



# SURI

## Network News

a publication of The Suri Network

### Suri Network News (SNN) – It's New!

The Board of Trustees of the Suri Network is pleased to present our first newsletter issue, “**SURI NETWORK NEWS**” (SNN). Suri Network News is a newsletter for the members of Suri Network and will be published 4 to 6 times a year. To continue receiving SNN, you must be a member of Suri Network and can find an application form (PDF file that you can print) at [www.SuriNetwork.org](http://www.SuriNetwork.org) or contact the Suri Network office at 970-586-5876. We do accept MC and VISA credit cards.

We welcome member ideas, articles, and/or comments for SNN. If you have an idea or article, submit it to the Suri Network office at [SuriAssociation@aol.com](mailto:SuriAssociation@aol.com) and highlight for SNN.

Your Board of Trustees:

Dick Walker, *President* ([alpacas@supersuris.com](mailto:alpacas@supersuris.com))

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Cindy Fronk, *Member at Large* ([cfronk@qwest.net](mailto:cfronk@qwest.net))



#### From the President

The primary content of this first *Suri Network News* is the Survey Results mailed out last October. The Board mailed this survey to all Suri Network members as well as all known suri owners. Nearly one-half of all members responded. We have published the combined results in this issue for your convenience.

Thank you to all who participated in the survey. Your input is very important in shaping the future of the suri alpaca industry and providing direction for your Board of Trustees. Discussions and working recommendations resulting from this survey will be one of the primary subjects of the upcoming membership meeting in Atlanta, GA on February 24, 2005 at the Fiber to Fashion conference. It may be helpful if you bring this copy of SNN with you.



For your convenience, we have chosen to publish the entire survey again in this SNN issue with the results following each question. We hope you will come to the membership meeting and share your thoughts and ideas.

Thank you and have a successful 2005.

*Dick Walker*  
Dick Walker, *President*

#### Membership Meeting

The Suri Network Board of Trustees announce the following membership meeting. This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions, clarify positions and address any concerns regarding the survey. The Board will introduce strategies and objectives regarding each of the survey topics. In the afternoon, starting at 1:00pm there will be member working groups formed around key survey topics. These groups will develop recommendations for plans of action for the Board to consider implementing as SN moves forward on these issues. Later in the afternoon, the Research, Marketing, and Education committees

*Membership Meeting - Cont. on Pg. 2*

will meet. Three new committees will be starting up as well; the Show committee, the Membership committee and the Breed Standards committee. Help is needed on these committees and we welcome all of those interested in a particular committee to participate.

Date: Thursday, February 24, 2005  
Time: 8:00am to 4:00pm  
Continental Breakfast courtesy of  
The Suri Network. Lunch on your own.  
Location: Atlanta Hilton, Atlanta, Georgia  
Fiber to Fashion Conference

Membership Meeting Topics: Following an 8:00am – 8:30 continental breakfast, there will be a Membership General Meeting Session in the morning focusing on the October 2004 survey results published in this newsletter (non-Suri Network breeders/owners are welcome to attend). Lunch on your own. In the afternoon, starting a 1:00pm there will be member working groups formed around key survey topics to further discuss and develop recommendations for plans of action for the Board of Trustees. Later in the afternoon, the Research, Marketing and Education committees will meet and all of those interested in a particular committee are welcome to attend.

We encourage all interested suri breeders and owners to attend.

### **Suri Network News Editor Search**

The Suri Network Board of Trustees is searching for a volunteer SN member to be editor of the Suri Network News (SNN) and prepare articles for AOBA's One Voice. If you think this maybe of interest to you and fits your talents, please don't hesitate to contact the Suri Network office or any Board member and send a brief resume and biographical information.

### **Calendar of Events**

Attention SN Members! Future issues of Suri Network News will contain a "Calendar of Events." It is a calendar of events not a classified section. This is a great way for member Farms & Ranches to promote their events or events at which suris will be present. Are you planning a farm open house, show, clinic, seminar, county fair showing, etc.? Send your suri event information to the Suri Network Office ([SuriAssociation@aol.com](mailto:SuriAssociation@aol.com) or fax it to 970-586-5876). Must

be a member – join! Note: (Suri Network may edit or refuse any submission for any reason at its discretion.)

