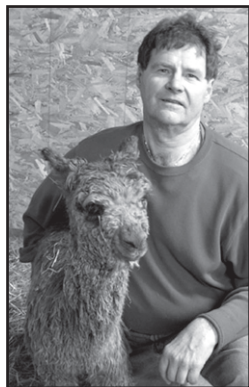




a publication of The Suri Network

FROM THE PRESIDENT



It has been awhile since we have communicated with you and this edition is packed with news I am sure you will appreciate hearing about. The spring show season is behind us and now it's time for catching up on industry business. It is with a feeling of accomplishment that I write this last letter as Suri Network President. It has truly been an honor to have served in this position. Thanks to the support of the Suri community, your Suri Network has accomplished a great deal for our industry. That said, I believe the best is yet to come. Much work needs to be done. With the Strategic Plan in place, the Suri Network is positioned to lead this industry toward a very bright future by promoting the *Suri Alpaca - Rarest of Breeds, Ultimate Natural Fiber*. Ours is an ongoing success story with the best still to come. Embrace our vision: *To become the world's premier producer of Suri genetics, fiber, and branded Suri products!*

This issue of Suri Network News is largely focused on fiber. Marketing Suri fiber and branded (value added) Suri fiber products is one of Suri Network's strategic initiatives. After you read the Suri Network Product Development Committee's report, you will see that we are making real progress on this goal. They have been very active and have accomplished a great deal! The board is very pleased with their commitment and focus and we think you will be too. I know you will be appreciative of the extensive listing of processors and their services. As we raise the awareness of the unique qualities of Suri fiber within the marketplace, we will take steps toward realizing our vision. We are laying the groundwork now for our future success as a fiber producing livestock industry.

The Nominating Committee has come up with a great group of candidates for the upcoming board of directors' election. You will soon be receiving candidate statements and ballots in the mail. Please do not forget to vote! New board members will be announced at the Symposium.

I have recently returned home from the SRC meeting in Nashville and can report that the reorganization of that committee into Suri and Huacaya divisions is going smoothly. With the expansion of the SRC to 10 members and the addition of three new Suri members; Suzanne Backer, Vicki Trimmerger and Kristina Flegel, I feel the Suri community is well represented. The integration of the Suri Breed Standard into the show rules and other show system activities is moving forward.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at the Summer Symposium and yearly meeting at Estes Park, CO in August. You really won't want to miss this event!

Sincerely,

SURI NETWORK

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

As an association of Suri breeders, the Suri Network is constantly looking to the future. Recent activities have included the development of a youth program for FFA and 4-H. The development of current pilot programs focus on education and future alpaca owners.

Please support the Suri Network by providing a gift membership to new owners. For every membership you gift, you receive \$10.00 off of your renewal membership - a win-win for all!

The creation of the Suri Network Product Development committee is focused on several goals, which includes the education of the general public on the qualities and uses of Suri fiber. This committee is also continuing to focus on practical solutions of making products from Suri fiber.

Research is an ongoing objective in several areas. A meaningful luster study has been conducted over the last several years. Now a co-funded project with the Alpaca Research Foundation to go into phase II of this study is being proposed. Health issues, and the gathering of measurable data on Suris, is a continual project. Data that will help make important decision in improving the Suri Network Breed Standard.

Show competition is of high interest and the Suri Network continues to make practical improvements through the AOBA Show Division. The association has made scholarships available to apprentice judges and funded all Suri Judges' clinics to enhance their knowledge and experience in judging as well as helping them become a qualified judge sooner.

See "Benefits" - continued on Page 7

Suri Alpaca - Rarest of Breeds, Ultimate Natural Fiber

SURI NETWORK SUMMER SYMPOSIUM AUGUST 14 – 17, 2008 - ESTES PARK, CO

Registration material for the upcoming Suri Network Symposium in Estes Park, CO has been mailed to all members. Don't miss out on this wonderful, educational event. REGISTER NOW!

We have added some new sponsorship opportunities so your farm can be a sponsor of each day's meals.

- \$450 sponsorship for Friday's Breakfast and Lunch, August 15th.
- \$550 sponsorship for Saturday's Breakfast, Lunch and afternoon hors d' oeuvres, August 16th.
- \$350 sponsorship for Sunday's Breakfast, August 17th.

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.
- Special thank you signage for the day.
- Recognition in the symposium notebook, the next issue of PurelySuri Magazine, Suri Network website, and introduction at that day's events.
- 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*).

More than one farm may sponsor a day's meal events. If you are interesting in becoming a meal sponsor, please contact the Suri Network Office at 970-586-5876 or email office@SuriNetwork.org.

THANK YOU TO SURI FLEECE SHOW AND SYMPOSIUM SPONSORS Jim & Gini Barker, Sweetbriar Suri Alpaca Farm, and Dale & Jan Davis, Derwydd Alpacas.

