breeding, but all cria are likely to have white-spot or grey/roan markings.



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*Photos courtesy of Rainbows End Alpacas, VIC*



*Photo courtesy of Jalminca Alpacas, QLD*

Animals with white-spot often attract many farm visitors because of their distinctive markings. Greys are beautiful and some of the highest selling alpacas in the US. Some breeding programs in other countries are breeding for all-white fibre animals (which can be dyed to any colour).

There is already some prejudice in some other breeding programs against any animals with non-solid markings because of the need to remove these contaminating colours prior to sending to fibre mills (colours must be separated prior to spinning and processing) and the US show system reflects this in docking points for contamination of colour in the prime blanket (but not outside the blanket). Unlike Peru, the US has no mills that buy fleeces from producers. Rather US producers must pay mills to process their fleece, then sell the processed fleece themselves. So many (indeed most) in the US we are not necessarily breeding for all-white solid animals. Some in the US have been pushing natural colours, rather than dyed colours.

My own recommendation is that I don't usually use herd sires with white-spot since offspring that have white-spot have more limited considerations with breeding (risk of BEW taking them to grey, and white). These animals are often devalued in the livestock breeding sales market (even though few people process the fibre from the extremities anyway, where the white spot often ends up), and in fact, other than greys and suri's, there are very few white-spot herd sires in use. AOBA fleece judging also penalizes colour variation in the blanket. I have no problem with using grey males and females in a breeding program.

Bred to solids, they will produce 50% solid cria and 50% grey cria and greys are very trendy right now, and often command top-dollar at auctions. They are also one of the rarer colour combinations, increasing their value for both males and females. Breed them to only solid-coloured, non-white animals if you don't want to risk BEWs. So it is up to you and your breeding program goals. Personally, I would happily breed BEW females (out of greys) to solid non-white males.

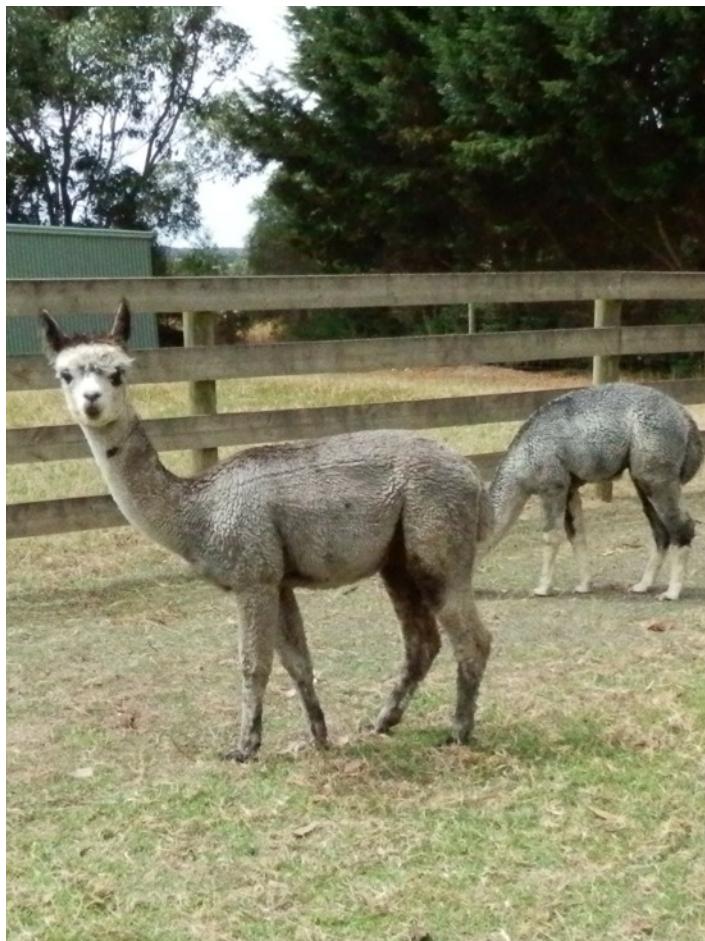
This would result in 50% grey cria and 50% white marked cria (the same percentage of grey you would get breeding directly to a classic grey). Given that greys are desirable in our market, and often expensive, BEWs out of a grey parent are an inexpensive way to make classic greys.

