



AUSTRALIAN
ALPACA

AUSTRALIAN ALPACA FLEECE LTD

Newsletter – November 2006

AUSTRALIAN ALPACA CONNECTION

PRODUCTS

There is now a large range of products that have been developed and are being produced under AAFL's new product label "**Australian Alpaca Connection**". Many of these products have been specially developed to utilize the range of fleece being produced by Australian alpaca growers.

Examples of these products are:

- *Carpet,*
- *Homewares – Including throw rugs and blankets - many in natural colours*
- *Baby blankets*
- *Quilts, pillows and under blankets*
- *Knitwear – Cardigans, ponchos, jumpers, gloves, beanies, coats and 100% suri scarves*
- *Shoe inner soles*
- *Horse Blankets*

Due to the strong demand for alpaca fleece that has been created, we would like to remind everyone that AAFL would like, and is seeking **all** available fleeces of all qualities.

CHANGES AT AAFL

Many changes are currently underway at AAFL's warehouse and offices at Sunshine. The offices will be moving upstairs to make way for a retail shop that will stock a range of products being made through AAFL's product division "Australian Alpaca Connection".

A new computer system is about to be installed that will allow for better communication to growers about when their clip is received and classed.

The AAFL website is about to have a major overhaul with sections focusing on the different aspects to the company. The two main areas will

be a 'fleece and growers information' section and the product division "Australian Alpaca Connection".

It is hoped that the website will become a valuable source of information for growers and interested people, not just focusing on AAFL, but the greater alpaca community as it develops further.

CHECK YOUR FLEECES

As another shearing approaches, some growers with sheds full of previous years fleeces may be looking to have a clean out and send their fleeces off to AAFL.

Just a reminder for these people – please thoroughly check fleeces for signs of moths before packing them. AAFL cannot accept fleeces containing moths as they can cause considerable loss of fibre very quickly.

QUICK CHECKLIST

A few important points for new breeders, and more experienced breeders alike to remember when handling and packing your fleeces –

- Please keep all fleeces separate. Whether that is in different bags, or separated by newspaper in bags or a wool pack.
- It is especially important to keep all colours separate – that applies to fleeces and also all necks and skirtings
- Please fold saddles edge to edge – this is to prevent higher quality fibre in the centre of the saddle being contaminated by the coarser edges
- The importance of growers pre-classing cannot be understated, but please don't use this as a reason to leave un-prepared fleeces sitting in the shed instead of sending them to AAFL.

- Most importantly – please include identification in all bags, and clearly mark the outside of the wool pack or bag with your name and address details.

FLEECE HANDLING MANUAL

An updated Fleece Handling and Information Manual is now available from the AAFL website or by contacting Matthew at AAFL.

The manual is currently at a ‘Working Draft’ stage and we welcome feedback on the content from growers of all levels of experience.

THE 3C's OF FLEECE POSTER

A fleece preparation poster titled “The 3C’s of fleece” is now available. All regional FLO’s have supplies of the poster or copies are available from AAFL.

HAVE YOUR ALPACAS SHORN FOR \$4

A shearing and information day is planned for the 3rd of December at Creswick Woollen Mills premises in Creswick, Victoria.

Creswick will be subsidising the cost of shearing with alpaca owners able to have their animals shorn for \$4 each. For further information contact Rohan Dagleish at info@tumialpacas.com

FLEECE CONTACT

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Matthew McAninly has returned to AAFL after spending time in the US and England.

He is now the contact person for any fleece related issue. All growers are encouraged to contact Matthew at AAFL in Sunshine mattm@aafl.com.au if they have a question or suggestion regarding fleece.

FLEECE RECEIVED

As of the 2nd of November 14,080Kg of fleece has been received at Sunshine, this is around 3 tonne up on this time last year.

This financial year, AAFL requires 65 tonne of fleece in order to meet the expected demand from processors.

SHEARERS AND FLEECE COLLECTION

POINTS

A list of alpaca shearers and fleece collection points across Australia is available by contacting AAFL.

Any shearers who don’t believe they are on the list are welcome to contact Matthew at AAFL with their details and they will be added.

REGIONAL NEWS:

CENTRAL WESTERN (NSW) REGION

And so the dry goes on and on with no relief in sight. I would suspect that all of our members have finished shearing by now. For most of our members who do not have the luxury (for various reasons) of being able to do the classing at the same time as shearing, have that task ahead of them. Classing is going to be a slow process this year with the temperatures in the high 30’s and even higher inside the shearing shed, the time one devotes to classing will be limited. The 25 January has been set aside for pressing at our collection point in Orange.

A little “snippet” of information breeders might be interested in.

Our Region held its inaugural “most valuable (huacaya) fleece” competition recently during the Alpaca Expo at the Australian National Field Days in Orange. The competition was organised by John & Julie Lawrie. John secured a sponsorship from Telstra Country Wide. The fleeces were weighed and tested by Western Wool and judged by Kevin Rubie according to the AAA showing rules for commercial fleece and the latest AAFL grower raw fleece price list. Alas breeders did not get very much notice, but still there were 28 fleeces entered.