Donors of Auction Items or Services will receive the following marketing benefits:

- 1) Publicity in the Conference Notebook next to the donated item/service.
- 2) Publicity on the Suri Network website next to the donated item/service.
- 3) Publicity through a blast email prior to the conference which promotes the donated items/services.
- 4) Publicity in the 2008 PurelySuri Fall magazine thanking the donors.
- 5) Publicity in the upcoming May 2008 Suri Network News promoting the donated items/service.
- 6) A Publicity opportunity at the auction to be on stage and talk about their donated product/service immediately prior to it being auctioned.

(Printed publicity means – donated by “company, person, & contact info”)

LIVE AUCTION DONATIONS AS OF June 25, 2008:

- Suri Bronze Sculpture — The Suri Network is again auctioning the limited edition “Suri Bronze.” The winning bidder will get to display the bronze sculpture at their farm for one year and be spotlighted in a two-page farm profile in the next PurelySuri magazine, receive recognition in the Suri Network News, and on www.SuriNetwork.org. THANK YOU to Bill & Emi Koopman of KFF Suri Alpacas for being the 2007 highest bidders.
- Custom Designed Belt Buckle — donated by Susan & Darrell Gray, Images of the Heart & Soul
- Custom Suri Sculpture — donated by Judy Steele, Polo Field Farm/Alpacas by Design
- Suri Shawl (2007 First Place at AOBA Nationals) — donated by Susan Simonton, Little Gidding Farm Suri Alpacas
- 2 for 1 Alpaca Transport Package up to 3,000 mi. — donated by Caliente Alpaca Transport
- Ranch Profile (value \$1950) in American Livestock Magazine — donated by Jeanine Mensch, American Livestock Magazine
- Full Day of Veterinary Services from Pam Walker, DVM — donated by Jack & Miriam Donaldson, Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm
- Full day of fleece evaluation/sorting course on your farm from Mary Lou Clingan — donated by Jack & Miriam Donaldson, Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm
- Full day of Veterinary Services on your farm from Dr. Toni Cotton — donated by Drs. Toni & Gary Cotton, Suris of the Western Slope
- Microscope — donated by Bruce Armstrong, Useful Lama Items
- Suri Only Peru Trip — donated by Dr. Renzo Morante

by *Toni Cotton, DVM*

Over the past several months, the Suri Network Research committee has been communicating with research professionals in an effort to finalize the current Suri fiber project and initiate future research. We have had conference calls discussing our goal which has been identifying the “measurable” characteristics of Suri fiber that make it unique and desirable to the textile industry. We have been working with Dr. Helmet Hergeth from NCSU and Dr. Chris Lupton from Texas A + M as well as Angus McColl. The data analysis of the current fiber project is underway and Dr. Lupton is the acting “research consultant” to the Suri Network. He will have the final analysis to present to the membership at the 2008 Summer Symposium. The research committee is happy to announce that Dr. Lupton and Angus McColl have sent a proposal into ARF for funding in a future Suri Fiber Research Project that the Suri Network has agreed to co-fund. This is exciting news for the Suri Industry as our goal has been to initiate Suri Fiber Research by professionals in the fiber and textile industry and with this current research proposal, we have met our goal!

The title of the proposed project is: Evaluation of two objective methods for measuring luster in Suri alpaca fiber, comparison with subjective luster assessments, and correlation with other physical properties. The following abstract is a brief description of the project. 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 proposal is currently being reviewed by ARF and we are waiting to hear whether or not they are going to co-fund this research. We will notify the membership as soon as we hear the final decision on funding. If any members are interested in serving on the Research Committee, we are in need of a few motivated individuals to work closely with the board liaison to ensure the future success of this committee. Please contact Dr. Toni Cotton at camelidvet@surisofthewesternslope.com for information.

BREED STANDARDS COUNCIL

by *Dick Walker*

Much progress is being made in the area of Expected Progency Differences (EPDs). Having approved a Suri Breed Standard we are positioned very well for moving forward in this area. Susan Tellez, BSC administrator, and I have had several meetings with Mark Enns, PHD, Animal Science Dept at CSU regarding the development of the database necessary to develop EPDs for Suris. We are currently evaluating the variety of data compiled by breeders in an effort to determine what specific criteria will be included in the database. Dr. Enns will be attending the BSC meeting in Estes Park to more fully explain the development of this program as well as answer questions on EPDs. This is an ongoing process and there will be ample opportunity for member comments and input before a final program is adopted. There will be much discussion on this at the Symposium.

In conjunction with our work with CSU we are currently beta testing a Suri Classification System, based on traits as ranked in the BS, for use in compiling a more inclusive list and ranking of Suri traits, both fiber and conformational. On a trial basis only, a small sampling of herds from across the country are being utilized to test the feasibility of using this classification system on both full fleeced and shorn Suris. The results of this effort will be presented at the Symposium in the BSC meeting. If you are seeking more information on this program contact either myself or Susan Tellez.



