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Alpaca – Rarest of Breeds, Ultimate Natural Fiber

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jim Barker, President ←

Welcome to the *Suri Network News*, a publication designed to update its members on what is new in the world of the Suri alpaca.

I certainly hope that you are all surviving the global recession that is affecting all of us, all of us except our Suri alpacas. I bet they don't know about the recession, for life is better here than it was for their ancestors in South America. We keep feeding and caring for them just as we did before the economic downturn. Suri breeders are very resourceful and innovative when it comes to handling this recession. Breeders are trading breedings, trading goods and services for breedings, even trading alpacas! Some farms are even trading or leasing females from others to breed to their own males, increasing their genetic diversity without putting out much cash. While farm visits and sales are down, there is no better time to get into the alpaca business. Has the quality or quantity of our Suris caused this drop in prices? I think not! More and more people are looking for more open space without big city commutes. As breeders we can offer potential customers a simpler and greener lifestyle with these wonderful alpacas. Prices won't stay this low for long. We need to promote and market as much as possible. Look at all the advancements that have been made in the Suri business over the past several years. Greener pastures lie just around the corner. You will find a very interesting article in this Suri Network News written by fellow Suri breeder, Jack Hanna, that I think you will find very timely.

by Tim Sheets, Charlene Parks,
 Mike Murphy & Ken Hobert ←

As a Suri owner and breeder, you have come to love this remarkable animal. You appreciate its exquisite style and grace and sometimes wonder why people would not naturally be flocking to your farm or ranch to experience firsthand what this animal is all about. While it's true that raising Suris has much to offer in terms of lifestyle and potential profit, it's naïve to think that potential Suri buyers will discover your wonderful Suris without an organized effort on your behalf. The techniques and methods of getting people to discover

what you have to offer and more importantly, how it can benefit them, is called marketing. Marketing is everything you do to reach and persuade prospects – you offer the goods and services that they want. It is the systematic planning and implementation of a mix of business activities intended to bring buyers and sellers together for the mutually beneficial exchange of products and/or services.

Many people have the misconception that marketing efforts are expensive and therefore don't think they can afford to

Use some of the resources that the Suri Network has made available to you. The marketing folders continue to be a big hit. The "Get the Word Out" effort has caused the office to send out over nearly 600 PurelySuri magazines. It's not too late to send in your list of names. Many breeders have reported farm visits and even a couple of sales from the leads. And remember, if you gift a membership to the Suri Network to a customer, you get a 10% reduction in your next dues. Is there any greater value in the alpaca business than your \$100 dues to the Suri Network?

Spring has arrived and the show season is upon us. New crias are on the way and the economy is showing signs of improvement. If you are attending the AOBA Nationals here in Cleveland, plan on stopping by for a visit. I look forward to better times as we keep the momentum going to promote the "Suri Alpaca—Rarest of Breeds, Ultimate Natural Fiber."



"MARKETING" — IDEAS FOR ALL BREEDERS

include marketing in their business plan. These people tend to equate marketing to advertising. Yes, it's true that advertising can be expensive, but it is just a single component of marketing. Marketing also includes public relations, community involvement, research, planning, and other activities. Granted, these activities do involve effort on your behalf, but do not necessarily have to break your budget.

The rest of this article offers some tips and techniques that can help you improve your marketing efforts and produce

"Marketing" – Cont. on Page 9



August 13-15, 2009 - A Conference For All

Mark your calendar now for Symposium 2009. The conference will be held again in beautiful Estes Park, Colorado. The slate of 2009 speakers and workshops will offer **something for everyone**: from fiber workshops (sorting and felting) to the latest scientific research updates certain to enhance your alpaca breeding decisions as well as the continued growth of the alpaca industry with a Friday hands-on classification clinic for all attendees. Whether you breed Suri or Huacaya, you are sure to find this conference beneficial and well worth your time.

REGISTRATION IS NOW AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT WWW.SuriNETWORK.ORG

Thursday, August 13th

Full Day Clinics (lunch provided)

7:30 am – 5:00 pm

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

8:30 am – 5:00 pm

8:30 am – 11:30

11:30 am – 12:15 pm

12:30 am – 5:00

8:30 am – 5:00

8:30 am – 5:00

Registration

Fleece Show Check-In

Parasitology Clinic with Dr. Pam Walker

Neo Natal Lecture with Dr. Toni Cotton

Lunch for clinic attendees

Neo Natal Lab with Dr. Toni Cotton

Felting Clinic with Donna Rudd

Fiber Grading & Sorting with Mary Lou Clingan



Friday, August 14th

7:30 am – 8:30 am

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

8:30 am – 10:00 am

10:00 am – 10:30 am

10:30 am – 10:45 am

10:45 am – 11:45 am

12:00 am – 1:00 pm

1:00 – 5:30 pm

Breakfast

Fleece Show Judging

Welcome, Annual Meeting & Committee Reports -
SN Board of Trustees & Committees

ARI: Past, Present & Future - Darby Vannier

Break

Pacomarco EPD Program - Dr. Renzo Morante

Lunch

1/2 day Classification Workshop for all attendees -
Susan Tellez & Dick Walker

Free time to enjoy Estes in the afternoon

Dinner/Evening on your own



Saturday, August 15th

7:30 am – 8:30 am

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

8:30 am – 9:30 am

9:30 am – 10:30 am

10:30 am – 10:45 am

10:45 am – 11:45 am

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm

1:45 pm – 2:10 pm

2:10 pm – 3:00 pm

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm

3:15 pm – 4:30 pm

4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

5:30 pm to conclusion

Breakfast

Fleece Show Judging

Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases - Dr. Rob Callen

Medications for Camelids - Dr. Pam Walker

Break

Business Issues of Operating a Farm - Claudia Raessler

Lunch

Alpaca Fiber Processing - Suri Criteria - Dr. Renzo Morante

Update on Suri Network Research Project - Dr. Toni Cotton

An Overview of the Livestock Industry - Brett Kaysen

Break

Fleece Show Awards - Judges VandenBosch & Lavan

Social Time

Herdsire Live Auction & Fund Raiser



"Symposium" – Cont. on Page 3



WHERE TO STAY

The Host Hotel is Holiday Inn Rocky - **\$114.00/night single/double occupancy. 1-800-803-7837.**

Black Canyon Inn: A variety of units including 2-3 BR. 1-800-897-3720.

Comfort Inn: Motel rooms and 2 BR, 2 Bath Loft Units. Call Choice Hotels at 1-800-424-6423 or direct at 970/586-2358.

Boulder Brook: On Fall River. 1-800-238-0910.

McGregor Mountain Lodge: On Fall River. A variety of cabins, rooms and suites. 1-800-835-8439.

Streamside Cottages: On Fall River. 1-800-321-3303.

For other accommodations, please visit www.estesparkcvb.com

Airport to Hotel Shuttle Service: Estes Park Shuttle (www.estesparktransportation.com or 970/586-5151)

Estes Mountain Shuttle (www.estesmountainshuttle.com or 877-378-3711)

Private Pick-Up: Lanty McCartney (970/481-5251)

WHAT TO DO

Estes Park is “Gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park.” The majestic scenery of RMNP combined with the home town hospitality of Estes Park transforms trips to the Colorado Rockies into dream vacations in paradise. We hope you will come early and stay after the conference to enjoy this beautiful area. Don’t miss a ride up on Trail Ridge Road; the highest, most continuous highway reaching an elevation of 12,183. With world class hiking and climbing, fishing, golfing, sightseeing, wildlife watching, galleries, unique shopping, an array of dining choices, and options in lodging to meet every taste and Rocky Mountain National Park out the back door, there’s something in Estes Park just for you.

