

**UPPER CANADA FIBERSHED
ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE**

August 22, 2018

Good morning/afternoon to all participants of this 1st annual roundtable conference. Thank you to Becky, the Board and your committee for including Alpaca Ontario Inc. as a sponsor and participant in this inaugural event here today in Orillia. It is our hope that as a fibre industry, together we can all collectively work with, market and promote our fleeces, wools and products across Ontario, Canada and world markets for the benefit of all.

My name is Glen Finbow. I am currently President of Alpaca Ontario Inc. My wife and I have owned alpacas for 14 years and operate a 56-acre alpaca farm in Ridgeway, Ontario, which serves as home to 94 alpacas, 2 llamas, 4 dogs and a cat.

Alpaca Ontario Inc. was founded in 2001 by 20 original member farms. Today, we currently have over 70 members from Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan on our roster list. Alpaca Ontario's main event annually is our April Spring Show. It has previously been held in various locations across Ontario, including Orangeville, Newmarket and Grassie. The 2019 Show, will again be held at the new West Lincoln Agricultural Centre and Fairgrounds in Grassie from April 26 to 28, 2019. The Walking Fleece Show will be judged by A.O.A. certified-

judge, Wini Labreque, of New Mexico,USA and the Halter Show will be judged by A.O.A. senior judge Jill Marcellus, from Alberta, Canada. The Show breeds lots of excitement with its myriad of events over the 2 1/2 day period including alpaca shearing demonstrations, The Mary Ann English Fibre Spin-Off, fleece-sorting demonstration, fashion show, photo contest, fibre arts competition, over 30 vendors displaying a large variety of alpaca products, an evening banquet accompanied by a not-so-silent auction, our AGM meeting and a general huge gathering of alpaca fleece-loving, alpaca breeders and participants. Just a great learning, interesting opportunity and fun for all. You are all welcome to attend next year as vendors as we promote and invite all fibre producers to meet the thousand plus attendees from Niagara, Hamilton and Southern Ontario's cities, towns and villages.

As an Association, Alpaca Ontario participates in numerous shows and events across the Province during the year. You might have seen us at the Navan Fair near Ottawa, Rockton World's Fair in the Hamilton area, the Canadian Farm Show in Mississauga, the International Plowing Match held in different Ontario locations yearly, Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto, The Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto and the Fort Erie Santa Claus Parade -- to name but a few.

Few know that alpacas are one of the first livestock in the world, coming before many others, and that they are the least known

worldwide. They are known to originate first on the plains of North America ten (10) million years ago.

Why do we raise alpacas? We raise them for their spectacular fleece. Many breeders sell product from their farm stores as well as farmer's markets and other venues. Those products consist of socks, hats, scarves, blankets, any and all garments, toys, blankets, etc.

We are currently asking our members to attend as many fibre-related events across the Province as they can to spread the word about our alpaca industry and the fleece products derived from our animals.

BRIEF SYNOPSIS ON ALPACAS

As an A.O.A.- certified judge, I am trained to judge shows throughout the world. The show disciplines include Halter Shows (Huacaya and Suri) where fleece and conformation are judged on the animal in the showring, Walking Fleece where only fleece is judged on the animal, performance classes and fleece shows. In Halter and Walking Fleece Shows, there are twenty-two (22) colour categories. The eight (8) colour groups used for the majority are:

- grey: light silver grey, medium silver grey, dark silver grey, light rose grey, medium rose grey, dark rose grey (6)**
- black: true black, bay black (2)**
- brown: light brown, medium brown, dark brown (3)**
- fawn: medium fawn, dark fawn (2)**
- cream/light: light cream, beige (2)**
- white: white (1)**
- multi: pattern, pinto, fancy, appaloosa (4)**
- indefinite (dark): dark coloured with prominent white fibre (1)**
- indefinite (light): light coloured with prominent dark fibre (1)**

Alpaca fibre is measured in microns. One (1) micron constitutes one-millionth of a meter. The fibre currently produced throughout North America can vary in degrees of micron from the finest at around 13-15 microns to courser percentages generally found on older animals which measures in the 32-35 micron range.

Alpacas are divided into two distinct classes during the show judging based on their fleece styles: Huacaya and Suri.

