



Your Central Region Newsletter From The Alpaca Association New Zealand

Greetings,

It is already August and we are finally seeing clear signs of spring out there. Only a few more weeks until the grass growth really picks up. Almost as important is our National Show which runs between the 20th and 25th September at Manfeild in Feilding. For those of you entering animals or fleece don't forget to get your entries in by August 31st. The show will be open to the public (23rd-25th) so it would be great if members of Central Region could spread the word. For those of you that aren't planning on entering animals it would be great to see you there as it's a fantastic opportunity to see the best alpacas in the country on mass. For more details about the show visit our National Show Website at <https://www.alpaca2022.com/>. We are really looking forward to the show - it going to be great!!



In the spirit of the show, this edition of our Newsletter contains excellent articles on the preparation of suri and huacaya fleeces for show. Although perhaps too late for this year's Nationals, their contents will help the less experienced prepare fleeces for future competitions. We have also included an authoritative article by Marty McGee Bennett on the perfect halter fit.

The final section contains a (hopefully) complete and up-to-date listing of the Nation's shearers. Getting your booking in early ensures that you can have your animals shorn before the heat of summer and also allows the shearers to organise their travels in the most efficient way. If any shearer has been missed or should you hear of new one, please do let us know.

Ros Scott, Acting AANZ Central Region President

Halter Fit - Care and Feeding of the Alpaca Head

By Marty McGee Bennett (Republished from AANZ Magazine April 2017)

The alpaca's head... it is a big part of why we fall in love with them. The beautiful eyes, long eyelashes, the adorable lips; as we gaze at this enchanting countenance it is crucial to remember that they also breathe and eat using it.



Unfortunately for many alpacas—their owners may appreciate the beauty of the head but don't understand exactly how to REALLY look out for it. For over twenty years I have been writing about halter fit, with most of the emphasis on the importance of the airway. In this article I re-visit the issue of halter fit but go further to have a look at the whole head, for inspiration I am gazing into the naked eye orbits of my personal alpaca skull... Alas Poor Yorick I knew him well.

The Problem

I spend my entire professional life and much of my free time working with, watching and obsessing about camelids. I have a pretty good understanding of their behavior and what humans do to affect it— both positively and negatively. In my experience, improper halter fit and its related effects create more behavioral problems than any other single thing.

Many if not most alpacas in the show ring misbehave because their halters don't fit.

- Most difficult-to-halter alpacas are that way because of their early experiences with the halter; both its fit and the way it is introduced.
- Behavioral problems such as kicking, spitting and kushing can be and often are related to halter fit.
- Any time an alpaca is wearing a halter that doesn't fit they are going to be more difficult to handle. This means that shearing, trimming toenails, giving injections or doing an ultrasound can all be adversely affected by improper halter fit.
- An alpaca's small head, coupled with the leverage provided by their long neck make proper halter fit trickier AND much more important.

Halter Fit - continued

You would think that given its importance and the fact that we don't have a heap of other pieces of equipment to worry about, that we would just naturally get it right. Surely people that have owned alpacas for years would know how to properly fit a halter... NOT so.

Behavioral problems such as kicking, spitting, and rebellious kushing can be and often are related to halter fit.

Go to any show, look at any magazine or show catalog and you will see many examples of alpacas wearing halters that are uncomfortable if not down right dangerous. Most people can pick out a halter that REALLY doesn't fit. It slips way down the nose compresses the cartilage and looks obviously uncomfortable but there is way more to it than that! Halters can be frightening or uncomfortable or both for a variety of reasons. On top of that you can have a halter that isn't scary or uncomfortable or unsafe but it doesn't work to communicate and control the alpaca any better than a rope around the top of the neck.

Right - A halter that fits! A halter that fits well is essential to the health, well-being, and good behavior of your alpaca.



Halters that are Scary!

Clear the airway! That is the first thing we are taught to do in an emergency, we are taught to do this even before we stop the bleeding. This is the most basic element of lifesaving procedure. It is IMPORTANT! Alpacas are semi-obligate nasal breathers. Dissect this appellation and you understand that alpacas must largely but not entirely breathe through their noses. Go figure, they have that perfectly good opening called a mouth but it is almost entirely for eating (more on that later).

Halter Fit - continued



ABOVE This halter does NOT fit. It is restricting the animals ability to chew and is not resting. When a halter that is fitting in this way is actually used to control the alpaca the cartilage is compressed and the airway is compromised. When taking these photos I could hear the sound of her breathing become much louder and more obvious.