For more information on Rocky Mountain National Park, please visit www.estesparkcvb.com, rockymountainnationalpark.com or www.nps.gov

ADVERTISING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A. Business Card Ad on Notebook Tab \$50.00

B. Registration Handout Flier or Promotional Piece \$75.00

C. Suri Fleece Show & Symposium Sponsorship \$250.00

Includes A & B Above and web site recognition with link, recognition in the next PurelySuri™ Magazine, Suri Network News, Symposium Conference Notebook, and on Name badge.

D. Meal Sponsor (cost per farm; more than one farm may sponsor a day’s meal events):

1. \$450 sponsorship for Friday’s meals.
2. \$550 sponsorship for Saturday’s meals.

These special sponsorships include the general sponsorship benefits of a business card ad in the symposium notebook, a symposium bag stuffer flier, and general sponsorship recognition. In addition, these special meal sponsorships will include:

- a. Recognition card on each table.
- b. Special thank you signage for the day.
- c. Recognition in the symposium notebook, the next issue of PurelySuri Magazine, Suri Network web site, and introduction at that day’s events.
- d. AND, if you wish, an opportunity for you to place a handout at each place setting (business card, pen, flier, etc. handouts supplied by you).

SURI NETWORK’S 4TH ANNUAL “ENTER & WIN”

Enter the Suri Network All Suri Fleece Show 2009 and earn one or more of the following:

- PurelySuri™ Magazine & web site recognition for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places
- PurelySuri™ Magazine recognition for Color Champions and Reserve Championship.
- Name badge recognition for attendees with fleece entries.
- All First Timers in the fleece show receive a special gift.
- All farms that enter the fleece show will be listed in the next PurelySuri™.

AND for each set of 5 fleeces or spin-offs entered by a single farm, WIN a coupon worth \$100 towards your next PurelySuri™ Magazine advertisement.

“Symposium” – Cont. on Page 4



Parasitology with Dr. Pam Walker

This clinic was given last year and was quite a success. The successful management for optimum overall herd health is dependent on your ability to correctly identify and test for internal parasites. This hands on lab/full day clinic will demonstrate current techniques for proper preparation of feces using a centrifuge; followed by proper parasite identification. This hands on part is when you get to know your alpacas on a personal level! Please bring three or more fecal specimens (approximately 3 to 5 grams each, if possible) from older crias/weanlings or suspect adults. The specimens should be obtained just a few days before you leave for the Symposium and kept refrigerated. You will prepare these samples and examine them for parasites. The necessary equipment for this clinic, including microscopes, will be provided for all attendees. Also discussed, is if and/or when you should deworm your alpacas and what deworming products to use.

Bio:

Pamela G. Walker, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVIM-LA of Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm, is a 1992 graduate of Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine. She completed a Food Animal Medicine and Surgery residency at the University of Illinois, where she also received her Masters of Science degree. Dr. Walker completed her specialty examinations and is a Board Certified Large Animal Internist. She has taught senior veterinary students at University of Illinois, Washington State University, Michigan State University, and is currently teaching part time as a Clinical Assistant Professor at The Ohio State University. At Alpaca Jack's, Dr. Walker is responsible for the medical, surgical, reproductive, and daily health care of our alpacas.

Neonatal Clinic with Dr. Toni Cotton

This course is a must for breeders of all levels of experience. This year you can choose to attend the lecture only in the morning or the full day with the hands-on lab in the afternoon. The class offers extensive lecture material on reproductive physiology, breeding management, pregnancy diagnosis including ultrasound, care of the pregnant dam, normal and abnormal birthing, reproductive emergencies and cria care! During the lab portion, participants will learn how to identify abnormal birthing positions which is key in communication with the farm veterinarian and correct the simple presentations. Breeders will leave the course with a higher level of knowledge and understanding of how important a good veterinary – client relationship is. Each participant will receive a neonatal book that Dr. Cotton offers with her classes.

Bio:

Dr. Toni Cotton attended the University of Findlay for her undergraduate work, then graduate studies in veterinary medicine at The Ohio State University from 1986-1990. She spent one-year abroad in Morocco as a veterinarian for the Peace Corps. She returned to private practice in 1991 with Dr. Gary Cotton (now her husband) at the Animal Medical Center of Findlay. Dr. Toni Cotton took over the few camelid clients at the time and became so busy that she started her own specialty practice, Camelid Veterinary Services, in 1994. During her years of Camelid practice in Ohio, she focused on reproduction and neonatal care. She was an instructor at the continuing education courses taught at The Ohio State University while she practiced in Ohio. In June, 2006 Dr. Cotton and her family relocated to Ridgway, Colorado. Dr. Cotton has started a new referral practice in Ridgway called the Camelid Reproduction Center of the Western Slope. She and her husband, Dr. Gary Cotton run Suris of the Western Slope and the Camelid Reproduction Center in Ridgway, home to 90 camelids! She has spoken both regionally and internationally on Camelid Reproduction and health issues and continues to offer neonatal classes and reproductive training classes for veterinarians from her Ridgway location and at select courses throughout the U.S.

Fiber Grading and Sorting with Mary Lou Clingan

An enhanced practicum on the processes and procedures of the "authentic" Peruvian method of sorting and grading alpaca fiber.

- Review the basics of Suri fiber – learning and knowing micron
- Learn and practice the three prime sorting criteria – micron, color, length
- Practice sorting whole fleeces by the criteria of micron, color, length
- Learn the levels of grading Suri fleeces
- Practice grading Suri fleeces according to fineness.
- Know why these processes are invaluable



This practicum will consist primarily of hands-on experience with as many Suri fleeces as we can accumulate in our clinic room. You are welcome to bring your own fleeces on which to work.

Bio:

Mary Lou went to Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm in 1999 straight from her work as an Occupational Therapist of 34 years. She grew up on a dairy farm in northwest Ohio before obtaining her degrees – a B.S. in Occupational Therapy and a M.S. in Allied Medical Professions from Ohio State University. Her background in farming and in the medical field and continued training in alpaca care and fiber, i.e. courses in Neonatal Care, Emergency Alpaca Care, Fiber Analysis, Halter Training have contributed to an important knowledge base for raising alpacas.

She has been the manager of Alpaca Jack's Country Store since the store opened in 1999. She is also the head of the Fiber Department, is responsible for all fiber and fiber related activities, on and off the animals, as well as special fiber projects - skirting, sorting / grading and preparation for processing. Each year Mary Lou typically prepares 30 – 50 Suri show fleeces, collect 400 representative fiber samples for micron testing, skirts 400 + fleeces for distribution into yarn, roving, fabric.

Mary Lou serves on the AOBA Judges Training and Certification Committee and am currently on the Suri Network Research Committee working on the Suri Luster Study. Since 1996, she has been involved in all aspects of alpaca fiber and is quite enthusiastic about working with this great natural asset.

A trip to Peru in 2000 was a highlight that brought a high level of respect and appreciation for the South American Camelid, the Peruvian farmers, and the industry as a whole. A more recent trip to Peru in February, 2008, was spent entirely in the IncaTops mill sorting and grading both Suri and Huacaya fiber. This trip cemented her belief in the need for and value of sorted and graded alpaca fiber. Mary Lou's Peruvian Maestras (teachers) said, “We are throwing away money if we don't sort and grade our fleeces. She loves to teach and share the knowledge gained.

Felting Your Suri Alpaca Fleece with Donna M Rudd

This exciting new felting class is for the beginner or the experienced felter, just bring a Suri fleece—good or poor; tender or very long and we will explore various techniques to create a textured lock floor matt or wall hanging. A state of the art felting machine will be on hand to do the finishing touches for you. You do the best part; the fleece layout and design, initial wetting and setting and the machine does the rest. It's all about learning how to use your Suri fleeces that mills cannot process. You know those fleeces too long, too tender, too matted or even too dirty. Bring your own fleece, your creative thoughts and most importantly your sense of humour.