Huacaya point score out of 100 total points with maximum fleece length between 3" and 8" long

Uniformity of Length	5
Fineness (15) & Handle (5)	20
Uniformity of Micron	10
Absence of Guard Hair	10
Style: Character (Crimp)	10
Staple Length/Density	5
Brightness	10
Uniformity of Colour	5
Absence of Impurities, Stain,	5
Clean Annualized Weight --	20 - Total 100

Suri point score out of 100 total points with maximum fleece length between 3" and 11" long:

Uniformity of Length	5
Fineness (10) & Handle (10)	20
Uniformity of Micron	10
Colour	5
Style: Lock Structure	10
Density	5
Luster	20
Absence of Guard Hair	5
Absence of Impurities, Stain,	5
Damage	
Clean Annualized Weight --	15 - Total 100

The industry has developed a standard by which we sort and grade our annual harvest that will be made into garments, socks and felted goods. In Canada, it is known as "the Canadian Alpaca Industry Fibre Harvesting Code of Practice." This information can be found on Google:

- Grade 1: under 20 microns, ultra fine -- fine fabric close to skin**
- Grade 2: 20-22.9 microns, super fine -- knit wear, suiting**
- Grade 3: 23-25.9 microns, fine -- woven goods, handknit yarns**
- Grade 4: 26-28.9 microns, medium -- socks, heavy wovens, felt**
- Grade 5: 29-31.9, intermediate -- socks, heavy wovens, felt**
- Grade 6: 32-35, robust -- carpets, insoles, quilt batting, stuffing**

Processing is usually by the woolen method where fibre is 1.5"-3.5" long or worsted processing method where fibre is 3.5"-6" long. Though alpaca fleece stands up well on its own during processing, it can also be blended with all kinds of other fibres such as bamboo, silk, merino, angora, yak, acrylics ... the list goes on. Also Alpaca Fleeces take well to dyeing.

ALPACA FACTS

- o Alpacas are members of the Camelid Family, which consists of camels, llamas, guanacos and vicunas. Being the largest, camels and llamas are usually transport animals; alpacas fall in the middle of the Camelid Family and are used primarily for their fleece which is harvested annually -- during the Inca reign, alpaca clothed their rulers and hence was known as the "clothing of the Gods"; guanacos and vicunas are found mostly in South America and raised primarily for their fibre, as well, but are only shorn bi-annually.**
- o Alpaca babies, known as "cria", are born any time during the year, but the current practice among most breeders is to breed their animals so that babies arrive during the warmer months of May - September.**
- o The alpaca gestation period is eleven (11) to eleven and one-half (11 1/2) months.**
- o Alpacas normal lifespan is between 15 and 20 years.**

- o Hay, straw, feed and mineral costs average approximately \$1.00 per alpaca per day.**

- o Though alpacas are being raised all over the world, their greatest numbers currently are in Peru, Chile and Bolivia where temperatures range from -20 C to +20 C at 15,000 feet above sea level**

- o Certain precautions must be taken if temperatures remain over or under normal ranges for long periods of time in Canada and the U.S.**

- o There are approximately 23,000 alpacas registered with CLAA (Canadian Llama and Alpaca Association) in Canada and a small number as yet untallied who are not registered. The Alpaca Registry Inc. (ARI) reports 263,000 registered alpacas in the United States, plus a number who are not registered, as in Canada. These two registries serve as the rule enforcers in both countries.**

- o The world's known population of alpacas is between 6 and 7 million, depending upon your source and where your research takes you.**

Farm Days are held annually across North America on the last weekend of every September. This year, Open Houses held at many farms and ranches will take place on the weekend of September 29 and 30. This promotional event is sponsored by both Alpaca Canada Inc. and the Alpaca Owners Association. Feel free to visit any one of our several Ontario farms in your area to view our herds, babies and products for sale on that weekend. At our farm, we give hourly fact-finding tours and opportunities to get up and personal with our alpacas, as well as a large array of alpaca items on display and for sale.

Please take some time today to visit Doug, Carolyn, Dee and myself at our table and display area. We will entertain any and all questions you might have. If you wish to be included on our email list of events and quarterly newsletters, let us know -- we welcome you, so sign up today.

For further information or questions on anything that I missed mentioning, please ask us or go to www.alpacaontario.ca or email us at info@alpacaontario.ca.

Sincere thanks for the opportunity to speak to you today and for your time and attention,

Thank you!! Questions?