An alpaca can die if his nasal passage is blocked, because of this ANY suggestion that the halter may slip forward is going to frighten the alpaca. Imagine that someone is pushing your head slightly under water, if you tilt your nose just right you can still barely breathe but you begin to panic and struggle. Your tormentor is thinking "just settle down and cooperate and I will lighten up." Alpacas or humans that even think that they can't breathe will panic. The problem is not limited to nose-bands that slip totally off the nose bone but includes halters that slip to the edge of the nose bone. On a related matter I think it is absolutely inappropriate to cover the airway of an alpaca... period.

Covering an alpaca's nose and mouth with a spit mask or sock or covering the head during shearing or an unpleasant medical procedure compromises the airway and increases the animal's level of discomfort or abject panic. Inhalation pneumonia is also not out of the realm of possibility.

Once we have our hands on an alpaca we Can easily aim the nose away from people to control where the spit goes. Spit washes off, bad memories stay with an animal for a long, long time, maybe forever.

Alpacas have a frighteningly short nose bone (see photo), in fact most of what we call the nose is cartilage not.

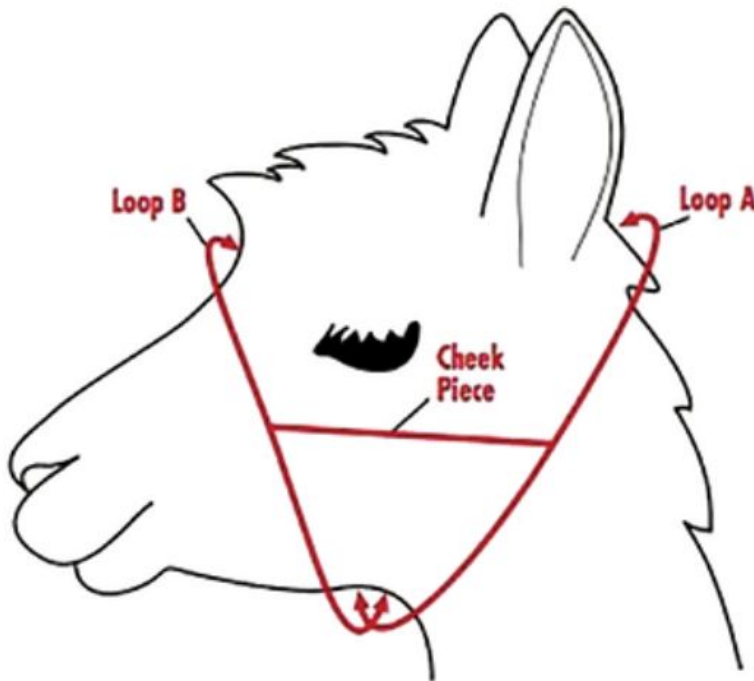
The nose bone on most adult alpacas ends about an inch or so in front of the eyes. Not very much bone to hang a halter on! In fact the bone is so short that we ought not be using it at all for actual fitting. That's right leave the nose out of it!

Most people have trouble fitting a halter because they are trying to fit the nose and there just isn't enough nose to fit. Instead of fitting the nose bone I suggest that we focus instead on fitting the rear part of the jaw-bone and the back of the head.

Halter Fit - continued

Almost every halter is composed of two loops- one that goes around the back of the jaw and behind the head (crown piece-throatlatch — loop A on drawing) and a second loop that goes around the nose (nose-band — loop B on drawing), these are connected by a short piece on each side called the cheek piece.

You can have a halter that isn't scary or uncomfortable or unsafe but it doesn't work to communicate and control the alpaca any better than a rope around the top of the neck.



In order to fit a halter that is not going to slip forward and off the bone we must begin by fitting loop A, and loop A MUST be reasonably snug because the nose bone is so short. The adjustment of loop A is the one that prevents the nose-band from slipping forward off the bone.

Some halters feature adjustments in both of these loops, others are sized according to the size of the nose-band (a bad idea). In order to fit a halter that is not going to slip forward and off the bone we must begin by fitting loop A, and loop A MUST be reasonably snug because the nose bone is so short. The adjustment of loop A is the one that prevents the nose-band from slipping forward off the bone. And this is the kicker... loop B, THE NOSE-BAND must be large enough that it doesn't interfere with the fitting of loop A. If loop B is not big enough...