Bio:

Donna is not new to fibres or textiles, she's been a spinner, weaver, felter and dyer for 20 years, focusing on Suri fleeces for the past 10 years. She is a student of Olds College Master Spinner program and teaches Suri spinning classes. In recent years she has developed numerous techniques for weaving and felting Suri alpaca and llama rugs, matts and wall hangings using the very long Suri locks. She has experience with a wide variety of natural fibres as a Canadian Certified Wool Judge, Angora Goat and Fleece Judge and she is a Certified Camelid Fibre Sorter (Olds College). Donna lives on a small farm in central Alberta with her herd of Suri llamas and alpacas and volunteers on the Suri Network Product Development Committee.

A TASTE OF FRIDAY-SATURDAY PRESENTATIONS (INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION FEE)

Classification Workshop with Susan Tellez and Classifiers

This is a hands-on Friday afternoon Classification Workshop for all Symposium attendees. The objectives are:

- To provide owners with Visual Live Demonstration of Suri Classification Program
- To present a format for owner participation in the EPD Data Collection
- To Provide owners with tools for breeding program selection

The workshop will cover demonstrations, traits and documentation, training and implementation, justification for use of the program, relation and link to EPD data collection, conformation and phenotype, fiber on or off the alpaca, actual test data utilization and accuracy, and practice sessions for attendees with classifiers.

Bio:

Susan has been involved with livestock more than 40 years with a B.S. Degree in Animal Science, Production and Marketing, and a Masters in Education and Research (Investigative Studies)

“Symposium” – Cont. on Page 6



from the Univ. of Arizona. She has certification in Insurance Appraisal, Marketing, Camelid Judge & Instructor (for ALSA, AOBA, AELAS, SOFO), is a founding member of the ICI (International Camelid Institute), the Suri Network and Suri Llama Association, and an active long-time member of USAHA.

A variety of livestock experiences has included ranching with purebred and commercial beef cattle, commercial swine production and dairy goats, including a Grade "A" raw milk dairy. Her affiliation with 12 different breed associations led to 30 years of consulting work in International Trade & Development, annual participation in major Livestock Shows & Expositions in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, South America and Europe with livestock and camelids. All these endeavors included extensive knowledge and utilization of scientific data collected on traits critical to each breed, known as Classification and EPDs.

Her interest now lies with perfecting this system within the camelid industry.

Her 25 years experience with camelid projects, registries, exports/imports and judging/training has taken her to the U.S., Canada, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Germany, France, Austria and Switzerland.

Renzo D. Morante MVZ Presentations:

Alpaca Genetic Improvement: PACOMARCA Experience

The lecture will present to the Suri breeder a scientific-based genetic program from the selection criteria, the recordkeeping, the genetic tools available, and their use in alpaca breeding to their use in fiber commercial operation and new reproductive techniques used on Alpacas such as Embryo transfer.

The lecture will show the Suri selection criteria and their reasons from a textile point of view. Also shown will be the first results for Suri fiber heritability run on Pacamarca Suris.

Pacomarca ranch is the only ranch in Peru to have EPDs for 100% of their animals along with information on several generations. It has been the first entity to publish heritability results for Alpacas in Peru.

Alpaca Fiber Processing – Suri criteria

The lecture will present alpaca fiber from the view of a textile company. Differences between Huacaya and Suri from the textile view. What is the industry looking for in Suri fiber? A brief description of the textile process will be presented from the buying of the raw fiber to the final Suri garment. It will show the uses of Suri fiber in the textile industry and their future as a unique fiber.

Bio:

Dr. Morante was born in Arequipa, Peru, graduated from Veterinary School in Arequipa (1994) and has an MBA from ESAN University. He was part of the selection team for the Peruvian alpaca exports done to the US, Canada, Australia and Switzerland. As a veterinarian, he was in charge of quarantine animal health in Tacna (Peru) Key West (US) and Miquelon (Canada). Dr. Morante has worked with the largest alpaca breeders in Peru, U.S. and Australia,

Dr. Morante is the Production Manager for Pacamarca S.A., a division of Grupo Inca. Pacamarca is an experimental research farm where new alpaca technology is developed for the use in improving the quality of alpaca fiber later transferred to the Andean alpaca breeder. The research includes shearing techniques, reproduction, health management, nutrition and lately the most aggressive genetic program.

SURI NETWORK SYMPOSIUM DEADLINES DEADLINES!

The First Deadline is approaching soon.

1. SPIN-OFF COMPETITION – All entries must be postmarked no later than **May 15, 2009**
2. FLEECE SHOW – Early Bird fees must be postmarked by **June 30, 2009**. Final Deadline entries must be postmarked by **July 28, 2009**.
3. SYMPOSIUM, REGISTRATION, VENDORS, CLINICS, SPONORS – Early Bird Registration must be postmarked by **July 28, 2009**. Regular fees apply after **July 28, 2009**.

All entries forms, disclosure forms, instructions, registration forms can be found at **SuriNetwork.org** – click on 2009 Symposium. Need entry forms mailed or faxed to you? Contact the Suri Network at 970-586-5876 or Office@SuriNetwork.org.



THE FACTS ABOUT YOUR FIBER AND ITS SUCCESS IN THE MARKETPLACE

by Liz Vahlkamp ←

Are you following the progress of the **EPD database and how it will be used**? Have you heard Brett Kaysen speak about the “**livestock model**” and the “**seedstock model**”? Would you like your **Suri fiber to supplement your farm income**? Would you like to someday have another **customer base that wants to pay money to buy your “fiber males”** – not just breeding females?

All of these topics may end up relating to one another in the not-so-distant future, and the **Suri Network Product Development Committee (SNPDC) is offering a seminar this summer to help connect a few of the dots** to get **BREEDERS** thinking about the direction of our industry and how the topics above all relate to each other.

The Facts About Your Fiber and its Success in the Marketplace is a course **DESIGNED FOR BREEDERS** that we will be hosting across the country at a series of seven host farms. This will be a very hands-on course that will give everyone a clear connection between the fleece on the animal and the yarn we ultimately sell to end users.

We realize that most Suri Network members are not fiber artists, crafts people, or even retailers, and that you'd really like to just hand your fiber over to someone who knows what to do with it (and then send you a check when it's all sold!). If you're that kind of breeder, you are our kind of seminar participant!!! Because remember, for someone to take it and turn it into “gold,” it has to meet the needs of the end market. Additionally, you are breeders of fiber animals, and the fiber on your Suris will reflect the quality of our national herd.

We all know our industry is constantly moving and growing, and it will be important for breeders to stay informed and make educated decisions about the direction our industry takes. Signing

up for this course will not give you all the answers, but will certainly give you a better perspective on what the possibilities are for our industry!

The course is \$50.00 and will run from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM local time. Lunch will be provided, and you'll come away with lots of handouts! You can't beat that! The host farms and the dates on which they are having their seminar are listed below. **Each of the presenters has a proven track record of selling Suri fiber and Suri end products**, so will give an interesting perspective on what the end market demands. Each seminar will accommodate a maximum of 18 participants, so sign up soon! Delay, and your spot may be taken!

May 30	Little Gidding Farm Suri Alpacas, MN Presenter: Donna Rudd
June 20	Hidden Hilltop Alpaca Ranch, OH Presenter: Mary Lou Clingan
June 20	Salt River Alpacas, MO Presenter: Ann Mayes
June 27	Weather'd T Ranch, CO Presenter: Kaye Collins
June 27	Sea Ayre Suris, SC Presenter: Mary Lou Clingan
June 27	Royal River Alpacas, ME Presenter: Lynn Deichman and Ruth Elvestad
June 27	Suri Futures, OR Presenter: Kathy Haneke

Just fill out the enclosed seminar sheet and return your form, along with your check (made payable to the Suri Network) to the Suri Network office. Thanks, and we look forward to seeing everyone at one of the seminars!