The negative to breeding to a BEW is that the other 50% of the cria that are not grey will have white markings, and in the US anyway would likely never be herd sires if they were males. BEWs that do not have a grey parent will not make grey and would always make one of the other white spot variants. I would not breed those at all (personally).

Fortunately in the US, the only males with white markings that get used a lot are greys and all-whites, so a fair percentage of US BEWs do carry the grey allele. I would not likely breed a BEW male at all. Eliminating a BEW from the breeding program removes two copies of the white-spot gene from the gene pool, but unless we are also removing greys and other white-spot animals from the breeding program, it will have a negligible effect on the overall level of white markings and BEWs in the gene pool.

One last note, there are environmental causes of white spot: frostbite, ringworm, and abscesses. These all tend to yield small circular spots that are often not at the extremities. Abscesses are commonly caused by infections caused by giving shots, or from bites from intact males with fighting teeth. So if the markings are small and circular and not at the extremities, and especially if the animal has no parent with white anywhere on it, it is likely environmental rather than genetic.

*Feel free to email me with questions (andym@binghamton.edu). I am a geneticist and one of my main focuses is on camelids. I am involved in the alpaca genome project and my lab is sequencing many candidate genes for colour as well as conducting linkage mapping to find genes for traits and diseases in camelids (including wry face, choanal atresia, atresia ani, cataracts, polydactyl, etc..) and fleece characteristics (suri trait, micron diameter, density, etc..). Feel free to contact me with any questions or if you want to help me with my research. My wife and I are also alpaca breeders, with ~80 huacaya alpacas on my farm in Vestal, New York. ☺*



*Photo courtesy of Chiverton Alpacas, VIC*

A large image of a light-colored alpaca standing in a grassy field, facing left. The background is blurred greenery.

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# Alpaca Twins

## Celebration or Commiseration?

Researched by Leanne Tunny & Esme Graham

Twin births are exciting and rare and cause much interest among breeders but are they worth the problems they can cause? Checking through the IAR database several sets of twins can be found. Several of the owners were happy to discuss their twins with us.

### The Illawarra Twins (2 Females)

*First published in Alpacas Australia, No 31, 2000*

For those unfamiliar with the story, or who don't recall the details, the twins were delivered some six hours apart on the same day by Jolimont Nunoa. She was a 7 year old Sollacotta female, who had previously delivered a white male by a Barreda sire in 1998. The sire of the twins was Jolimont The Don. The first cria born was a solid fawn female, but incredibly only 3.75 kg at an estimated gestational age of 334 days.

The cria appeared normal in all other respects, and was up and about fairly quickly, but the afterbirth failed to materialise. The mother remained restless, distracted and uncomfortable until 8pm, when she delivered the second cria, this one a 3.5 kg white female. Both cria suckled independently within 20 minutes of delivery.

Our excitement was mixed a little with apprehension as it became increasingly apparent that the second born was a clear favourite with its mother. Whilst the first born enjoyed its mother's full attention for the first six hours, it was never so favoured after the birth of the second.

By the fourth day it would occasionally bear the brunt of a deft kick or a well-directed spit if it tried to suckle, and had to develop cunning in order to get to its mother's teats. It quickly learnt to follow in on its sister whenever she suckled, thereby getting her turn at the milk bar. For the first three months, we supplemented the first born with a powdered milk substitute, which it was eager to accept for the most part.

Despite this, she has always lagged a little behind her sister in weight.

The twins were weaned at 6 months, and weighed 26 and 27 kg respectively at seven months (compared to a herd average of 35 to 40 kg for the same age).



The mother was remated to the same sire 30 days post-partum, and spat off after the one mating. This mating produced a (single!) solid white male.