Why Halters are Uncomfortable

Alpacas eat or ruminate most of the day. Assuming that jaw movement is required for both of these activities it is probably safe to guess that the jaw moves side to side once every second or two for half of their waking hours. My math gives me 7200 side-to-side movements per day. If I am wrong by a factor of two that is still a lot of chewing. Put a halter on until the nose-band won't go any further; as in putting a ring on a cone, and you are by definition tying the mouth shut or at least interfering with the alpaca's ability to chew freely.

Halter Fit - continued

A properly fitting halter means that loop A (the loop that is composed of the throat latch and the crown piece) must be tight enough to keep the nose-band (loop B) from slipping off of the nose bone BEFORE the nose-band is fitted. With the crown piece snug there should still be slack in the nose-band! Fitting the nose-band means taking up any extra slack—it does NOT mean tightening it. You should still be able to fit a finger or two inside the nose-band of a fitted halter. A nose-band that compresses the skin covering the bottom mandible or impedes the animal's ability to chew is uncomfortably tight.

I do not know of any formal studies on the effect of tight nose-bands on the alpaca's ability to properly chew and therefore digest their food. My intuition tells me that not only is a tight nose-band a comfort issue but it is also a potential health issue. Given a camelid's elaborate digestive process I cannot believe that properly chewing forage before swallowing isn't important. Being able to ruminate properly must impact how the food is digested. An alpaca that wears a poorly fitting halter all day long (any many animals at shows wear them all night as well) for several days may be subject to stomach upsets leading to diarrhea or impactions from improperly digested food. At a minimum spending several days locked in a small pen with nothing to do but eat while wearing the equivalent of a muzzle, must be pretty frustrating and can't help but affect show ring performance.

Fitting a Halter, a Step-by-Step Process

You must start with a halter that is properly proportioned. To check this: buckle the crown piece of the halter you intend to use on a medium setting—if you have 8 holes choose the A™ or 5" hole. Next open the nose-band all the way to its largest setting. Measure both loops with a tape measure. Multiply the circumference of the nose-band by 100 and divide by the circumference of the crownpiece/ throatlatch. The resulting number should be 85 or larger. This means that the nose-band when fully opened is at least 85% as big as the average size of the crown piece/throatlatch opening. For example if the opening of the throatlatch/crown piece is 15 inches then the nose-band should be at least 13 inches. If this ratio is significantly off, your halter WILL not fit in the way I describe — no matter what you do! Another clue is to look at the cheek pieces. Cheek pieces longer than 2 inches indicate that the halter is constructed with a nose-band that is too small. When you put one of these halters on the animal the nose-band gets stuck on the nose and therefore the cheek piece must be longer to connect loops A and B.

Once you have determined that your halter is properly proportioned you can put it on and fit it to your alpaca. You will do this each and every time you halter your alpaca. Prefitting halters just about guarantees that they will NOT be properly fitted. Putting on a halter is like putting on a lace up shoe you must loosen the shoe each and every time you put it on!

1. Open the nose-band all the way up.
2. Put the halter on.
3. Tighten the crown piece as much as you can.
4. Put your fingers on each side of the nose-band and tug forward. If you can pull the nose-band to the very edge of or off the nose bone you must tighten up the crown piece. You can determine where the bone ends and the cartilage begins by pressing gently down. If there is give, it is cartilage not bone.

Halter Fit - continued

After you are totally satisfied with the crown piece adjustment take the slack out of the nose-band. This means that the nose-band should just gently touch all the way around the nose without pressing or restricting the alpaca's ability to move his mouth and jaw. Check the crown piece about 10 minutes after you put the halter on or just before entering the show ring. Nylon stretches by approximately 33%. As the nylon stretches and the fleece compresses you could end up with a dangerous amount of slack in the crown piece.

Remember that halter fit counts all the time. Alpacas have small heads and young alpacas have even smaller heads— be precise! You must pay attention every time you put a halter on! Most car accidents happen close to home; most haltering dramas happen when we are just putting a halter on for "a few minutes" to do something quickly.

Putting a halter on an alpaca is a compromise in comfort... nakedness is always more comfortable. Take the halter off whenever you can and if at all possible don't make your alpaca wear a halter over night.

Happy haltering!