SEMINAR PRESENTERS

by Liz Vahlkamp ←

As the SNPDC prepares to put on its first set of seminars for Suri breeders across the country, we want to give everyone an introduction to the presenters giving these seminars. Some you may know, while others may not sound as familiar. However, each has a solid history of working with Suri fiber. Many have experience processing, and all have experience selling Suri fiber, in various forms, to end users.

As we build our national herd and consider the direction of our breed standard, show criteria, and prospective fiber research projects, we will have to understand the needs of the end market. That piece of the “puzzle” cannot be ignored. As such, the knowledge that these presenters will be sharing with everyone will be a valuable tool of which the SNPDC hopes everyone will take advantage.

May 30 – Little Gidding Farm Suri Alpacas, Lester Prairie, MN

Presenter - Donna Rudd: Donna is a student of the Master Spinner Certificate Program. She is a Certified Wool and Angora Goat and Fleece Judge, Alberta approved Domestic Arts Judge, Suri Llama Inspector, Certified Camelid Fibre Sorter/Classer (Olds College) and experienced spinner, weaver, felter and dyer. Donna teaches spinning, weaving and felting classes showing techniques she has developed for incorporating Suri locks into all her fibre arts. Following 20 years raising, showing, and importing/exporting registered cattle, Donna now focuses on her small fibre herd of Suri llamas and alpacas. She travels extensively in her work and enjoys researching textiles from around the world. Donna is a member of the SNPDC and has authored our seminar syllabus.

“Seminar Presenters” – Cont. on Page 8



June 20 – Salt River Alpacas, Paris, MO

Presenter - Ann Mayes: Ann entered the alpaca world about 6 years ago as a small breeding farm of both Suris and Huacayas. She quickly discovered the opportunities inherent in processing and marketing alpaca fiber to the cottage industry. Today Ann has about 30 animals on her farm which includes a fiber only herd, breeding females and boarders. She currently buys the clips of other farms and processes both her own and others into roving, yarn, and end products. Ann has steadily grown her fiber business, and in 2008 alone, Ann sold approximately 750 lbs of Suri fiber into the crafts market, with back orders carrying over to 2009! Ann has taken the fiber sorting class given by the Coarse Broads, Inc, and works with other farms to market both their fiber and their fiber animals. Ann truly believes it is the fiber that will keep alpaca farms in business for a very long time and plans to continue her efforts to learn about and expand the fiber market.

June 20 – Hidden Hilltop Alpaca Ranch, Lexington, OH

June 27 – Sea Ayre Suris, Cameron, SC

Presenter - Mary Lou Clingan: Mary Lou has been the manager of Alpaca Jack's Country Store since the store opened in 1999. She is also the head of the Fiber Department at Alpaca Jack's, responsible for all fiber and fiber related activities, on and off the animal, as well as special fiber projects such as skirting, sorting / grading, and preparation for processing. Each year Mary Lou typically prepares 30 – 50 Suri show fleeces, collects 400 representative fiber samples for micron testing, and shears and skirts 400 + fleeces for distribution into yarn, roving, and fabric. Mary Lou serves on the AOBA Judges Training and Certification Committee and is the past chairperson of the Suri Network Product Development Committee. She is currently on the Suri Network Research Committee working on the Suri Luster Study. Mary Lou provides workshops and seminars on a regular basis.

June 27 – Weather'd T Ranch, Elbert, CO

Presenter - Kaye Collins: Kaye Collins is an internationally known lecturer and instructor of spinning with alpaca fiber. Her training as a Certified Fleece Judge through AOBA allowed her to judge alpaca fleeces throughout the country including AOBA Nationals. Her skill and experience as a Master Handspinner has given her a unique insight in the use of alpaca fiber. She has inspected hundreds of individual fleeces (spinning many of them) and judged at several handspinning events, including the first Suri Network Spin-Off in 2007. Her independent study in spinning alpaca provided an opportunity to take raw fleece directly from dozens of alpacas and prepare, spin and knit or weave several projects. Her specific interest was in using Suri alpaca in a variety of ways. Kaye has authored several articles regarding spinning camelid fibers, and Kaye is a frequent contributor to Spin-Off Magazine, where she recently wrote an article on spinning Suri alpaca using fiber provided by the Suri Network Product Development Committee.

June 27 – Royal River Alpaca Company, North Yarmouth, ME

Presenters – Lynn Deichman and Ruth Elvestad:

Lynn and her husband purchased their first alpacas in 1996 - 13 years ago - and they were Huacayas. Eight years later they purchased their first Suris and today their herd numbers 12 Suris and 25 Huacayas. Their initial purchase was the result of Lynn's love of fiber. She couldn't imagine anything better than a ready supply of yarn on the "hoof!" Well, little did she know!! Truly!! Lynn's experiences with alpaca fiber are that of a breeder and fiber lover. What she has learned comes from many years of shearing (yes, she often does her own shearing!), skirting, sorting and processing the fiber generously donated by her herd. The day to day decisions Lynn makes about her herd are the result of all that time spent with the fiber! Lynn's commitment is to the long term success of alpaca breeders and the North American fiber industry.

Ruth has over 30 years' experience in a broad Canadian base of agriculture, business, government and academic sectors. She has extensive teaching, curriculum and program development expertise, and has been involved in international trade, import/export of livestock, and international fiber research. Ruth manages the Natural Fiber Centre and Testing Laboratory at Olds College, Canada; is a qualified fiber testing technician; a Certified Camelid Fibre Classifier; a Certified AOBA Judge; a volunteer with the Canadian Camelid Fiber Co-op; a founding member of the Canadian AgriFibre Network; a Wool Judge, and teaches Fiber Workshops extensively throughout North America and overseas. Ruth and her husband, Rod, own R&R Alpacas in Olds, Alberta.

June 27 – Suri Futures and the OSU Small Farms Extension Office, Central Point, OR

Presenter – Kathy Haneke: Kathy has 18 years in the fiber industry. She got started in the business by raising her own Merino Sheep and Alpacas as part of a 4-H project for her 3 children. She is a certified sheep shearer and wool classifier. She has traveled abroad to further educate herself with the total process of growing and harvesting fiber with a focus on end use. She has worked closely with the textile and fiber processing mills in South America and the USA. Several of her trips to South America required her assistance in educating the Aymara and Quechua people in the altiplano of Peru; teaching them about animal husbandry, quality of fiber, harvesting and blending. She has sponsored 2 fashion shows focusing primarily on the end use of fiber type and quality. Kathy currently has over 22 exotic yarns which she has retailed in the USA and abroad for over 15 years. She also owns and operates Haneke Fiber Processing Mill in Meridian, Idaho.



results in terms of attracting and building relationships with potential buyers. Many are simple; some are a little more involved, but all have been proven to work.

Develop a Marketing Plan. Who are your potential customers? What's the most effective way of inform your potential customer? What do your customers want? How can you position your service or product in an appealing manner? Look closely at your target market – what's their age, sex, profession, income level, education, etc. What do you have to offer that is unique.

Know your customer and determine their need, interest, etc. If a prospect already has other livestock but is looking for diversity, that becomes your focus as to how alpacas can fit into diversification of their operation or interest – you don't need to deal with the general livestock questions. But if a prospect is looking for a lifestyle change, that should be the focus. Again different if someone is looking for an investment and another is focused on natural fibers, and so on. Listen and learn about your customer.