Suri Network Board of Trustees:

Dick Walker, *President* (alpacas@supersuris.com)
Miriam Donaldson, *Vice President* (alpcajack@aol.com)
Toni Cotton, *Treasurer* (bestbrd@bright.net)
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SURI NETWORK PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE LETTER (SNPDC)

Dear Suri Network Members,

Over the last 18 months, **the Suri Network Product Development Committee (SNPDC) has spent a great deal of time researching the state of Suri in the U.S.** in order to develop a comprehensive marketing plan for Suri fiber. To do this, we have surveyed SN members, mill processors, co-ops, knitting and weaving shop owners, as well as Buyers at department stores. With all of this information, **the SNPDC has created a multi-faceted Action Plan, which has been approved by the SN Board of Directors.**

Included with this issue of the Suri Network News, you will find that Action Plan as well as a variety of items which we will discuss below. We encourage everyone to read through all of the material to get a full understanding of where we are going. The SNPDC is excited about the prospects that lie ahead for all of us, and **we believe strongly that developing a viable fiber market will serve to benefit all Suri owners – through added income from the fiber, more focused breeding programs, as well as the sale of production males for fiber farms.**

Please keep in mind that we will need the help of all members to make this endeavor succeed. That “help” can be as simple as sending your fiber to a co-op or a mill – we cannot make progress if processors, co-ops, and end users don’t know about the fiber! But **we also realize we need to give you the tools to succeed. To that end, we are moving forward with several near-term initiatives:**

- We are **setting up booths at fiber festivals to introduce spinners to Suri.** There are lots of misconceptions about spinning Suri, and we are going to “steer the ship in a different direction”. **We are going to have a “drop in and spin” theme, with wheels and instructors on hand to encourage people to sit down and spin!** We will have finished goods on hand to show people what can be done with the fiber, and we will be passing out sample bags with Suri roving and a business card that directs spinners to Suri farms to find more! **If you send us your washed, white fiber (or any color roving), we will turn it into roving and place your farm name on the web page so that we can connect spinners with your farm!**
- **We are going to work with several knitting and weaving pattern designers to develop patterns specifically for Suri and Suri blends.** We believe this will send Suri in a whole new direction and **make you and/or the co-op you work with infinitely more successful at selling your yarns!** The average knitter thinks about what they want to make, they find a pattern they like, and the pattern tells them what yarn to use – but today, there are very few patterns for Suri, which makes it quite difficult for you to sell your yarns. We are going to change that, and **by doing so we believe we will set ourselves apart from the rest of the alpaca industry!**
- Over the next 12 months, **we will be developing and staging seminars to educate you** on a variety of topics that will make you better sellers of Suri fiber. **First up – Beatriz Canedo Patino – a world renowned fashion designer who uses primarily Suri – will be flying in from Bolivia to speak specifically at the SN Symposium!**
- We will have **a series of articles in both the SN Newsletter and Purely Suri.**
- **We are in the process of setting up a blog** so everyone can follow our progress. We will be posting comments monthly and encourage everyone to follow along!

We also have long-term initiatives such as focusing on Suri as fabric, further research and development of Suri fiber, becoming more involved with F2F, and developing a branding concept for Suri grown and processed in North America. While there are lots of other ideas that can be pursued, the immediate focus needs to be on introducing the public to this great fiber, creating demand for what we have today, and taking advantage of this time to educate ourselves on fleece preparation and to learn about the attributes of Suri as a yarn – blended or pure.

The materials attached include:

- **The full Business and Action Plan** covering our findings, where we believe we need to start, and where we want to go.
- **An excerpt copy of an article which we were able to get published in Spin-Off magazine about Suri fiber.** You can make copies of this and hand it out at local fairs and alpaca events to begin showing people what can be done with Suri fiber. This is the first time Spin-Off has run an article on Suri alpaca and we couldn’t be more pleased! **Spin-Off Magazine has 38,000 readers who will see this article and who will probably want to get their hands on some Suri fiber after reading it!**
- A copy of an article that just ran in American Livestock Magazine that one of our committee members wrote on shearing. **Remember – good fiber production includes good shearing!**
- **A summary of options for everyone to use when determining where to send your fiber.** Two out the three co-ops are actively using Suri today and a third wants to work with the SNPDC to develop some products. There are also many mill options (not a complete list – if you use a mill that you think processes Suri well and it’s not on here, let us know, we are happy to put them on!). Bottom line...**the more we get our fiber out into the market, the more these “processors” see the need to develop Suri and Suri blend products, and the easier R&D becomes, etc....**
- Sign up sheets – **we need volunteers!** We are setting up educational booths at two fiber festivals this year, and we hope to get into several more in 2009. We need people who can spin Suri well, we need people to man the booths, and if you are good at

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putting events together, we could really use a coordinator for these events! We also need people to help with the educational seminars – there are lots of things for everyone to learn! **And last but not least....SEND US YOUR WASHED WHITE FIBER (OR ROVING OF ANY COLOR)!**

Thank you everyone, and we look forward to working with all of you as we take our industry into the next phase of development!
Sincerely,

The Suri Network Product Development Committee

Liz Vahlkamp, Chairperson

Eric Morti, Co-Chair

Christine Perala Gardiner

Peggy Broz

Holli Cox

Ann Mayes

Claudia Raessler

SNPDC BUSINESS PLAN 2008

MISSION STATEMENT: The purpose of the SN Product Development Committee is to focus on US Suri Fiber and to discover the numerous outlets for the National Suri Clip. Their mission is to keep the SN membership informed therefore involved in this discovery process.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The goals of the Suri Network Product Development Committee will be to:

- Gather Suri Fiber information pertinent to US Suri breeders
- Determine quantity of annual US Suri fiber production
- Define scope of national Suri fiber industry
- Educate Suri breeders on Suri fiber characteristics and its ultimate usage
- Discover numerous outlets for US Suri fleece clip
- Develop Suri products
- Pursue buyers for end products developed from Suri fleece
- Pursue manufacturers of Suri end products

HISTORY: The Suri Network Product Development Committee (the “SNPDC”) was formed in August, 2006 in recognition of the need to develop a market for Suri fiber and associated end products. The membership realized that further advancement of this fiber would 1) provide additional income to existing breeders, 2) create additional sales avenues for male suris not being placed into the breeding population, 3) further improve the fiber qualities of the national herd, and 4) create greater awareness within the U.S. of the Suri alpaca.

Since that time, the SNPDC has researched a variety of topics to develop a comprehensive business plan to advance the use of domestic Suri fiber. We have explored a number of areas, including:

- 1) What Suri breeders are currently doing with their fiber. (EXHIBIT A)
- 2) How much U.S. Suri fiber is currently being processed each year.
- 3) What outlets are available to Suri breeders to process their fleece. (EXHIBIT B)
- 4) What knowledge exists within the U.S. textile industry for processing Suri – from mini-mills to industrial processors.
- 5) What assistance is available to those breeders who want to market their own fiber.
- 6) What assistance is available to Co-ops who want to market Suri fiber.
- 7) What is known about Suri fiber beyond the alpaca community.
- 8) What role the SNPDC should play long-term to best promote our fiber.
- 9) What sorts of end products are achievable for Suri and what types of products would yield the best returns for our members.

FINDINGS: Overall, the SNPDC has found that while very few farms are processing their Suri fiber, the potential for high margin end products exists, as long as there is member support for research, product development, member participation, and strong marketing/product awareness. Our specific findings are as follows:

- 1) There are 30,647 Suri alpacas registered in the U.S., according to ARI. Assuming an average of three lbs of blanket on every animal, that equates to 91,941 lbs of annual Suri fiber available for production. However, in speaking with processors, co-ops, and breeders, it appears that only about 12,600 lbs, or 14% of the annual national clip is being processed.
- 2) The demand for Suri fiber to be processed by mini-mills has, over the years, created a community of small processors who are relatively knowledgeable about processing Suri. However, the Suri community has taken little advantage of the co-op system. As

See “Business Plan” - continued on Page 6

- such, there has been minimal demand via co-ops and/or other commercial businesses to process Suri. The result is that industrial processors do not have the equipment or the knowledge to process 100% Suri, nor do they currently have a motivation to pursue research on Suri fiber.
- 3) Outside of the alpaca community, very few people know of Suri or have worked with it. The result is misconceptions and a “default” to the word “alpaca”.
 - 4) The marketing perception of “alpaca” among non-breeders conjures up descriptions such as “warm and fuzzy” and “low cost luxury”.
 - 5) The marketing perception among non-breeders who are familiar with Suri conjures up descriptions such as “elegant”, “having drape”, “soft”.
 - 6) There is a belief among many Suri breeders that the fiber will be best suited in a woven form, but little research exists to support or dismiss this idea. Additionally, very little research has been done on the contribution that Suri can offer to the knitting community in the form of blending.
 - 7) Due to the lack of research and understanding of our fiber in processed form, the breeding goals for Suri owners is currently limited.
 - 8) With only limited amounts of Suri being processed, there is little in the way of support for breeders to sell end products.
 - 9) Over the last five years, there are a number of outlets that have been created for Suri breeders to process their Suri fiber. These include mini-mills, co-ops that re-pay with end product, co-ops that re-pay with cash, and private businesses that offer cash or product in return for fiber.
 - 10) Unlike U.S. “alpaca” which must compete with a multitude of imports, there is very little Suri being imported into the U.S. The result is an open market, available to U.S. Suri breeders to develop.
 - 11) The small amount of Suri that is being imported into the U.S., either in the form of yarn or fabric, carries a significant price premium over “alpaca”.

CONCLUSIONS TO FINDINGS:

- 1) The Suri breeding community needs to have a majority of its clip put into a processed form, whether that is through the use of mini-mills, co-ops, or wholesalers/retailers. The processed form can range from roving to yarn to fabric. Putting our fiber into the market will a) create more demand in the artisan community, where strong profit margins exist, and b) demonstrate to the commercial sector that there is a demand for the fiber, thereby driving more sophisticated processing options.
- 2) The SNPDC needs to take advantage of the window of opportunity to introduce and promote U.S. Suri fiber while there is little in the way of imported products.
- 3) The SNPDC’s role should be to support SN members through a) public awareness of Suri fiber, b) education for breeders and fiber users, c) research and product development, d) tools for breeders and co-ops to more readily sell products with Suri, and d) general advertising.
- 4) The SNPDC’s role should not include creating its own co-op as there are enough options for members today, and new ones being developed all the time.