At twelve months of age, the twins were 41 and 43.5 kg in weight, which is certainly lower than our average. For that reason, we were not anxious to join them just yet, and decided to let them grow out a little more. The question of fertility is one that has been frequently put, but is not usually a problem in twins of the same sex.

The twins were now indicating by their behaviour that they were ready for mating, and will be put to one of our males in the next few months.



So, at the end of the day, what lessons are there to be learnt from this Tale of Two Pretties?

Firstly, there was no physical clue before delivery that the dam was carrying twins: her weight increase was within the expected range, and she was not clinically overburdened.

Secondly, where a healthy female gives birth to a full-term, grossly underweight, but clearly healthy cria, consider the possibility of twins: check the paddock for a prior birth, and don't discount the possibility of a much delayed second delivery, particularly with a retained placenta.

Thirdly, it is my suspicion that the incidence of twinning amongst alpacas is much higher than the 1 in 50,000 quoted in Peru, where many twin births would go unnoticed with either or both failing to survive.

If you are lucky enough to drop twins, watch carefully for signs that one (here, and in other species usually, the first) is being rejected, or at least underfed. Be prepared to supplement both dam and cria.

Much remains to be answered. Will both cria be fertile? Will they grow out to normal size? Will they carry a genetic predisposition to twinning? Will their fleece weights improve with advancing growth and nutrition?

2013 Update - One of the females has since given birth to several healthy cria but no twins but the other was found to have a vagina which ended in a blind pouch.



## The Mossvale Twins (1 Male, 1 Female)

On 9 January 2009 at three weeks old the twins were doing well. We had kept the twins and their mother (Goldenwest Burilda) in their own small paddock - which has lots of green grass and some shelter trees. Minuet was very small when she was born (only 2.8kg) and was hand fed twice a day for the first two weeks.

She then rejected the bottle but seemed to be able to hold her own against her brother. Burilda was heavily supplemented with about 15 litres of chaff, pellets and grains each day – which she happily ate. Both twins had grown well and after 23 days had almost doubled their birth weight – Minute increasing from 2.8kg to 5.7kg and Tango increased from 4.75kg to 9.2kg.

Twins - good thing or bad thing: Although we were very happy to have two healthy alpacas, we did have to consider the possible complications with having twins of the opposite sex. As with cows, the incidence of sterility in females of mixed sex twins is high.

These females are referred to as freemartins. There are tests that can be done to determine whether a female will be sterile, Cytogenetic examination can demonstrate XX and XY chromosome patterns in freemartins.

The interchange of cells that occurs in the placental circulation between the two foetuses can be demonstrated by detecting two different blood types in a single animal.. Ultrasound may be used when the female has reached puberty to see if the reproductive tract is normal or whether the vagina is a blind-ending pouch.

After contacting Helen Jessop in March 2012, it was reported that the female cria 'never really grew'. She was found dead in the paddock - an autopsy showed all her organs were underdeveloped and the vet was surprised she had lived so long.

More work has been done on this subject with cattle where higher numbers make research easier and the research is probably applicable to alpacas.



## The Currabungla Twins (2 males)

During March and April 2006 we had our autumn drop of crias. As usual we move the females who are due into the paddocks behind the house so we can observe them easily.

During the week before the 23<sup>rd</sup> March I had noticed Shelbory Park Jewel a 12year old (approx) imported Allianza Peruvian was sitting down to eat at the hay bale practically all day and she looked huge bulging out on both sides. She is an excellent female who had produced six quality progeny.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2006 at 7am she gave birth to a white male cria from Purrumbete Brigantine.

He weighed in at 7kgs. We always keep an eye on females after birthing to make sure they pass the placenta. By 11am Jewel had still not passed the placenta so armed with an injection of oxytocin John and I headed out to the paddock. As we got near Jewel she lay down and started to roll a little. We thought, good she is right, we won't give the Oxytocin. Next thing a little white head appeared and we were amazed. We waited and were even more amazed at the size of the second white boy. He weighed 8kg. No wonder Jewel had looked the size and shape she was. She was carrying around 15kg of babies plus the placenta.