- Create a Marketing Budget and make an effort to put adequate resources into it. Marketing does not have to be expensive – creativity and effort is more important.
- Develop a brand/identity. A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers to differentiate them from those of other sellers.
- Create a flier or brochure about your farm – who you are, what services and products you offer. Don't rush to print; have outsiders review it to provide input and be willing to listen and accept ideas to make it better. Your flier or brochure needs to have an action item to have people contact you.
- Find newsworthy articles about Alpacas; pass it on via email with a link, to your client or potential client list. Example: CNN or other news outlet has a segment on alpacas. Notify your cus-

tomers of the report and provide the link so they can view online. They will learn that you care about them.

- Recognize the power of Word of Mouth. Turn strangers into friends. Turn friends into customers. Then turn your customers into sales people – they talk about you! When your friends and customers recommend you, their words carry more weight than any sales force. At an event, a shift in priorities may be in order – a new emphasis in developing relationships, strengthening and maintaining existing ones – what are you doing to help your prospect or customers so they spread the word? Tell them how much you appreciate them and value them.
- Talk about your prospects interest – don't get carried away with your own interests. Also remember not everyone wants to be educated on every aspect of your product or service – don't waste time telling them things that don't convey a benefit for them. Be interested in them, don't try to be interesting.
- Sponsor/participate in events and/or seminars and shows; look for public relations opportunities everywhere you go.
- Encourage referrals and be willing to offer incentives – if they do something for you, you need to do something for them.
- Network at events; hand out and gather business cards and begin developing relationships. Some successful alpaca farmers hand out thousands of business cards each year. Be sure to get their card or info so you can follow up with them.
- Create joint-ventures or marketing co-ops. Find other alpaca breeders whose business compliments yours and do joint promotions such as advertising, holding an open house or seminar, share farm displays at a show, and more.
- Provide press releases and news-

worthy information to your local newspaper. You just won a blue ribbon at a show – make a press release with photo. Many small town newspapers are hungry for news.

- Write and send newsletters (email or postal mail). Offer something of value to the reader i.e., informative articles – not just advertising.
- Have a web presence. A basic web site has the potential of reaching a lot of people and making them aware that you are in business.
- Blogging is a new trend in great marketing strategies. Blogging is not much more than a periodic personal account or perspective of your daily life posting on your web site or on one of the blogging sites. So why blog?
 - It is FREE to do
 - It is EASY to do
 - It can bring traffic to a web site and sales of product.
- Post your farm listing in on-line directories – many are free and all increase your web presence
- Send a second offer to your customer immediately after they purchased. If someone just purchased an alpaca sweater, send them a note thanking them and offer them a private offer of 20% off their next purchase – but include an expiration date to create urgency.
- Take your best small ad and put it on a post card and mail to your prospects.
- Visit schools. Ask to participate in special programs such as agriculture days or social studies units where they are learning about South America.
- Participate in Youth Projects with Suri Network/AOBA promoting alpacas through local FFA/4H organizations.
- Attract people to your farm with seminars / open houses / herd health days



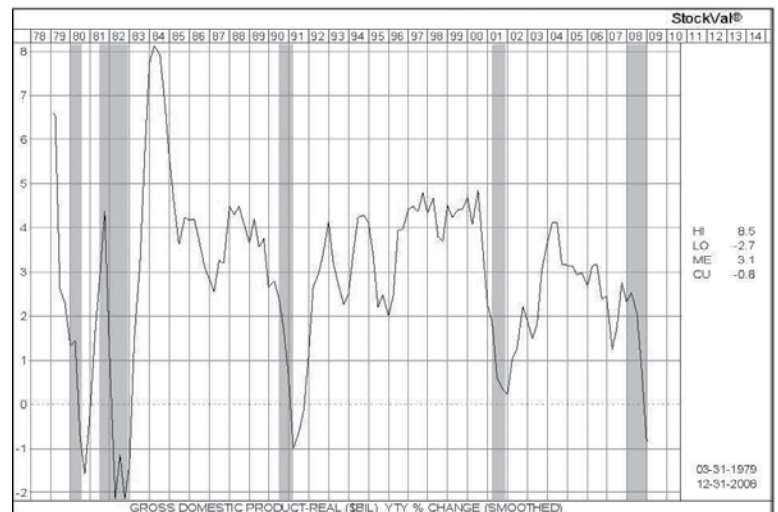
The Misery Index is an economic indicator created by economist Arthur Okon to measure economic and social cost. It has been higher than today's level but it's clearly larger than anyone would like to see. The University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index, frequently quoted by business journalists, is also a leading indicator of future economic activity. It too has seen better days. Everywhere you look, it's one negative after another. Autos, real estate, banks, unemployment, the stock market, *the list goes on and on*. It's a miracle we're still breathing. I often wonder if our alpacas know we are in the middle of a nasty global recession. Even if they did, they'd continue their genetic advancement, eyes wide open and keeping their end of the bargain. Adversity is nothing new to them. They would still happily hum, cush, pronk, breed, manufacture unbelievable fiber and produce cria after cria. Maybe we should take a lesson from a species that has survived 5,000 years of change, endured many hardships, is currently being reintroduced to the world and is now stronger than ever.

As a matter of fact, the foundation of our industry is also much stronger. We continue to see more breeders, register more alpacas, and have opportunities to attend more shows. Technology is helping us implement sophisticated breeding programs, apply advancements in the area of herd health and make progress with our wonderful fiber. *This list also goes on and on*. The only thing that has put a short-term cloud over our industry is us. Maybe it's time to look into the mirror.

Economics 101

I know you are probably saying, "It's not me, it's the economy stupid." Remember the Misery Index? It was first used during Lyndon Johnson's term, but today the formula can be applied going back as far as anyone cares. The index peaked during the crossover period between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon and most Presidents have had periods during which this measuring tool and other barometers reflected periods of economic difficulty. This recent downturn is painful but in reality is nothing new. Recessions and periods of slowing economic activity are somewhat common. Please see Chart A which shows recessionary time periods along with the closely-following economic rebounds. The economy is cyclical, always has been and will continue to show times of contraction and expansion. You may say: "But this time the issues are more widespread and more severe. The combination of autos, real estate, banks, etc. has created a CRISIS!" Time will tell, but we've had to deal with crisis before. Please see Chart B. Notice again the rebound, this time relating to the stock market, after the crisis period has ended. Why is

Chart A: GDP 1978-2008



Recessions: Recession time periods are normal events within economic cycles. The gray bars represent recessions going back to 1980. The solid line is United States GDP. There have been 5 recessions in the last 28 years. In all cases economic rebounds are significant after the end of recession time periods. It will also happen after this recession.

Chart B: Crisis

Appreciating crisis			
Performance of the Dow Jones Industrial Average through major postwar crises			
	Market low after crisis	Appreciation	
		1 year later	2 years later
Korean War	7/13/50	28.8	39.3
1962 stock market break	8/26/62	32.3	55.1
Cuban missile crisis	10/23/62	33.8	67.3
Kennedy assassination	11/22/63	25.0	33.0
Gulf of Tonkin	8/6/64	7.2	3.1
1969-70 stock market break	6/26/70	43.6	63.9
1973-74 stock market break	12/6/74	42.2	66.5
1979-80 oil crisis	3/27/80	27.9	6.9
1987 crash	10/19/87	22.9	64.3
1990 Persian Gulf War	8/23/90	23.6	31.3
2001 Sept. 11 attacks	9/21/01	-1.1	22.2

Source: Contrarian Investment Strategies: The Next Generation by David Dreman

Crisis: Events classified as crisis are a part of any economy. Their impact on the short term can be painful but time periods afterward show significant improvement. This chart deals with improving conditions regarding the DJIA.

the U.S. stock market important? It's a leading indicator. Historically the stock market will move higher 6 to 9 months prior to economic improvement, signaling the end of recessionary periods. Remember, when you're in the middle of the storm, they all seem bad. Things will get better! As reported in *The Wall Street Journal* on 2-27-2009, Abraham Lincoln liked to tell the story of a King who ordered his wise men to come up with a single sentence that would never be false. Their solution, which Lincoln called "consoling," covered all possible contingencies: "AND THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS."