RIGHT - This halter fits! You can see that it must be right up close to the eye in order to be fully on the bone. Notice too that the nose-band is not compressing the cartilage or the skin around the mouth. This alpaca still has full mobility when she chews. Notice that when I pull down on the bottom of the halter the nose bone supports the halter and does not compress the cartilage.



Marty McGee Bennett is the founder of CAMELIDynamics and has traveled from the wilds of Patagonia to Peru and around the world studying llamas and alpacas and teaching others to understand them. CAMELIDynamics is the result of Marty McGee Bennett's over 30 years of experience with camelids. It is a collection of methods that represent the most positive, least intrusive techniques for training and managing camelids.

Marty has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Animal Behavior she has developed several instructional videos and is the author of three books, including the best-selling Camelid Companion.

www.camelidynamics.com

Preparing Fleece for Show

By Sarah Busby - Gilt Edge Alpacas (Republished from AANZ Magazine Dec 2017)

How do we prepare fleeces for showing? Understanding what the judges are looking for is an important starting point and the best tool to begin with is the AANZ fleece score-sheet. It is the sheet that is returned with every judged fleece and contains the score that the fleece attained at that show. A copy can be downloaded from within the members section of the AANZ website. (From the right hand block menu select Showing and Judging then from the centre, Forms and Templates for running shows. In the section at the bottom, Fleece Worksheets & Score-sheets you can download a copy of the huacaya, suri or fancy score-sheet.) The separate headings in each line of the score-sheet refer to a trait or attribute which the judge will be appraising your fleece on. It is important to keep referring back to these traits as you carry out your skirting process.

I begin preparing my show fleeces right from the weeks running up to shearing time. I know which are my best alpacas and you too should have a good idea of which are the best fleeces in your herd. The best fleece does not necessarily come from your most valuable alpaca. Many other attributes go towards the breeding value of each alpaca, age, fertility, mothering ability, birthing ability, unique genetics and so forth. When your fleeces are being shown remember that the judges are not privy to that knowledge about your alpaca, they assess exactly what is in front of them on the day, and under the conditions that they are presented with when they arrive at the show. This 'anonymity' of each fleece goes a long way towards increasing the objectivity by which your fleece is appraised. By this I mean that the judge does not know anything at all about the animal that grew the fleece. All they have got to do is carry out an analytical assessment of the traits described on the score-sheet, then tally up the points. So what is presented to the judge has to be the very best that it can be.

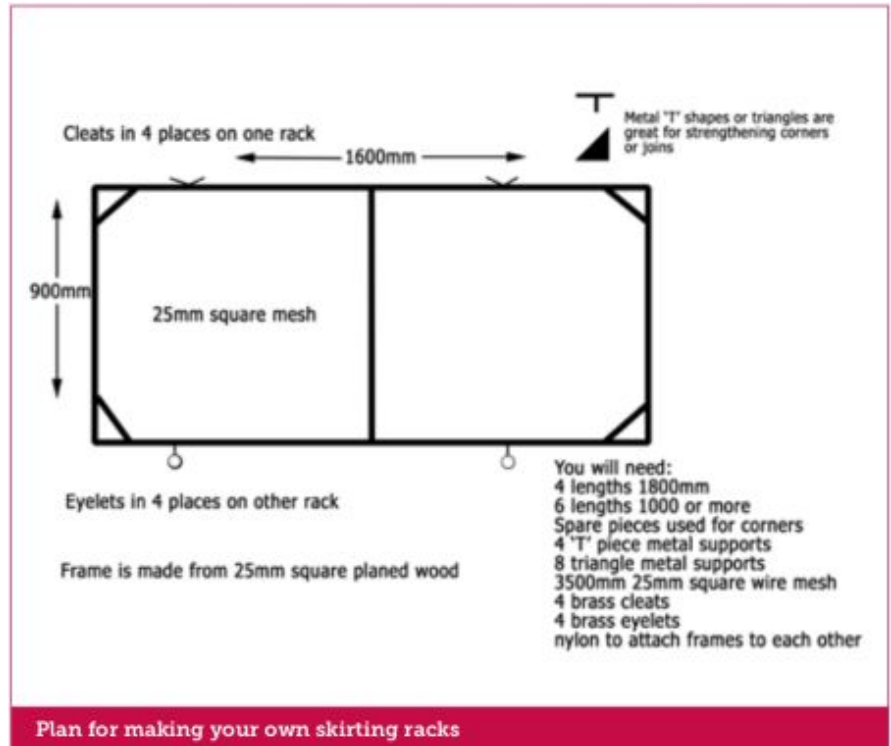
Removing alpacas from dry, dusty and dirty paddocks leading up to shearing is of most importance. On shearing day I have a number of pre-cut lengths of net curtain ready, along with heaps of paper sacks and a black marker pen to name the bags. My prime candidates arrive at the shearing bay and I ask my shearer to do a show fleece. I lay the net curtain out flat under the alpaca and as the fleece is shorn away the entire blanket area is carefully placed onto my net curtain. For a good show fleece the prime blanket fleece should be shorn off first so it does not get contaminated by the hairy belly fleece.