These weights are quite exceptional as once again being in drought for the fifth year in a row our birth weights were a little lower than normal and I think these would have to be the largest twins born in Australia. Both boys were very active from the time they hit the ground and Jewel fed them totally from Day 1 and treats them equally.



We kept Jewel and the twins in a smaller paddock with one other female and her cria for company and gave extra lucerne and shalfal clover hay to make sure she kept the milk supply up. She only had one mating to Purrumbete Brigantine so we know that the gestation was 11mths and 14days. The twins are not identical and have very different fleece types. Topaz is what would be classed as a soft rolling skin with loose skin and fine pencil staples and extremely lustrous (tested at 18.2M 4.2SD on 1st fleece) and Jade would be more of the traditional type but still with lustre and felt the finer of the two (tested at 16.9M 3.5SD on 1st fleece) .

Three weeks after having the twins, Jewel was very keen to be mated, so Brigantine went over her again. She has produced 2 female crias since, Amethyst and Opalette making 10 progeny altogether.

Both males are big, sturdy and dominant in different ways and while Jades fleece has still stayed like Purrumbete Brigantines, at 6 yrs is around 24 micron, Topaz has gone over 26 micron. They are both fertile although Jade's cria are not registered as he has not been certified.



**Nanita Blomquist, Alberta Ag-Info Centre, Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development prepared the following:-**

In animals such as cattle, in a pair of twins of different sex, the female twin is infertile in more than 90% of cases. The infertile calf is called a Freemartin. Freemartinism is one of the most severe forms of sexual abnormality among cattle. It causes infertility in the female calf born with a male twin. Freemartinism occurs when a female twin shares the uterus with a male. The placental membranes connect the fetus to the dam are shared, and the placental fluids are exchanged between the two fetuses. The exchange of fluid and blood between the two calves mixes the antigens responsible for carrying the unique sex characteristics of each calf. The twins develop with some sex characteristics of both the male and female.

This transfer of hormones and antigens causes the female's reproductive tract to be severely underdeveloped, and in some cases they express characteristics of a male reproductive system. Often the ovaries are underdeveloped and are not capable of producing eggs. The uterus is also underdeveloped, and the reproductive tract does not supply sufficient hormones necessary to maintain a pregnancy.

Reduced fertility sometimes occurs in the male twin, but in ninety percent of the cases the female twin is completely infertile. The exact cause of Freemartinism is not fully understood. However, the reproductive organs of the male fetus develop earlier than those of a female fetus, which results in the female genitalia being affected. The presence of male hormones impairs the development of the female reproductive system. The fetus is genetically female, but male hormones dominate its reproductive system.

Most often the external genitalia of the female appears normal, but the internal organs are underdeveloped. In some cases, the female genitalia may appear to be male. For example the vulva may be normal, but there may be large amounts of hair present or the udder will not be fully developed and sometimes it is not noticeable at first glance.

Freemartinism cannot be prevented. It is not a genetic trait that is passed on through generations; it occurs randomly from the conception of two embryos instead of one. Detection and diagnosis of a Freemartin is critical from an economic standpoint. A female twin born with a male twin has no reproductive value, it is important not to spend time and money preparing the heifer to go into your breeding herd.

**In 2001 as part of the thesis for her PhD Jane Vaughan BVSc PhD MACVSc wrote:-**

"Live twin births are rare in camelids and mostly result from multiple ovulations (dizygotic rather than monozygotic, Sumar 1999). Twins were never recorded in alpacas in more than 12,000 births over 12 years at La Raya Research Station in Peru (San-Martin et al 1968). Since then, perhaps due to improved nutrition and closer observation of births, the occasional set of twins has been born alive (Adams 1997, Fowler 1990). Live alpaca twins have been recorded in Australia (Hand 1998, H Davison pers comm 1999).