CHALLENGES:

- 1) The state of the textile industry in the U.S. – There has been a large increase in the number of mini-mills in the U.S. and Canada, largely as a result of the demand to process alpaca fiber. However, the mini-mill machinery has significant limitations as to the quantity that it can produce (ten lbs/day/machine) and the quality it can produce (relative to other yarns and fabrics found in standard retail stores). Additionally, the industrial textile industry in the U.S. is small, and standard industrial equipment is designed to accommodate woolen products, not Suri. It is the hope of the SNPDC that as more Suri farms contribute fiber into the processing chain, the textile industry will recognize the need for machinery that can handle Suri fiber and either purchase or develop the appropriate equipment.
- 2) The “Chicken or the Egg” problem – the SNPDC recognizes the need for Suri breeders to put their fiber into the processing chain. However, with little awareness of/demand for Suri in the crafts community, and with little done in the way of research and development, there is minimal support to offer breeders who have their fiber processed through a mini-mill, thus discouraging fiber processing. Additionally, there is little to no support available to co-ops and wholesalers/retailers to differentiate Suri from other fiber. If that support existed, the SNPDC believes that superior profit margins could be realized for Suri breeders.
- 3) Expectations of the SN membership re: the value of Suri fiber – historically Suri fiber could command a price of \$3.00 - \$5.00 per ounce in raw form. However, it is a very small community of fiber artists that will purchase at that price, and thus, very little fiber is disseminated into the crafts community. However, some segment of the Suri community will be reticent to contribute their fiber to the processing queue if they believe that they can find a market for raw fiber at \$4.00/oz.

See “Business Plan” - continued on Page 7

“Business Plan” - continued from Page 6

ACTION PLAN: In order to properly promote Suri, a variety of issues need to be tackled. The SNPDC believes that with a multi-faceted approach, successful promotion of Suri can be achieved. To this end, the SNPDC plans to do the following:

- 1) Promote Suri from a “bottoms up” approach. We intend to set up an educational booth at a series of fiber festivals to educate the spinning community about Suri fiber. We will use donated fiber from SN members. In return, those members who donate fiber will have their name and contact information posted on a dedicated page of the SN website. Spinners who want to work more with the fiber can go to that site and find a person in their local area. Additional ideas include providing specific instructive classes at these festivals.
- 2) Pursue processing research. We will pursue working with North Carolina State, possibly in conjunction with co-ops and/or processors, to learn more about the processing characteristics of Suri fiber. Research will include, but not be limited to, studying twist, static electricity, slickness, shedding, and the applications of different lock structures.
- 3) Pursue product development. While the SNPDC would like to pursue Suri as a fabric in the long run, we believe that we first need to understand Suri as a yarn. This would include understanding not only the characteristics in #2 above, but also, the additive values of Suri as a blend to a variety of other fibers such as wool, huacaya, silk, and synthetics. Product development will also include supporting the SN membership with more immediate tools such as knitting design patterns that work with 100% Suri and with Suri blends. These patterns will also be made available to co-ops and wholesalers/retailers. The overall objective will be to make Suri yarns more accessible and usable for the general crafts community.
- 4) Provide general advertising. Once the first three objectives are underway, we believe that a general advertising campaign to educate both the crafts community and the general public would be worthwhile. The SNPDC believes that Suri needs to be separated from the word “alpaca”. As noted earlier, we believe that there is a higher profit margin for Suri when it can be marketed as “elegant”, “adding drape” and “adding luster”. We have concerns that the association with “alpaca” may reduce that margin and associate Suri with “low cost luxury”, which we want to avoid.
- 5) Pursue branding. This would be a long-term goal. The idea would be to develop a standard of processing Suri that creates a high quality, dependable product. Processors who follow the standards could use a branded logo/label. The SNPDC would market the logo/label to the general public with the association of high quality.
- 6) Educate members. The SNPDC proposes to have a column in both the SN Newsletter and Purely Suri Magazine which addresses a variety of topics pertinent to the successful processing of Suri. Those topics may include but not be limited to: shearing techniques, nutritional factors, research findings, breeding goals as related to end product usage, etc.

BUDGET: TBD

SUMMARY: Overall, the SNPDC believes that there is great opportunity to develop a market within the U.S. for domestic Suri fiber. Development of this market will be driven by SN members contributing their fiber into the processing chain; SN members supporting research and development as well as product development; and general advertising on the part of the SNPDC. It is the belief of the SNPDC that developing such a market will enhance the value of all suris, provide alternative markets for profit, and further strengthen the long-term breeding goals of the U.S. Suri community. Thus, we recommend that the SN Board formally approve the SNPDC’s 2008 Business Plan and the pursuit of the Action Plan referenced above.

“Benefits” - continued from Page 1

Education through symposiums, magazine articles, and newsletters is another high priority. The Suri Network works hard to develop relationships with universities, veterinarians, professors and other knowledge bases to bring quality information to its membership.

All these goals, take the support and participation of members, and in the end provide the most important benefit to the member –knowledge and a basis for the future of the industry.