Edges of the net curtain are folded in and the entire fleece rolled into a sausage shape and popped into a paper sack. I then label the bag with a name and write 'show fleece' so I know it will need special attention at a later date. I never ever use plastic bags with my fleeces until maybe a year after they have been shorn. There is a lot of moisture retained in fleeces that needs to evaporate or else mould will grow.

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued

To prepare any fleece properly we need to clean both sides, the cut side that was nearest the body and the outside that was exposed to the elements. I have a pair of skirting racks that were homemade and are invaluable.

Onto one rack I lay out the fleece by unrolling the sausage roll. It is now presented in the exact same shape as it came off the alpaca. I can easily find the place where the neck, tail and legs all joined the blanket. These are very important regions to focus on during skirting so knowing where they are makes it a lot easier.



If my fleece is first presented with the cut side uppermost I run my hand over the cut surface looking for second cuts. These are 1-2 cm long pieces that might have been cut if your shearer returned to the body for a clean-up, second cuts don't happen if your shearer takes the blanket off with single passes of the hand-piece. Second cuts damage the quality of any yarn made from your fleece by changing its tensile strength and increasing pilling (balling up of tiny bits of fluff from garments when rubbed during wearing).

I then go around to each of my prime target areas where the four legs, the neck and the tail join the blanket. I take away any fleece that seems coarse, hairy, harsh to touch, dirty, urine stained or full of vegetable matter (VM) such as occurs at the base of the neck. I often make these decisions with my eyes closed and just by handling the edges of the fleece. I compare the feeling around the edge with the feeling I get when I touch the centre of the blanket. By doing this I am already addressing the important feature on the score-sheet, that of uniformity. We will refer back to the 'U word' many times.

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued



Armpits - before and after

ABOVE - This before and after figure shows the improvement made by removing the coarse, often characterless staples that run close to the armpits.

Once the cut surface is free from second cuts and any obvious vegetable matter (VM) is removed it is time to turn the fleece over. I lay the second rack on top of the fleece, tie up the cord to the four cleats so I have a fleece sandwiched firmly between two racks, then I simply flip it over and lay the racks down. Undo the cord, remove the top rack off the sandwich and I now have the outside surface facing uppermost ready for most of the attention.

Before I lavish attention on my fleeces I test them for tenderness. Pull a few staples out from the main body of the fleece, nip the very ends between thumb and forefinger and pull sharply. If done swiftly you can hear a twang or a snapping noise. Machinery in mills apply a reasonable amount of pull on the fibres during processing and the tensile strength of the fibres needs to be good enough to withstand processing without breaking into shorter lengths. Junior fleeces and in particular huacaya junior fleeces can suffer from breaks or tenderness due to stress at weaning time or maybe through any illness in early months. Tender tips are quite common in junior fleeces and are undesirable during processing.



Tender tips

ABOVE - Cria tips are undesirable in processing. The picture on the right shows how easily the tips pull away and act as a contaminant in manufacturing. Tender tips lose points but mostly only occur in the first fleece.

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued

You will lose a point for tender tips but it is unlikely to happen from the second shearing onwards. If a fleece is tender it may not be worth spending time preparing it for showing, or processing. If the fleece is sound I then assess how much VM is on this outside surface.



Vegetable matter

ABOVE - The fleece on the left has countless tiny wattle seeds embedded in it and would be impossible to clean. This fleece would not be suitable to show. The fleece on the right has heavy vegetable matter contamination but with diligence could be cleaned and shown. Neither fleece should be submitted 'as is'.