If you happen to be new to the industry or are considering entry into the wonderful world of Alpacas your timing may be excellent. Today the Alpaca industry can point to many positives. While there are too many to discuss in this writing, one worth mentioning is the fact that demographics can not be ignored. The baby boom generation

"This Too Shall Pass" - Cont. on Page 11



is going strong and will be for some time. There are 78 million of us, representing 28% of the U.S. population. As a group we will be more active and maintain our health longer than any generation before us. As described by Ken Dychtwald in his well known book "The Age Wave", boomers are in the driver's seat. Today the largest segment of the U.S. population is excited about its next career. This time around we want space, simplicity, healthy normal lives and things that are green. At the same time, technology has given us the ability to move away from urban centers while continuing to be productive within the work force. Given these macro-economic forces as a backdrop, the demand for Alpacas, and the contribution they make to our changing world, will continue to grow.

There Is No Bailout Money For Alpacas

So what should alpaca breeders do until improvement in the economy is visible? Put our head in the sand? Look the other way? Sweep it under the rug? Absolutely not! We should act like other industry groups and hit the situation head-on. Let's continue to promote all that is great about the alpaca industry, stick to our knitting and invest wisely in future genetics. Behavioral economics is an interesting field of study, focusing on human decision-making. As a group, we have tendencies to behave irrationally when making purchasing or investment decisions. Often the herd mentality takes over, and we follow the crowd. This is a mistake. How does this relate to the business of alpacas? Today there is a fire sale on alpacas. Opportunities exist to acquire outstanding genetics from excellent breeding programs at compelling prices. I agree that the global economy has an obvious impact and that financial decisions are paramount to success, but these prices will not stay low forever, and when the economy turns for the better, which it will and probably sooner than later, those who wait and follow the crowd will say, "I should have..." It's the wise investor who knows when to go against the grain.

As alpaca enthusiasts, we should be proud of the advancements we have made in the past and undoubtedly will make in the future. The attributes of our industry, the things that first intrigued all of us about these wonderful animals, the attraction to all things alpaca, are still alive and well. There may be wind in our face today, but it will blow in a different direction in the future and be at our backs once again.

If we need to be convinced, all we really need to do is look at our alpacas.

FROM THE 2009 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2009 Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following four candidates to run for two openings on the Board of Trustees as follows:

Jack Hanna – Tiger Ranch Alpacas, Lynchburg, VA
Linda Kondris – Pines Edge Suri Alpacas, Elbert, CO
Gretchen Nygaard – EvenTyr Gaard Alpacas, Sonora, CA
Joyce White – Tinkers Creek Alpacas, LLC, Twinsburg Twp., OH

This year's nomination and election schedule has been moved up to better allow new Board members to make plans to attend the face-to-face Board meeting immediately prior to the Summer Symposium in August.

The schedule will be as follows:

April 27, 2009 - Candidates statements and photos must be received at the Suri Network Office.
May 4-8, 2009 - Ballots will be mailed to the membership during this week.
June 8, 2009 - Deadline for ballots cast to be received at the Suri Network Office.
June 12, 2009 - Ballots will be counted.
June 15, 2009 - Election results will be announced

Nominating Committee:

Mike Murphy, Chair, Flying M Ranch, KS
Jim Barker, Sweetbriar Suri Alpaca Farm, OH
Nancy Walker, SuperSuris Alpacas, WA
Suzanne Backer, Country Haven Farm Alpacas, CO
Miriam Donaldson, Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm, OH



ARE WE EVER GOING TO SEE THE REPORT ON PHASE 1 OF THE Suri NETWORK LUSTER STUDY? AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF PHASE 1, THE PROGRESS AND THE CURRENT PHASE 2 ARF CO-FUNDED STUDY

I bet this is a question that you have been asking yourself for some time now! When I took on the job of the Suri Network Board Research Committee Chairperson in 2005, little did I know about the research process! Being a veterinary practitioner is much different than being a veterinary researcher! I knew the importance of research as much of the cutting edge information in alpaca medicine and surgery is provided by the researchers at the annual Camelid veterinary conference. The Suri Network board at the time, myself included, felt that it would be beneficial to the Suri Alpaca industry to initiate a series of research projects, specifically focused on the characteristics of North American Suri Fiber. While serving on the board of directors as the research liaison, I soon found out that RESEARCH TAKES MONEY, TIME AND PATIENCE! My intent for this article is to bring everyone up to date by documenting the history of the project and providing you with current information on the ARF – Suri Network co-funded study.

At the 2006 Suri Symposium, there were many members that signed up for the research committee and a project design was completed that week. Our mission statement and our initial study goal are printed below.

“The Suri Network Research Committee will seek to identify, fund and conduct research projects that will delineate the unique characteristics of Suri fiber, to allow the North American Suri industry to be competitive in the world market.”

After much review and discussion the Research Committee defined the goal of the initial study as collecting data at the 2006 shearing to permit current and future studies of Suri fleece characteristics. The methodology will involve the enlistment of 100 animals, 50 white and 50 colored, at the time of the 2006 shearing in their second fleece, with

at least 10 months growth. The animals will be anonymously submitted and assigned a research number. A donation from the enrolling farm will be requested to offset expenses.

In return the farm will be provided with all the data and test results on their animals as the study/data collection progresses. Fleece samples

from three specific areas will be taken, as well as a 3 ounce sample from the blanket for future amino acid and chemical analysis. A skin biopsy will be taken from the mid-blanket area and staple length measured. Shear weight will be recorded as well as a digital photo in full fleece. Sex, height at the withers and weight of the animal will be recorded. A lock classification will be made and digital photos of individual locks will be taken as well. Color will be assessed using a hand held spectrophotometer. Both Yocom-McColl and OFDA 2000 fiber analyses will be performed. At some point, funding permitting, a measurement of tensile strength will be made as well as scanning and transmission electron microscopy. If a technologically sound means of measuring luster is found this too may be included.

It is the hope of the Research Committee that this data will serve as a benchmark for Suri alpaca fleece of the North American herd at this point in time. We hope to be able to analyze the data obtained in an ongoing fashion and draw conclusions as to possible interrelationships of the various characteristics. Future studies will be explored as well as the utilization of outside funding sources such as the USDA and others. The committee is very excited about carrying out this important project in a professional and scientifically valid fashion. It is hoped that the information gained will be of great use and benefit to all the membership of Suri Network.

With the huge financial support of the Suri Alpaca Industry, this initial study

was fully funded through a herdsire auction held in November 2006. There were key members of the research committee, Mary Lou Clingan, Bill Vonderhaar, Bruce Van Natta and Claudia Raessler, that made the sample collection process and initial data testing possible. This initial step towards data collection on North American Suri Fleece was a milestone for the Suri Industry. We soon found out that research takes time and that we had a lot of data on our hands but without a research professional, we could not analyze the data properly.

In 2006, we were hopeful that some means of “luster and color” measurement would be possible in the future. It was with the work done at Bossa Nova Technologies and the efforts of Bill Vonderhaar that made all of this possible! The discovery of the luster testing technology by Bill Vonderhaar’s work with Bossa Nova caught the attention of the professional research community. In February 2007, we had an initial report from Bossa Nova on the SAMBA method of luster testing. I met with Dr. Chris Lupton from Texas A + M in February 2007 and reviewed the data with him. Dr. Lupton has been very involved in fiber research, specifically mohair. He was co-researcher on the AOBA funded huacaya fiber study. He had been searching for a specific means to measure luster in mohair and he felt that this technology might be applicable to mohair. I asked Dr. Lupton at that time if he was available to analyze the data that we had collected during Phase 1 of the Suri Fiber Research. At that time his time was limited and he could not commit to analyze our data. From February 07 until spring of 2008, we were busy having all of the samples tested. We had established a close working relationship with Angus McColl as he was performing the length and strength tests for us as well as the OFDA 2000 analyses on all of the samples.