- Subscription to two issues per year of PurelySuri Magazine.
- Receive Suri Network Newsletter.
- Option to attend the Suri Network Summer Symposium at member’s discounted rate.
- Listing on the Suri Network web site.
- Listing in the Suri Network Membership Directory printed once each year.
- Option to purchase marketing materials (Suri Network marketing folder, Suri Network DVD, Suri Network fliers, back issues of PurelySuri Magazine, etc.)
- Option to enter the world’s largest annual all Suri Fleece Show at member prices.
- Option to participate in the Suri Network Suri Breed Standard Council.
- Option to participate in any of Suri Network’s working committees (Marketing, Research, Education/Conference, Product Development, Suri Network Youth Program, Show, Nominating, Governance, and more.)
- Support for the future of the Suri Industry through a variety of research projects, FFA & 4-H youth programs, breed standard research, apprentice judging scholarships at the Suri fleece show, and more!

EXHIBIT A1

2006 Fiber Questionnaire Summary Results

Total number of respondents = 161 (29%)

1. How many pounds of 2006 raw Suri blanket fleece was your clip (by color)

White	3467 lbs.
Beige, Light Fawn, Medium Fawn	1923 lbs.
Dark Fawn, Brown (all shades)	1599 lbs.
Bay Black and True Black	982 lbs.
Grey (all shades)	301 lbs.
2. What percentage of your 2006 Suri blanket fleece do you still have?
39 still have 100%, another 39 have between 95% and 50% still left, another 22 have between 49% and 5% left
None 38 have none of their 2006 Suri blanket fleece left.
3. Did you have any of your 2006 Suri fleece blankets micron tested?
Yes *74 of the respondents had their fleece blankets micron tested.*
No *85 of the respondents did not have their fleece blankets micron tested*
4. By your best estimate, complete how many pounds were in each category.

lb. 16 - 22 micron	2630 lbs.
lb. 23 - 26 micron	3658 lbs.
lb. 27 - or greater micron	983 lbs.
5. In your best estimate, what percentage of your 2006 Suri blanket fleece was less than 5 1/2 inches long.
(*Overall, the answers were all over the place without a pattern -- difficult to analyze.*)
% White
% Beige, Light Fawn, Medium Fawn
% Dark Fawn, Brown (all Shades)
% Bay Black, True Black
% Gray (all shades)
6. Would you be interested in having the Suri Network develop an outlet for your fleece?
Yes, I would like an outlet for my fleece. *152 responded "yes" to this question*
No, I already have an outlet for my fleece. *8 responded "no" to this question for various reasons*

COMING SOON **!!!!THE SNPDC BLOG!!!!**

Stay tuned, we expect to have it up and running over the next few weeks. We will use the blog to provide educational topics for members, post events that are coming up, discuss the results of various events, and allow the membership to follow our progress as we develop the fiber segment of the industry. Overtime, members will have a chance to interact with us on the blog to ensure full participation. Posts will initially be made once a month and cover a variety of topics. We will have a link from the SN website to the blog

So stay tuned and we'll let you know when we are up and running!!!

EXHIBIT A2

2007 Breeders Fiber Results

Number of Respondents	52		
Number of Animals		<u>Estimated Poundage</u>	<u>Avg Poundage/Animal</u>
White	261	944.76	3.62
Beige, Lt Fawn, Med Fawn	187	654.03	3.50
Dark Fawn and Brown	194	645.01	3.32
Bay and True Black	88	315.05	3.58
Grey	18	38.9	2.16
Multi	15	53	3.53
Total Animals	763	2650.75	
Average Animals/Farm	14.7		
What % of Suri blanket do you still have?		<u># Farms</u>	
100%		38	
50% - 99%	9		Of these, 4 had 90% or more, the rest 70-75%
< 50%	5		Of these, 3 had 0% left, the other were 20% and 30%
Did you have any fleeces micron tested?			
Yes	25		
No	27		
Estimated Poundage in each micron category		<u>lbs</u>	
16-22 microns		577	
23-26 microns		930	
27 or greater		453	
What % of blanket was < 5.5" long		<u># Farms</u>	
100%		19	
50% - 99%		23	
< 50%		10	
Would you like SN to develop outlet for your fleece?		<u># Farms</u>	
Yes		48	
No	4		Of these, two were very supportive of our efforts, the other two said 'yes' and 'no'(?).