Alpacas may have a mechanism to reduce twin conceptions to singletons in early gestation as multiple ovulations are common (up to 10%) and live singleton pregnancies have been observed in hembras with multiple CLs on the ovaries (Fernandez-Baca et

al 1970b). Perhaps differential luteolysis of the left and right uterine horns is a mechanism that camelids reduce twins to a single foetus (Fernandez-Baca et al 1970b). In one alpaca, both foetuses were in the left uterine horn at 30 days gestation, while both CLs were in the right ovary (Fernandez-Baca et al 1970b). In one llama, one foetus was found in each uterine horn (Adams et al 1989). In dromedaries, both foetuses may be in the left uterine horn or one foetus in each horn (ElWishy 1987).

In a study of llama twins by Fowler (1990), freemartinism was reported in a female-male twin pair aborted after 230 days gestation. The female had a large clitoris and the vagina ended in a blind pouch. The study describes 11 other female-male twin pairs of llamas in which the female did not have any abnormalities. 2 of these females were known to be fertile. Hinrichs et al (1997) describe two sets of female-male twin llamas where the female had hypoplastic genitalia."

To bring the above research up to date Jane commented:- Over the last decade, I have been presented with many maiden female alpacas that have failed to conceive. Diagnosis of an infantile uterus and ovaries OR a segmental aplasia of the vagina (where the tract has not opened up properly during embryogenesis) may be made by ultrasonography of the uterus and ovaries followed by examination of the vagina using a speculum. Could some of these females be a surviving twin, where the male twin has died in utero, after his reproductive hormones have disrupted development of her reproductive tract? Perhaps we would rather be without that cute little pair of alpacas in our paddock?

Our thanks to Ian Davison – Illawarra Alpacas, Penny & John Pittard – Currabungla Alpacas, Mark & Helen Jessop – Mossvale Alpacas for sharing their stories, and Jane Vaughan & Nanita Blomquist for expert comment. ☺



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# Alpaca Agistment & Mating Agreements

Industry Article



Alpacas may be agisted for a variety of reasons, i.e. mating, veterinary care, or on-farm care, and therefore the owner of the alpaca/s may need to consider several issues before agisting the animal/s

## Agreement

The owner of the alpaca/s and the agisting alpaca stud owner should enter into a written agreement, whether it is a contract or simply an acknowledged email, to cover the terms of the agistment. The agreement should list the services, responsibilities and any liabilities that are required by the agistee, and what is to be provided by the agistor, and the cost, if any, of these services.

## Services

- Does the agistment fee cover any supplementary feed, worming/vitamin injections, veterinary costs (if required), ultrasound for mating confirmation, or will there be additional fees and at what rate?
- Is the agistment account payable: in advance, monthly in arrears, or at the end of the agistment period?
- Is a mating fee payable in instalments or in full at confirmation of pregnancy, and is some form of live cria guarantee provided?

Note: if the animal is being agisted for on-farm mating to a certified sire is a period of agistment provided as part of a mating fee?

- The owner should discuss with the agistment provider where on the property the agisted animal/s is/are to be kept, and ensure this is acceptable and adequately fenced with shade and water available.
- Are agisted animal/s to be kept separate from stud owners' animals, i.e. in a quarantine paddock, or will they be run in a herd?
- If they are to be run in a herd check that the AlpacaMAP and/or the Q-Alpaca Program status is acceptable.
- What access will the owner have to inspect the agisted animals?

## Responsibilities and Liabilities

- The agreement should clearly state whether or not the agisted animal/s is/are insured, and also cover the area of responsibility for notification in the event of illness or death, including agreement to incur veterinary fees in an emergency if the owner cannot be contacted.
- Does the stud owner carry Liability Insurance in case of an animal's death, wild dog attack or animal theft, or is this the alpaca owners responsibility?

This article is a general overview of areas that should be discussed and we hope will be of particular assistance to new breeders and a reminder to more experienced breeders. ☺

# Daegu Korea

International textile Fair

DAEGU, KOREA – INTERNATIONAL TEXTILE FAIR

As reported in our March magazine, Zuhal Kuvan-Mills was one of four textile and fashion designers from WA, selected, and fully sponsored, by TCF WA & Belmont BEC to attend the International Textile Fair in Daegu in South Korea.