If the fleece is crispy and crunchy from an excessive amount of VM, this too suggests it would not be worth preparing for showing or processing. There are some types of VM that will be impossible to remove Figure VM, and other types that can laboriously be removed. It is up to you to decide how much time you want to spend on each fleece. Once I decide to proceed with skirting I work on removing the obvious areas that are hairy and most often these will be the edges that run along each side of the belly. Really feel what you are handling. Be honest about whether it feels slippery and soft like the fibres hopefully feel a bit further in from the edge. The aim is to remove fleece from around the edges so that the remaining fleece feel very similar, wherever you touch it. With your eyes open look at the length of the fleece around the perimeter. Are these staples the same length as those further in? We are aiming for uniformity of length. Neck fleece, whilst often being gloriously soft, dense and lustrous is rarely the same length as the blanket fleece so don't be tempted to leave it in. A lack of uniformity of length will lose you points. An important part of the technique is to hold the blanket side still with one hand whilst gently pulling or peeling the waste fleece away. The aim is to cause as little disruption to the good side as possible. It is impossible to remove staples without causing the edge to look a bit fluffy, that is just the way it is, but judges will not be using staples right from the edge to decide on the character and style of your fleece so don't agonise of the edges too much.

Not only is uniformity of length important, but so is uniformity of micron too. Coarse fibres in large areas from the rump fleece, brisket fleece or belly fleece could affect to score given for uniformity of micron. Refer back to the downloaded fleece score-sheet and look at the list of traits. The judge will take five or more samples from areas of the blanket that seem to be representative of the whole. If a large area of rump or thigh fleece is left in which differs in fineness, length, character and style and handle there is a good chance that a sample may be selected from there. This will alter the points awarded by there being a lack of uniformity.

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued



ABOVE On the left these staples from two different fleeces seem very similar. On the right, after careful examination a judge would see the white fleece is uneven in the micron within the staple. Coarse, straight guard hairs contaminate this staple and this fleece would lose points. The fawn staple is extremely even in micron and would score highly.

So it is important that the fleece is uniform in length, uniform in micron, not hairy and it should have the same character and style as that fleece further in from the edge. Points are awarded for the character and style of the fleece. In Huacaya this term is used to describe the undulating or crimping appearance along the length of the staple. Dense fleeces, where individual fibres grow out of tightly packed hair follicles in the skin turn left and right in unison with their neighbouring fibre. This creates a highly aligned crimp style. A term often used by judges in an oral critique of a good huacaya alpaca. There is no preferred crimp style or crimp frequency but it is essential that whatever crimp style or frequency, it must be uniformly expressed across the fleece. In Suri fleece the same principle of uniformity applies, however there is a preference given to layers upon layers of flat locks creating excellent character and style rather than tightly twisted locks. Tightly twisted locks look impressive but are much harder to separate into individual fibres in the manufacturing process.

It is tempting to think that the extra weight points that you gain for leaving bits in will bump up the total points. However there are many more places through the score-sheet where you can lose points for lack of uniformity so it really does not pay to leave in unsuitable pieces. The chart that judges use to work out how many points can be scored for weight allows a maximum of 15 points. The chart that is used to work out points for fineness has a maximum allowance of 20 points. You can see that fineness is already being given a greater possible amount of influence than weight. On the judges chart points are increased for every 150 gm of fleece weight. It is a useful exercise to see just how much fleece is needed to weigh 150gm. In bulk it is quite a significant amount, particularly in huacaya. By skirting dubious bits out, you are not likely to reduce your points by more than 1 or 2 but if you leave it in you can lose a lot of points through a lack of uniformity.

My rule of thumb is 'If in doubt, skirt it out'

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued



ABOVE - Hairy regions such as the belly must be given special attention. Pieces such as this should be skirted away until you reach soft handling crimpy staples.

When I think I have produced an edge which resembles my middle fleece I stop for the day and wrap the fleece up and put it away. Another day get it out again and take another look.

I assure you there will be more bits of vegetable matter visible that can be taken away. Refresh your feel around the edge, does it feel as nice as you hoped? If not skirt away more.

When completely happy, flip the fleece over with a piece of net curtain on the lower side of the sandwich, take the top rack away and fold the sides of the net curtain over and roll up. Label clearly using a tag on string which can be pinned to the cloth. Name, IAR, Date of shearing, age of alpaca at shearing date and months of fleece growth. Store the rolled, labeled fleece somewhere clean and dry ready to send to a show. When you get the score-sheet back, put the fleece out once more and review the results. When you review the score-sheet after the show, if the results show low marks in the uniformity sections, plus maybe there are some minus points in the management section that refers specifically to skirting, you may need to skirt more. The management section at the bottom of the score-sheet is specifically aimed at showing exhibitors where they lost points through management issues rather than fleece/genetic issues. The minus points are your responsibility, not the alpacas.