“Luster Study” – Cont. on Page 13



In February of 2008, the first International Conference on Camelid Genetics was held and the current president of the Suri Network, Dr. Dick Walker, attended the conference as a Suri Network representative. There was discussion at the conference about the initial fiber research that the Suri Network was performing and there were many members of the ARF's (Alpaca Research Foundation) board of directors in attendance. Dr. Lupton and Angus McColl put together a proposal to ARF for funding to conduct a Suri Fiber Research project. The initial proposal was denied but with the involvement of the Suri Network and the re-submission of the proposal with the support of the Suri Network, the proposal was accepted and the project is currently underway! Because



of Dr. Lupton's involvement in the ARF co-funded study, we were able to hire Dr. Lupton as our research consultant in June 2008 and in August 2008 we had a preliminary report of the initial data collected. Dr. Lupton suggested that we test 20 of the 63 with scanning electron microscopy to complete our data collection for phase 1. All of the SEM tests were recently completed and this data has been sent to Dr. Lupton. I am happy to inform you that Dr. Lupton will have the final analysis of phase 1 in written report as well as in a power point presentation available at the August 2009 Summer Symposium! The research committee, myself included, had unrealistic expectations on a time line from the initiation of a project to the completion of a project. I

can now see why researchers request a 2-3 year time frame on most projects.

Not only did we reach our goal to conduct phase 1 of the Suri Fiber Research but this project led the research community to conduct a second study on Suri Fiber! In March of 2008, Chris Lupton and Angus McColl sent the following proposal to ARF:

Title: Evaluation of two objective methods for measuring luster in Suri alpaca fiber, comparison with subjective luster assessments, and correlation with other physical properties.

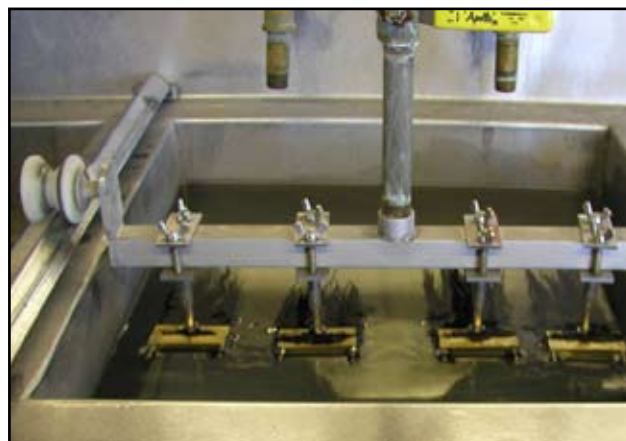
Lay Abstract:

100 Suri alpaca samples will be assembled by members of the Suri Network. White, black and 8 standard ARI colors will be equally represented. The full range of luster values and a wide range of fiber diameters will be represented within each color range. Every effort will be made to use samples that are geographically and genetically diverse. The samples will be assessed for color and luster before and after washing by 5 fiber judges and two instruments, the Samba and a near-infrared reflectance spectrometer. In addition, each sample will be analyzed for lab scoured yield, fiber diameter, fiber curvature, and staple length and strength. Using data from the Samba instrument, an estimate of luster will be calculated that is independent of color. Subsequently, mathematical relationships between the Samba and NIRS luster measurements versus subjective luster assessments, lab scoured yield, average fiber diameter (and variability), average fiber curvature (and variability), staple length (and variability) and strength (and variability) will be determined.

The SN agreed to co-fund \$10,000.00 of the total budget which was \$39,500.00. At this time, 101 samples have been tested. Angus reported the fol-

lowing tests have been performed on all submitted samples: lab scoured yields have been calculated for each sample and after conditioning, the clean samples were measured for fiber diameter (mean, SD, and CV), fiber curvature (AC, CSD), staple length (mean, SD, and CV), and for luster using a Samba Hair System.

The researchers have requested from the SN 100 additional samples to complete the study. Two thirds of the initial 101 samples tested were white and in order to



have statistically significant results from the study on the colored samples, they need more samples! With careful consideration, it has been determined that the additional funds needed to complete the study would be just under \$2,300.00 which the board of directors has agreed to fund! This is why we are asking for your help to send in your colored fleece samples. It is shearing time and this is the perfect time to collect your samples and submit them for inclusion into the research project. The colors that the researchers are currently looking for include: TB, BB, DB, MB, LB, DF, MF, LF and BG. They are not looking for grays,



"Luster Study" – Cont. on Page 14



multi or white samples. We are asking that the members pay ½ of the fee for testing which is \$15.00 per sample. The SN is paying the other half of the fee as a membership benefit. I have included some photos provided by Angus McColl of the scouring process prior to the luster testing and the mounting of the samples for luster testing. The researchers are very excited about the progress of this study and have decided to do additional testing on the initial 101 samples which was included in the recently submitted progress report to ARF and the Suri Network. See below:

We are planning additional testing (MFD, SD, CV), Fiber Curvature (AC, CSD) on the SAMBA tested sample in the area that the luster testing data was obtained. This information may give us another aspect of the relationship of fiber diameter to luster. We will also be testing for luster on the NIRS instrument.

As you can see, from the information presented, that research is important, exciting, expensive and time consuming! I am hopeful that you can feel my enthusiasm from this lengthy report and I hope that you will continue to support this project by submitting your color fleece samples this spring! Please refer to the insert in this Suri Network News for sample submission information.



- Contact your local Chamber of Commerce or Visitors Bureau/Center. They may be looking for activities to offer visitors such as visiting an alpaca farm! Some states have active ag-tourism programs. Investigate and get involved.
- Make it a goal when attending any event to meet 10 new people. Sit down at a lunch table with someone you don't know. Visit with as many other breeders as possible, give a friendly greeting to all you can. If at a show invite them to stop by and visit your Suris or farm display.
- Offer your local school a farm visit. Done that? – well, each year there is a new crop of students and parents so do it again!
- Have you ever considered being the "program" at your local Rotary Club, Lions Club, or other service club with an actual Suri as part of the program? Many clubs and organizations are looking for people to share their unique life experiences.
- If you don't already have a product store of yarn, clothing, etc., consider adding one. Demonstrating the final end product use of a Suri strengthens the purpose of the breeding industry and validates the Suri alpaca. If end products are not your primary purpose, you still need to be knowledgeable of those products to demonstrate to a prospect the industry as a whole. Customers that purchase an end product are a potential sales force for you if they have a good experience with you.
- Be familiar with all the industry organizations – Suri Network, AOBA, ARI, ARF, and regional affiliates to demonstrate the professional and organizational structure to the industry. Your knowledge will be important to a prospect's image of you.
- Take advantage of the fliers, magazines, marketing folders and DVDs offered by the Suri Network. Having an appropriate supply on hand provides you with an additional tool to give to a prospect when appropriate.
- Image is important. Are your alpacas registered with the ARI; do you have sales contracts ready, boarding contracts ready (if you don't board, do you have arrangements with another farm ready for those who need boarding), transportation, veterinarian referral and vet check standards ready, and more... All these demonstrate your professionalism and competency to a prospect.
- Small breeders might believe that they are at a disadvantage to large breeders with a wider selection available. Consider teaming up with other small breeders to provide a pool of alpacas that may in fact be equal in selection compared to a large breeder.
- Think and market the positive attributes of being a small breeder. What can you offer that larger breeders can't?