She was thrilled to discover on arrival that the organizers had chosen to display her screen printed merino and alpaca textiles as part of a “new trends around the globe” exhibition. Zuhal has returned very excited about the reception her work received and the contacts she has made. She is looking at a collaboration to launch an organic alpaca fashion label and also has high fashion ladies hat designers in both Korea and Russia wanting to use her felted textiles.



Zuhal said how amazing it was to see her exhibition space always full of textile artists, fashion designers, buyers, students and academics from Korea and around the world exchanging ideas and appreciating her work.

By the time this goes to print Zuhal will have been to Turkey representing Australia at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Biennial of Art and will head to Melbourne in July for the DESIGN:MADE:TRADE show.

A lady with a lot of passion and enthusiasm for her art and design. ☺

# HEIMTEX WORLD FAIR

Frankfurt, Germany 2013



Creswick Woollen Mills along with Kelly & Windsor participated in Heimtex 2013 in Frankfurt earlier this year. This collaboration was the first time two Australian Manufacturers have brought Australian Made Alpaca Quilts, Pillows, Throws & Blankets to the World Stage. Kelly & Windsor was able to reacquaint with customers identified during previous exhibitions. For Creswick this exhibition was historic. Celebrating 65 years of Manufacturing in Australia Creswick also celebrated its first German trade show as an exhibitor.

The stand was well attended by visitors from all around the world. High quality European companies were very impressed by the sophisticated designs of Creswick's new range of Blankets. Kelly & Windsor's revolutionary quilt design was also commented on by experienced industry experts.

The 2013 Heimtex show was a unique forum to showcase Australian Manufacturing. The Australian Alpaca Industry should be proud that products made from their fibre are on the world stage.

Both Creswick & Kelly & Windsor look forward to consistent growth in their export businesses utilizing Australian Alpaca. ☺





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## This Issue's Winner



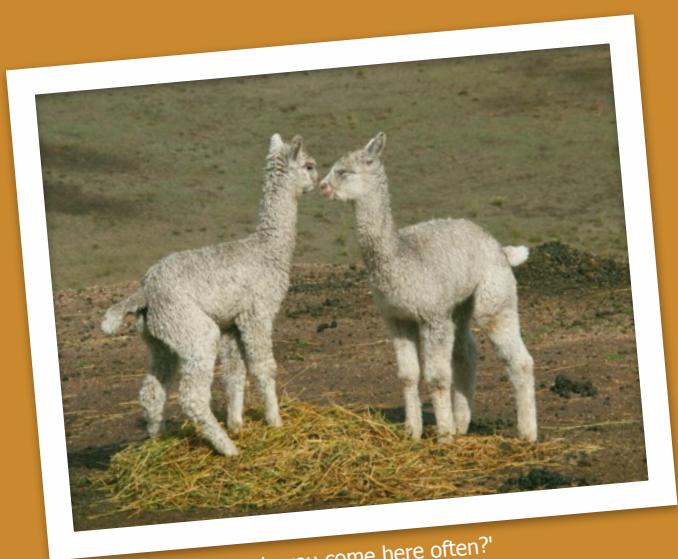
'Don't move pacas there's a human in the paddock'  
Diane Boede - Wattle Grove Alpacas VIC



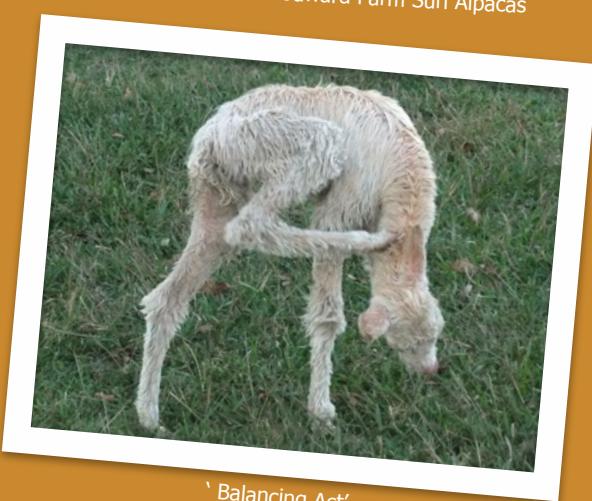
Dr Leida consults with Dr McCosker - She thinks he has a lot to learn!  
Kelli Pfeiffer, Pfeiffer Park Alpacas QLD