Comments

Ranges, but overall, everyone was supportive. Some comments were:

"Keep it simple"

"We need to find an outlet or the Suri industry will be in real trouble"

"We need a Suri mill and marketing into the high fashion industry"

"We would like to see a Suri co-op"

"Let's find a way to connect with spinning guilds"

"We would like a list of mills that process Suri"

"We would like to see a mill that can process long Suri so we don't have to cut it"

EXHIBIT B - PROCESSOR SUMMARY INFORMATION

	Stonehedge	Haneke	New Era	AFCNA**	Exotic Fibers	Still River	Suri-AI	Quail Run	Rach Alpacas	NAAFP	Kansas Fiber Mill	Fiber Pieces	New England Fiber Co-op	Flaggy Meadow Fiber Works
SURI EXPERIENCE														
Suri produced/yr.	250 lbs	100 lbs	400 lbs	0 lbs	200 lbs	100 lbs	350 lbs	750 lbs		Unknown	400 lbs	400 lbs	4000 lbs	800 lbs
# Spindles in machinery	24	8	4 and 8	Industrial	48	8	8	Industrial		Industrial		Industrial	Industrial	4 and 8
Total lbs processed/day	26 lbs	4.5 lbs	10 lbs		14 lbs	7 lbs	4 lbs	13.6 lbs		Unknown	7 lbs			14 - 20 lbs
Length of Suri produced	4 - 10 inches	2 - 5.5 inches	3 - 6 inches		2 - 5.5 inches		2 - 5.5 inches	2 - 5.5 inches	3 - 7 inches	>3 and < 6 inches	2 - 6 inches	2 - 5.5 inches	1 - 5 inches	2 - 6 inches
Process 100% Suri?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No - blend	Yes	No	No	Yes
Process Suri < 22 microns?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, if blended	Yes, if blended	Yes	Yes	Yes, if blended	Yes	Yes, but prefer higher	Yes, but challenging	Yes, if blended	Yes, if blended	Yes
Process Suri > 26 microns?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, if blended	Yes, if blended	Yes	Yes	Yes, if blended	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, if blended	Yes, if blended	Yes
% processed < 22 microns?	Not much	20%	25%	0%	0%	25%	25%			Unknown	20%		25%	20%
% processed > 26 microns?	25%	60%	25%	80%	0%	50%	15%			Unknown	50%		None	10%
Products produced with Suri	Roving, Yarn, Felt, Batting	Roving, Yarn, Felt, Batting	Mostly yarn, some roving	Blanket	Fabric, yarn	Yarn	Mostly yarn, some weaving	Roving, yarn, throws	Clouds, batts, sliver roving, yarn	Ruana, duvet, yarns	rovings, yarn, felt, weavings	Knitting Yarn, Rug Yarn, Home Products	Yarns - blended with huacaya, knitted and woven finished products	Yarns, roving, batts, felt
GENERAL PROCESSING INFO														
Minimum poundage requirements	10 lbs for yarn, no min. for roving	2 lbs.	No min., but charges start at 2 lbs.	No min.	50 lbs	Min. Cost of \$100/order of yarn	1 lbs.	5 lbs. Will run less; but charge for 5 lbs.	No minimum	N/A	1 lbs	No minimum	Varies with product ordered - typically 2-4 lbs	Will process any poundage, but customer pays for minimum of 3 lbs finished yarn.

	Stonehedge	Haneke	New Era	AFCNA**	Exotic Fibers	Still River	Suri-AI	Quail Run	Rach Alpacas	NAAFP	Kansas Fiber Mill	Fiber Pieces	New England Fiber Co-op	Flaggy Meadow Fiber Works
Current turn around time	5 mos.	1 yr.	8 wks	No delay, collects clip 1x/yr.	2 wks	8-9 mos down to fingering wt, 2-3 mos. For lace wt.	3 mos.	12 wks.	6 wks.	2 runs per year - Feb. and July	6 wks from sched date	Depends on when Fiber Pieces receives minimum poundage to place order (200-300 pounds). Then 4-6 weeks.	N/A	8 weeks
PROCESSING COSTS														
Roving/ Finished lb	\$7.95/100% Suri, \$6.45/ blend	\$21 Roving, \$27 pencil roving	\$26	No charge	\$7.75 CAN Slivers, \$11.50 CAN Pencil		\$7.25 roving or batts, min. order \$29	\$16	\$18		\$8.50 - \$10.50		No charge	
Yarn/ Finished lb	\$29	\$38 - \$40	\$41	No charge	\$15 CAN		\$30	\$32	\$30	Depends on product. Information available to members only.	\$20 - \$35	Depends on plan chosen by participant, but would range from less than \$26 to \$42	No charge	\$29 - \$43
Other services offered	None	Dying, knitting machine	Dying, small knitting machine, access to weaving machine	Custom dyes for bulk purchase of raw fiber. Custom labels for min. 144 skeins.	Fabric, knitting machine	Dying	Dying, weaving	Weaving is specialty	None		dyeing and weaving	Design services to purchasers of yarn	No dying. Promote 22 natural colors.	
Quality Control	Nothing specific	Nothing specific	One person running machines. Owner examines each order when finished. Each job has instruction card that follows it through process.	All fiber graded, core bale testing done, inspection of finished product.	Nothing specific.	Tag follows job through process.	Follows products in mkt to ensure they are producing quality product.	Nothing specific	Machines cleaned between each run, finished yarn inspected for flaws.	Shearing and sorting are monitored closely. Graders will come to member farm and sort/grade on day of shearing. Member pays for shipping to specific site, depending on grade of fiber.	Every step has QC checks and they have graders		They have sorters and skitters.	Mill run only by owners. Inspect all yarns to ensure they meet order. Wash all yarns after processing as well as prior to spinning.