ABOVE - Staple on the left is from the middle of the blanket. Staple on the right is from the edge. These are very similar in length, micron and style and represent a well-skirted fleece.

Preparing Fleece for Show - continued



Crimp frequency

ABOVE - Here are 4 huacaya staples with different crimp styles and frequencies. The length of the 4 white lines are identical. Using those as a ruler you can see the left staple has 14 crimps in the same distance as that on the far right, which has 6 crimps. Judges are most interested in the uniformity of this style throughout the fleece.



Wrapping up

ABOVE - Wrap securely, label well and leave in a clean, warm, dry place ready to submit for a show.

Showing Suri Fleece

By Sue Richards - Surico Alpaca (Republished from AANZ Magazine Dec 2017)

Sue Richards explains the process, from shearing to presentation, for showing your suri fleece.

Choosing a fleece to show

When choosing a fleece to show we select fleeces that will score maximum points for micron and handle or uniformity of micron as those are the most important factors in our breeding programme. At Surico we fibre test our herd so we can confirm our decision with objective measurement by taking a mid-side sample before shearing. Low micron usually goes hand in hand with uniformity of micron, handle and other traits that are judged at a show. But not always, keep an eye out for those rogue coarse fibres, often referred to as guard hair, medullated fibres or coarse primaries. Then there are coloured fibres, you can lose points for those too. The fleece has to be lustrous as well, dry chalky fleeces can lose considerable points. Above all it must be a fleece that we love, from a suri that we are proud to have bred, a fleece that fits our processing goals.



Preparing the fleece

Preparation starts at shearing and is the same for all our fleeces to be used for processing or showing. We try to remove as much debris as possible while they are waiting to be shorn, it is much easier to remove vege matter from the fleece while it is still on the animal than trying to pick it out of the shorn fleece. We shear on the floor using the “blanket first” method. Using a sheet of corflute to catch the fleece, it is quickly skirted as shorn and whisked away for another quick appraisal before being bagged carefully. This job becomes easier with experience.

At a later date we gently ease the fleece onto the skirting table and check for any left over debris or skirtings, carefully keeping the fleece intact.

Showing Suri Fleece - continued



You can learn a lot about your fleece by checking the fleeces afterwards with the score sheet, this can really help the direction of your breeding programme.

Presenting the fleece

On our skirting table we place the fleece on a piece of curtain netting, shorn side up, fold the edges of the netting towards the middle making sure the fleece is completely covered then roll up, using one safety pin fasten the end. This way, when it is opened and unrolled by the steward it can be easily seen as a complete fleece and kept intact. This could all be done at shearing if you have time and space.

Showing Suri Fleece - continued



Each fleece has its own piece of netting, we always use a permanent label, safety pinned to each piece of netting so when the fleece is collected from a show you can identify the wrapping to avoid cross contamination with other fleeces for future shows.

After the show

You can learn a lot about your fleece by checking the fleeces afterwards with the score sheet, this can really help the direction of your breeding programme. Look at the individual traits and how they have been scored and see if they match your thinking.



A very fine fleece will not usually give high marks for weight and a higher weight usually means it has a higher micron. A fleece may seem fine at the mid-side, but is it uniform across the body? Look at the individual characteristics on the score sheet and learn to recognise the different traits - see which sire and dam consistently produce these individual traits, or not.



I cannot emphasise enough the importance of recognising fleece traits to breed better suri.

Happy fleece showing.



Sue Richards is co-owner at Surico Alpaca and is dedicated to breeding quality suri alpaca and developing the suri industry. Surico Alpaca is a family run business with approximately 150 suri situated on a 33 acre block between Tauranga and Rotorua.