### **Suri Network Committees**

Interested in volunteering to work with a Committee? Your participation is vital to the success of your organization. The Board acknowledges that, in the past, our committees have not always been well organized or effective. This Board is committed to making the committees a vital part of a dynamic, action oriented Suri Network. We now have the administrative assistance to really make this work. Please volunteer your services!

SN has 3 standing committees: Research, Marketing, Education. Each one is looking for members to participate, either on a regular basis or on a specific project. As of February three new committees are being formed: Membership, Show, and Breed Standards. More information on these new committees will be forthcoming at the February meeting.

To learn more about each committee, contact: Dick Walker for Marketing, Toni Cotton for Research, and Cindy Fronk for Education. See Board contact information on page 1.

### **Purely Suri – 2005 Edition**

Deadlines are approaching! Advertising forms have been mailed to all Suri Network members for advertising opportunities in the 2005 edition of Purely Suri. Advertising reservations must be received at the Suri Network office by March 1, 2005! We apologize for the typo on the fax number. The correct fax number is (970) 586-6685.

Have an idea for an article for Purely Suri? Contact Dick Walker immediately.

### **Membership Dues**

If you wish to be included in the Suri Network membership directory, please be sure to send in your dues NOW. Dues are on an annual basis (January 1 thru December 31).

### **Membership Directory Advertising**

This year the Suri Network is offering business card size ads in their Membership Directory (B&W only). These business card ads will be printed on tabs and the number of tabs will be determined by the number of advertisers. Only one business card ad per member at \$100.00 ea. Deadline for submission is February 10th. You must be a member of the Suri Network in order to advertise in the membership directory and only one ad per farm member.



The Suri Network, Inc.

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# SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

## Survey Issue #1

Topic: Breed Standards, “Suri Alpaca” as a separate and distinct livestock breed.

### *Background Discussion-*

The integrity of the suri alpaca genome is being increasingly challenged within the camelid industry. The genetic makeup of our suris is our most precious resource. As purebred suri breeders there is nothing more important to assuring the future of our industry. Maintaining and improving the integrity of suri genetics is absolutely crucial to our breeding programs and to the competitive position of purebred suris in the worldwide camelid industry.

Let’s face it; there are other factions in the camelid world who want to utilize this resource to their advantage. There are those who promote the crossbreeding of suris with huacayas, others who have imported suri llamas and now breed these suri llamas to each other, developing a new breed of a suri-fleeced camelid. The newest, and perhaps the greatest, challenge to the integrity of the suri genome is the “collectable llama,” a new registry that promotes the crossbreeding of suri alpacas to llamas in North America to produce yet another brand of suri fleeced livestock. How many suri-fleeced camelids can the market support? The potential of crossing suri alpacas onto a traditional llama population in excess of 200,000 could have serious consequences for the suri alpaca market as we know it today. Can your new suri alpaca buyers readily discriminate between competing brands? In the future will the fiber industry care whether suri like fiber came from a purebred suri alpaca or from some other suri-fleeced camelid? Only by promoting a purely bred suri ALPACA as the suri will we maintain the quality of genetic material allowing us to produce the superior suri-fleeced camelid of the future. These are valid, timely concerns worthy of your consideration. Proper action now can keep purebred suri alpaca breeders at the top of this increasingly diverse suri camelid industry. After all, our pure suri alpacas have the genetic code necessary to create a truly unique North American suri alpaca that has the potential to produce the preeminent suri fiber in the world.

### Question #1a

With regard to the following statement which response best represents your opinion?

The suri alpaca is a unique breed of camelid with certain defining characteristics of fleece and conformation. Furthermore, a purebred suri is a breed apart from all other camelids and worthy of such distinction.

|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| % | 63.4%                 | 26.8%        | 1.0%              | 5.7%            | 3.1%                     |

### Continued Discussion- Issue #1

Developing breed standards for the suri alpaca is a necessary step in addressing the challenges facing the suri genome. Suri Network acknowledges the complexity and crucial importance of this controversial issue. An open dialog with wide participation will be necessary for progress and eventual success. For the long-term health of the suri industry it is imperative that we institute a process starting from the ground up. Every suri breeder should have the opportunity to participate in this endeavor. Only in this way can we assure that special interests and private agendas do not dictate a standard that is undesirable and potentially detrimental to our industry. The Suri Network is uniquely positioned to take the lead on this momentous and timely issue. To do so will require unprecedented participation and feedback by our membership. The BOD feels urgency in addressing this issue. The direction we choose to take now will have great and lasting benefits on the future promotion of the suri alpaca and its fiber.