These tips represent just a few of the things you can do to jump-start your marketing efforts. In this current economic climate, marketing may be the first thing that is cut from some farm's budgets. Take advantage of this by ramping up your own marketing effort. A good plan implemented well will distinguish your alpacas and set your farm apart from your competition.



IT IS SHEARING TIME AND WE NEED YOUR FLEECE!

The co-funded ARF-Suri Network Luster Study is in need of colored fleece samples to complete the study. Now that it is shearing time, it will be easy for you to collect the samples for the research project at the same time. Try to mitt the animal before shearing to decrease the amount of vegetable matter in the fleece sample. When the fleece is shorn from the animal, remove the desired amount from the mid blanket (7 ½ ounces) which is about a 12 inch square of fleece and set it aside for the project. The colors that are needed are listed below. We are asking that you hold onto the remaining blanket from the research animals just in case additional fleece is required for future testing. This is a very exciting project and the researchers cannot complete it without the additional samples requested!

SAMPLE PREPARATION:

1. Samples must be from the 2008 or 2009 shearing
2. A maximum of 10 samples per farm will be accepted until the quota of 200 samples achieved
3. Colors accepted: Samples of uniform color: TB, BB, DB, MB, LB, DF, MF, LF and BG (Grays, Fading Fawns and Multis will not be included in this study.) They do not need any white samples; they have already tested 63 white animals.
4. Staple length between 5 to 7 inches. If it is longer, you can cut the sample. It is best to cut the tips of the locks off vs. cutting the shorn edge.
5. 200 grams (7-1/4 ounces) of fiber are to be packaged in a clear gallon zip lock bag. You should try to keep the locks laying in the same direction when you place it in the bag. You do not have to separate each lock; you just want to be careful not to bunch up the fiber when placing it into the gallon zip lock bag.
6. The bag should be identified with the animal's ARI number and name and a copy of the ARI certificate is to be submitted with the sample.
7. There is no age restriction as long as the samples meet the criteria above.
8. In addition to luster analysis, you will receive the following information:
 - Mean Fiber Diameter
 - Standard Deviation
 - Coefficient of Variation
 - Spin Fineness
 - Fibers>30 Microns
 - Comfort Factor
 - Mean Staple Length
 - Length Standard Deviation
 - Length Coefficient of Variation
 - Mean Curvature
 - SD Curvature
 - Percentage of Medullated Fibers (white or light fleeces only)

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Include a check written to Yocom-McColl Testing Laboratories, Inc. for \$15.00 per sample.
2. Submit samples from April 15-August 30th, 2009.
3. Ship to the address below, being sure to write SAMBA on the box:

Yocom-McColl Testing Laboratories, Inc.
SAMBA
540 West Elk Place
Denver, CO 80216-1823

Please call the Suri Network Office if you have any questions at 970-586-5876. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



P.O. Box 1984
Estes Park, CO 80517

Email: office@Surinetwork.org

Phone: (970) 586-5876

Fax: (970) 586-6685

Web site: www.SuriNetwork.org

The Suri Network Product Development Committee

presents

The Facts about Alpaca Fiber and its Success in the Marketplace

For all alpaca breeders and those wanting to learn more about the alpaca industry

REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) of Attendees _____

Farm Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

Please sign me up for the following seminar:

- May 30 *Little Gidding Farm Suri Alpacas*, Lester Prairie, MN
Presenter: Donna Rudd
- June 20 *Hidden Hilltop Alpaca Ranch*, Lexington, OH
Presenter: Mary Lou Clingan
- June 20 *Salt River Alpacas*, Paris, MO
Presenter: Ann Mayes
- June 27 *Weather'd T Ranch*, Elbert, CO
Presenter: Kaye Collins
- June 27 *Sea Ayre Suris*, Cameron, SC
Presenter: Mary Lou Clingan
- June 27 *Royal River Alpaca Company*, North Yarmouth, ME
Presenter: Ruth Elvestad and Lynn Deichman
- June 27 *Suri Futures and the OSU Small Farms Extension Office, Central Point, OR*
Presenter: Kathy Haneke

The registration fee is \$50.00 per person. Class size is limited to 18 attendees.

Please make your check payable to Suri Network and mail to the address shown above. You will receive an email confirmation upon receipt of your check and registration form.



SURI NETWORK SUMMER SYMPOSIUM & ALL SURI FLEECE SHOW

AUGUST 13-15, 2009, ESTES PARK, COLORADO

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 Phone: 970-586-5876 • Fax: 970-586-6685 • office@SuriNetwork.org • www.SuriNetwork.org

Clinic 1 Clinic 2 Clinic 2a Clinic 3 Clinic 4

Name #1 (as it is to appear on your Badge): _____

Name #2 (as it is to appear on your Badge): _____

Name #3 (as it is to appear on your Badge): _____

Name #4 (as it is to appear on your Badge): _____

Farm Name (as it is to appear on your Badge): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

**Registration Fee includes ALL SEMINARS (Thursday Clinics are an additional charge and must be reserved in advance),
 Friday and Saturday Breakfast and Lunch, Saturday Social Evening and Live Auction.**

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>	
Early Bird Registration (per person) - Must be postmarked by July 28, 2009.....	\$265.00	\$290.00	\$ _____
Postmarked after July 28, 2009 Registration (per person)	\$290.00	\$315.00	\$ _____
“Special” Veterinarian Registration	\$200.00	\$225.00	\$ _____
On-Site Registration (per person).....	\$315.00	\$340.00	\$ _____
“NEW” Friday Only	\$150.00	\$165.00	\$ _____
“NEW” Saturday Only.....	\$150.00	\$165.00	\$ _____

THURSDAY ALL DAY CLINICS:

(1) Thursday Clinic #1 Parasitology Clinic w/Dr. Pam Walker (limit 25 in clinic)	\$250.00	\$260.00	\$ _____
(2a) Thursday Clinic #2a Neo-Natal Morning Lecture w/Dr. Toni Cotton (max 2 people per farm; limit 40 in lecture)	\$125.00	\$135.00	\$ _____
(2b) Thursday Clinic #2b Neo-Natal Full Day Lecture & Lab w/Dr. Toni Cotton (max 2 people per farm; limit 20).....	\$250.00	\$260.00	\$ _____
(3) Thursday Clinic #3 Fiber Grading & Sorting Clinic w/Mary Lou Clingan (limit 20).....	\$175.00	\$185.00	\$ _____
(4) Thursday Clinic #4 Felting Clinic w/Donna Rudd (limit 20).....	\$175.00	\$185.00	\$ _____
Vendor Space (you must be registered; includes 1 skirted table & 2 chairs).....	\$100.00		\$ _____
Additional Vendor Table.....	\$ 40.00		\$ _____
Business Card Ad in Symposium Notebook	\$ 50.00		\$ _____
Registration Handout Flier (<u>must be received in office no later than August 4</u>)	\$ 75.00		\$ _____
Sponsorship & Advertising Opportunity.....	\$250.00		\$ _____
Meal Sponsor (circle sponsorship) Friday (\$450) Saturday (\$550)			\$ _____
Fleece Show Total from Fleece Show Entry Form			\$ _____
Spin-Off Total from Spin Off Entry Form			\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if this is the first time you have ever entered a fleece show			Registration Fee Total (U.S. Dollars): _____ \$

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Enclosed is: Check Visa MC AMEX Discover Please check here if you require a vegetarian meal or have special requirements

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card: _____ Last 3 digits on back of card _____

Address for credit card if different from above: _____

Cancellation/Refund Policy: \$25.00 per person/max \$50.00 per farm cancellation fee if cancellation made prior to July 28, 2009. No refunds after August 1, 2009.