www.surico.co.nz

A List of Shearers - August 2022

Name	Contact	Area	Method	Blanket First	Fleece samples	Toenails	Injections	Requirements / Experience
Mike Banks	03 3278952 021 2562839 shearpac@hotmail.com	Nationwide. Global in off-season	Cut/ freestyle	✓	✓	✓	✓	Good sense of humour and a smile when the shearers arrive. 15 years experience. The shearer will be in touch to organize in advance his requirements.
Mike Morgan	03 3198778 021 2517742 mike091@windowslive.com	Nationwide	Floor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Good to have two or more helpers. I bring one with me. I need a power source, a flat area to shear and have alpacas penned. 20+ years shearing, 9 years alpaca shearing
Nigel Wood	03 2313112 027 4681903 nigelwood777@gmail.com	NZ Wide	Table, but prefers floor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Power source. Shearing sheep for 19+ years; Shearing Alpacas for 12+ years
Keenan Scott	021 0335589 lkscott@xtra.co.nz	North Island wide	Table	✓	✓	✓	✓	Prefer 230v power supply but do have battery options. Catch pen preferred but portable yards supplied by arrangement. All medications carried plus organic options including alpaca tonics and skin remedies. Over 20 Years shearing locally and internationally.
Mike Ottaway	07 8703920 021 02236850 otto.fam@xtra.co.nz	Mainly Waikato	Table	No - but will do show fleece if required	✓	✓	✓	Helpers required – two preferred, access to power needed. 6+ years experience
Janice Aldridge	06 7520668 janicesaldrige@hotmail.co.nz	Taranaki to Wanganui	Table	✓	✓	✓	✓	Power source, alpacas penned, at least helper 8+ years experience
Eric Lister	06 3578177 027 3258101 eric@thiefhearts.co.nz	Bring alpacas to me in Palmerston North area	Table		✓	✓	✓	22+ years experience
Gus Patterson	03 689 8516 027 3030544 Patterson.gus@gmail.com	Canterbury/Otago	Floor	✓	✓	✓	✓	4 seasons shearing both big and small jobs. Requirements are flexible for what is available at each place and can be worked out ahead of the shearing date. Has never left a job unfinished!
Shun Oishi	021 02931781 shunshearing@gmail.com	Auckland, Northland and Canterbury	Floor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Contained area and assistance if there are large numbers. 6 years experience shearing alpacas, 6 years sheep and 6 years llamas.



A List of Shearers - 2022 - continued

James Dixon	022 6147970 bravoshear@bigpond.com	Otago and Canterbury, Australia, Europe	Floor	Not usually, can do show fleeces in one piece	✓	✓	✓	Power source; Will bring helper but extra hands always appreciated 13+ years experience
Michael Matthews	027 337 8925 matthewsshearing@hotmail.com Facebook: @matthews shearing	Canterbury. Will travel to other areas in the South Island with travel costs incurred.	Floor	Not usually, can do show fleeces in one piece	✓	✓	✓	Can shear with or without power source. Alpacas penned and an area to shear preferably with somewhere to tie restraints. Brings own helper. 10 years experience in sheep and alpaca shearing. Charges: \$25 per Alpaca shorn. \$5 per Alpaca for hoof trimming. \$5 per Alpaca for Injections
Justin Bray	027 817 6646 admin@smallfarmsserviceshb.co.nz www.smallfarmsserviceshb.co.nz	Hawkes Bay	Table	No	No	✓	✓	At least one assistant required. Two years experience with alpaca
Allan Oldfield	027 529 2491 allan.oldfield@gmail.com	Wellington, Wairarapa and Horowhenua to Palmerston North	Floor	If required	✓	✓	✓	Animals must be penned in rediness. A flat area for shearing and power source needed. Can also do hand shearing for alpacas with overgrown fleeces. 2+ years experience shearing alpacas.
Shear Light	021 034 9950 ShearLight22@gmail.com	Lower North Island and South Island.	Floor	✓	✓	✓	✓	Must have a flat area suitable for shearing. Due to COVID rules animals must be penned prior to arrival. Power nearby preferably. Experience: we have our own alpacas so know the animals like the backs of our hands.
Leon Jovanovic	027 372 8860 leonj@windowslive.com	Western BOP	Table	No	No	✓	✓	Animals must be penned in readiness. No additional assistance is required. 30+ years of experience with sheep and goats, 3+ years with alpacas.

As of July 2022, this is the most up-to-date list of shearers. If you know of any shearer not listed here, please e-mail us and we will add them.

Your Central Region Committee

Ros Scott	President	rtg.scott71@gmail.com
Stephen Kellam	Vice President	tekorito-alcapas@inspire.net.nz
Cheryl Hunter	Secretary	cherylletcher@inspire.net.nz
Cheryl Wheatley	Committee Member	Cheryl@zl2max.gen.nz
Carey King	Committee Member	home@monarca.co.nz
Virginia Darlow	Committee Member	corinium@inspire.net.nz



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