### Question #1b

With regard to the following statement which response best represents your opinion?

- 1.) The Suri Network, utilizing a broad based breeder participation process, is the most appropriate group within AOBA to determine a suri breed standard.

|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| % | 51.6%                 | 29.5%        | 7.4%              | 6.8%            | 5.3%                     |

2.) I would prefer that another organization determine a suri alpaca breed standard:

|   |             |            |
|---|-------------|------------|
|   | <u>AOBA</u> | <u>ARI</u> |
| % | 58.1%       | 41.9%      |

3.) I prefer that the suri alpaca industry not have a breed standard.

|   |                       |              |                   |                 |                          |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
| % | 23.8%                 | 12.6%        | 11.9%             | 27.2%           | 24.5%                    |

## Survey Issue #2

Topic: Crossbreeding suri x huacaya alpacas

### *Background Discussion-*

The Suri Network is “Dedicated to the preservation of the Suri Alpaca”. Furthermore the Suri Network’s purpose is to serve the suri industry and protect the collective economic and legal interests of network members. Of importance to these goals is the issue of crossbreeding suri x huacaya alpacas. A small minority of breeders is pursuing this breeding strategy.

### Question #2a

With regard to the following statements which response best represents your opinion?

Crossbreeding should be strongly discouraged within the alpaca industry.

|   |                       |              |                   |                 |                          |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
| % | 78.5%                 | 13.3%        | 2.1%              | 3.6%            | 2.6%                     |

### Question #2b

On behalf of its membership, Suri Network should request of ARI that **going forward** only suri alpacas with two registered suri parents be registered as a suri alpaca.

|   |                       |              |                   |                 |                          |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
| % | 61.6%                 | 17.9%        | 2.6%              | 8.4%            | 9.5%                     |

### Question #2c

Changes discussed in #2b will not come about quickly. In the interim Suri Network should ask ARI to highlight huacaya ancestors on a suri pedigree. Furthermore ARI should designate with a statement or “seal” that a suri alpaca with an all suri pedigree is a Purely Bred suri.

|   |                       |              |                   |                 |                          |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
| % | 53.7%                 | 17.6%        | 5.9%              | 11.2%           | 11.7%                    |

## Survey Issue #3

Topic: Show Rules, grooming

### *Background Discussion-*

Current AOBA show rules stipulate: (pg.73- J.2 2004 AOBA Show Division Handbook) “the use of any shampoos, conditioners, luster enhancers, silicone based products, dyes, color dressings, oil dressings, any enhancing agent, and toenail painting is prohibited and may be the basis for reduced placement or disqualification at the Judge’s discretion.”

(pg. 74- 4.a. AOBA S.D. Handbook) “Rinsing with water to eliminate residue is permitted.”

(pg. 74- 4.c. AOBA S.D. Handbook) “Grooming shall be limited to the removal of debris. Twisting, curling or other enhancing practices that will alter or enhance the lock structure is strictly prohibited.”

### Question #3

These rules will also govern the 2005 show season. Which of the following statements best represents your position on these rules?

I agree with the rules as currently stipulated in the AOBA 2004 Show Division Handbook.

% 60.7%

I would support a rule change that would allow shampooing but would still prohibit the use of any luster enhancing products or manipulation practices intended to enhance lock structure.

% 36.6%

I would support a rule change that would give exhibitors free rein to groom their animals in any way they choose.

% 3.7%

### Survey Issue #4

Topic: Show Rules, enforcement

#### *Background Discussion-*

Feedback from Suri Network members regarding the 2004 show season indicates a lack of, or at best, inconsistent enforcement by AOBA judges of the grooming enhancement rules. At the June Suri Network meeting in Louisville this topic generated a heated discussion with many members expressing concern about the current state of affairs. In response to members concerns, Suri Network has done some initial investigation regarding possible scientific methods that would aid in the enforcement of current rules. It appears that scientific methods are available that could be used to detect the presence of products used to artificially enhance luster on the fiber. If a valid scientific protocol could be developed, then Suri Network could encourage the AOBA Show Committee to design an enforcement process that is fair and impartial. The goal would be to promote fair and friendly competition and to strongly discourage noncompliance.