'Push Me, Pull You'  
Marilyn Nicholls - Woodward Farm Suri Alpacas



'So, do you come here often?'  
Diane Boede - Wattle Grove Alpacas VIC



'Balancing Act'  
Esme Graham - Paltarra Park Alpacas QLD



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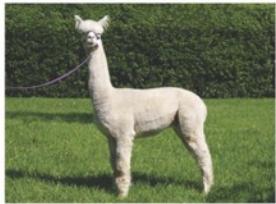
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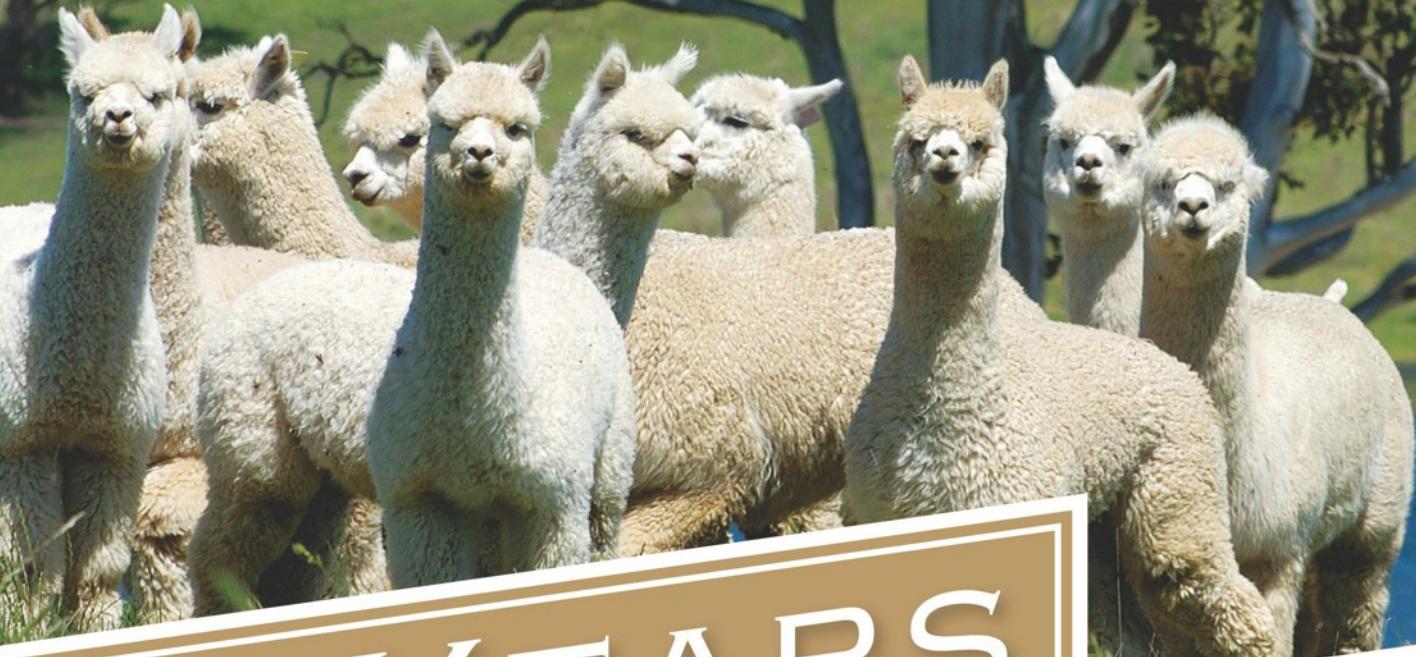
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