As there are a lot of “die hard” woolgrowers in our Region and the Australian National Field Days, being broad acre field days, holds a wool competition each year and it was felt that it was

important to hold our competition as a comparison. There was a lot of interest shown by these woolgrowers in the alpaca fibre. Woolgrowers have great difficulty guessing the micron of alpaca fibre. This was evident during a micron guessing competition we held during the same field days last year.

The competition was won by Bumble Hill Alpacas with their white huacaya fleece with a micron of 18.6.

FLO – Kate Bailey

WA CENTRAL REGION

Shearing is well underway if not almost completed in most areas and fleece is slowly coming in. I am picking up from Encantador and Paradise Alpacas - my collection points in a couple of weeks and hope to forward fleece prior to Christmas. If not it will be shortly afterwards.

I have continued to work with growers skirting and preparing fleeces after shearing or assisting at the time of shearing. My message remains that fleeces have more value to the industry out of the shed rather than in it!!

FLO – Kate Fysh

SA REGION

On October 21st we held a fleece-classing workshop with Matthew McAninly at the Urrbrae Agriculture High School. The workshop was well attended with 46 mostly new members attending the 2 sessions.

I believe like myself everyone picked up a lot of very useful information, many questions were asked and answered to everyone's satisfaction. It was good to see some samples of the products that are now being made, as we in SA have never seen any before.

A lot of people missed out on the workshop and have shown great interest in having another sometime in the New Year.

Thank you Matthew for taking the time to come over here.

FLO – Derrick Hall

VICTORIAN EASTERN REGION

VER have sold more bags/bales than any previous season. We've also had and planned more pre-classing workshops than any previous season due to the magnificent involvement of our Co-op approved pre-classers Kaye McNeill, Peter MacKinnon and Daphne Gregory.

Jen and Peter McDavitt have also stepped up to run a workshop. Locality group Mornington Peninsula Alpaca Breeders continue to lead the way with initiatives to raise commitment to fleece supply.

Two of our transport-support companies, Hoogies of Yarra Glen and Pakenham Produce have been presented with plaques in appreciation of their commitment to the industry (more later). Look out Oz here we come...we want that top spot to ourselves.

FLO - Rudy Balde'

Aussie alpacas a Chinese fashion hit Shanghai, China - November 1, 2006



Australian-born Qiangqiang and Lili strutted calmly down the Shanghai catwalk.

Two Australian-born alpacas and their creamy coloured fleece have proved major hits with Chinese fashionistas at Shanghai Fashion week.

Led by two handsome male models, Qiangqiang and Lili strutted calmly down the catwalk before a thrilled crowd and a mass of photographers at the first ever showcase of Australian fashion in Shanghai.

The woolly pair were the star attractions in a parade of luxury items from the newly created Australian Alpaca Connections label.

In what was a fashion show with a twist, fine and softly coloured woollen blankets, throw rugs and quilts were draped, knotted or belted around models as skirts, tops and long trains trailed behind them.

The alpacas travelled 20 hours from a farm in China's northern Shanxi province, near Beijing, for the show, which also featured Australian fashions by Jayson Brunsdon, Alex Zabotto-Bentley's Fashionassassin, High Tea with Mrs Woo and Ess Hoshika.

Australian Alpaca Fleece Ltd used the show, organised as the finale to Austrade's Celebrate Australia business promotion in Shanghai, to launch its homewears label amid a growing demand in China for finely woven alpaca products.

Managing director Michael Talbot said the company already had sealed a deal with a major upmarket department store chain in northern China, with a container load of stock already on its way from Australia.

The company has begun talks with several other department stores and expects to rake in about \$1 million from exports to China in its first year.

"We're trying to pick the top end (of the consumer goods market) so the stores we are selling into are upmarket, like David Jones," Mr Talbot told AAP.

"Homewear is really growing here, like it is around the world, with people spending more money on their homes than themselves.

"But the Chinese are very demanding so the quality has to be good."

The company, which represents 2,500 alpaca growers across Australia, already exports to Japan, Hong Kong and Korea, and expects about 70 per cent of its entire product line will be sold in foreign stores eventually.

The owner of the farm where Lili and Qiangqiang have lived for the past four years, Wang Ying, is also keen to work with the Australian alpaca growers to expand his flock of 100 so he too can make fine woollen homewear and knitwear.

"A lot of people visit the farm and want to buy the product but we only have the fleece," he said through an interpreter.

The Shanghai fashion week also got a glimpse of stylish alpaca knitwear from the latest collection by Melbourne-based designer Hoshika Oshimi, who owns the Ess Hoshika label.

Jayson Brunsdon also impressed the audience with his Angelica Huston-inspired line of glamorous sequinned dresses and tops featuring cute bows, while Fashionassassin and High Tea with Mrs Woo funkyed things up with their street wear lines.

Each of the Australian designers have made their first trip to China this week to try to seek out new buyers in the country's ever growing retail market.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
and
Happy New Year**



ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS-

Please submit information you would like to share in this newsletter to: Stella Butler – stella.butler@anembopark.com.au
Clearly identify in the subject header reference to – AAFL newsletter, so that your submission is not mistaken for virus or scam email.