### Question #4a

With regard to the following statements which response best represents your opinion?

Designing a standardized, scientifically reliable method of detecting banned substances on suri fiber is important. The Suri Network should pursue and financially support the effort necessary to enable the development of an enforcement protocol by AOBA Show Committee.

|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| % | 43.2%                 | 37.9%        | 8.4%              | 5.8%            | 4.7%                     |

### Question #4b

If possible, I would like to see this enforcement procedure in place by the 2005 show season.

|   | <u>Strongly agree</u> | <u>Agree</u> | <u>No Opinion</u> | <u>Disagree</u> | <u>Strongly Disagree</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| % | 33.9%                 | 38.7%        | 14.8%             | 5.8%            | 6.9%                     |

### Survey Issue #5

Topic: Show rules

#### *Background Discussion-*

Current AOBA show rules require sanctioned shows to include both huacaya and suri alpacas.

### Question #5

I am in favor of a rule change that would allow an AOBA sanctioned 'all suri' show.

% 53.4%

I would support an 'all suri' show even if it wasn't sanctioned by AOBA.

% 27.8%

I would not support an 'all suri' show.

% 18.8%

## **Survey Issue #6**

Topic: Suri Fiber Research

### *Background Discussion-*

This topic was discussed during the Suri Network Meeting at the AOBA Conference in June, 2004. Since then, the SN BOD has continued discussions in this area and would now like the input of the members as to their feelings on such a project. At this time, Yocom-McColl has provided a proposal for a Suri Fiber Study.

The study consists of obtaining 600 fleece samples (12 ounces per sample) from across the US and the subjective analysis of the samples by a panel of three to five judges. If 600 samples are used, that would represent >5% of the current US Suri population. The data from this subjective analysis would be entered into a database and statistically analyzed to determine the consensus of the judges. This study will allow us to benchmark our current breeding practices and allow us to quantitatively follow advancements. The estimated cost of the study is \$10,000.

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Base colors will be assigned to each color.
2. A luster measurement will be given to each fleece sample: High, Medium and Low
3. Each sample will be identified with one of the five recognized Suri lock types.
4. The following characteristics of the Suri fleece will be defined: fiber diameter, comfort factor, spinning fineness, length and strength, resistance to compression, position of break and clean yield.

### Question #6

I am in favor of the Suri Network pursuing the above proposed project.

%                    87.7%

I am opposed to the Suri Network pursuing the above proposed project.

%                    12.3%

### Question #6a

I am willing to provide fleece samples for the project.

%                    81.6%

I am not willing to provide fleece samples for the project.

%                    18.4%

### Question #6b

I would be willing to financially support this project through future fund raising events sponsored by The Suri Network

%                    72.6%

I do not plan to financially support research on Suri Fiber.

%                    27.4%

## **Survey Issue #7**

Topic: Measurement of Luster in Suri Fleece

The SN BOD has had several discussions regarding the feasibility of measuring the luster in Suri Fleece. There are two companies in the textile industry that currently have portable “lustermeters” to measure the luster in certain textiles. At the AOBA meeting, there was much dialogue among the membership regarding the need and utility of quantitatively measuring luster to give a non-biased judging tool. The SN BOD would like the input of the membership as to whether or not the SN should pursue the possibility of actively working with these companies to see if the lustermeter can be used on Suri fleece and if the measurements obtained correlate with the luster measurements that are obtained in the fiber study discussed in Issue #6.

### Question #7

I am in favor of the SN BOD working with the textile industry to determine whether or not the “lustermeter” has some merit in luster measurement of Suri fiber.

%                    85.2%

I am opposed to the SN BOD working with the textile industry to determine whether or not the lustermeter has some merit in luster measurement of Suri fiber.

%                    14.8%

# Going... Going... Gone... To the Highest Bidder!



*All proceeds go to  
The Suri Network  
for suri specific programs.*

Beginning a new Suri Network tradition, this limited edition bronze suri sculpture will be auctioned off at the first annual Suri Network fundraiser and then re-auctioned off each year carrying the engraved names of all winners. This event will be held in conjunction with Celebrity Futurity Show and Sale.

Highest bidder receives a two-page Farm Profile in the next Purely Suri Publication (Vol. IV).



**The Suri Network**  
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APRIL 15-18, 2005  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA  
INDIANA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