Guidance to customers	Stonehedge	Haneke	New Era	AFCNA**	Exotic Fibers	Still River	Suri-AI	Quail Run	Rach Alpacas	NAAFP	Kansas Fiber Mill	Fiber Pieces	New England Fiber Co-op	Flaggy Meadow Fiber Works
	Gives guidance on type of yarn to produce with raw fiber sent in, type of blend if any.	Gives guidance on type of yarn to produce with raw fiber sent in, type of blend if any.	Gives guidance on type of yarn to produce with raw fiber sent in, type of blend if any.	No guidance on buying products	Gives guidance on type of yarn to produce with raw fiber sent in, type of blend if any.	Gives guidance on type of yarn to produce with raw fiber sent in, type of blend if any.	Offers knitting patterns - 4-5 yr. Offers color guidance.	Nothing specific	Give pricing guidance, marketing strategy, appropriate yarn and skein sizes, blends		Has some knitting patterns for Suri. Gives guidance on variety of topics		N/A	Recommends types of blends, types of yarns.
Certifications	None	None	20+ blue ribbons including peoples choice award from FZF.	Scouring mill has "Certificate of Sterilization"	None - 30+ yrs. in textile industry	Master Dyer, Master Weaver	None, but in business 10+ years due to satisfied, repeat customers.	None	None				Certified by Co-op of America as National Green Company	
BUSINESS MODEL														
Business classification	Mill	Mill	Mill	Co-op	Mill	Mill	Mill	Mill	Mill	Co-op	Mill	Private Company selling to retail stores, designers and knitters	Fiber pool	Mill
How are members compensated?	N/A	N/A	N/A	Members pay initial \$250 fee for ownership. Then, can buy product at 50% discount and receive distribution of profit annually if co-op is profitable.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Several options: 1) Member can allow producer to make product and sell. Member receives cash. 2) Member can have finished product sent back and sell at retail. 3) Member can have finished product sent back and sell wholesale.	N/A	Farms pay a fee for processing and can either receive product back for sale in their own store, or they can sell product on "consignment" via Fiber Pieces sales program and receive a check when the yarn is sold. The benefit is that farms can pool their fiber to have it spun at a commercial mill instead of a mini-mill and reduce their costs.	Members are compensated through stock ownership and fiber banks are established for each member to purchase product at discounted prices.	N/A

	Stonehedge	Haneke	New Era	AFCNA**	Exotic Fibers	Still River	Suri-AI	Quail Run	Rach Alpacas	NAAFP	Kansas Fiber Mill	Fiber Pieces	New England Fiber Co-op	Flaggy Meadow Fiber Works
If selling product for customers - do you sell wholesale or retail?	N/A	N/A	N/A	Both - 80% wholesale, 20% retail	N/A	Retail	Sells for customers at both wholesale and retail. Suri-AI spins yarn, gives half back to customer with free processing.	N/A	Have sold for customers, but customer decides price and channel	Co-op can sell wholesale or retail	Retails and consigns for in-state customers.	Selling wholesale, but not for customers	Sell wholesale to both members and retail channels.	N/A
Types of products sold?	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yarn, apparel	N/A	Yarn, apparel, roving, dyes	Yarn, knitting kits, woven shirts	N/A	Raw, cloud, roving, slivers, batts, and yarn	Yarn, finished products	Yarn, weavings	Yarn, rugs	Yarn, knitted and woven products	N/A

** AFCNA has 10,000 lbs of Suri sitting in its warehouse, sorted, washed, and ready to process. However, of the total poundage, 5,000 lbs is between 26 and 30 microns, and 3,000 lbs is greater than 30 microns. So, they are trying to find an outlet for the higher micron fibers.

For a complete set of facts on each processor listed, we encourage you to visit their website or give them a call.

MARKETING COMMITTEE REMINDERS

by *Jim Barker*

The new marketing folder has been a great success and we want to encourage you to use it as a marketing tool for your farm or ranch along with the following items (order can be made on line at SuriNetwork.org or contact the Suri Network office).

Marketing Folder (full package with magazine, DVD and inserts)	1 or 2	\$17.50 each
	3 to 5	\$15.50 each
	6 or more	\$13.50 each
Marketing Folder only	1 or 2	\$6.00 each
	3 to 5	\$5.00 each
	6 or more	\$4.00 each
Marketing DVD		\$10.00 each
Suri Network Fliers		\$.25 each
Magazines	All past issues	\$1.00 each
	Current Issue	\$2.50 each

Don't forget that any Suri Network member can give a gift membership for a new farm and receive \$10 off their next dues renewal. This is a great way to get new Suri breeders involved in the industry.

ALL SURI JUDGES CLINIC—A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

by *Jim Barker*

Tuesday June 3, through Thursday June 5, 2008, were the dates for the third All Suri Judges Clinic held in Findlay, Ohio. Eleven current AOBA judges and apprentices gathered to better educate themselves in the judging of Suri alpacas. This year's clinic was led by Senior Judges/Senior Judge Trainers, Jude Anderson and Kristin Buhrmann and Fleece Judge/Trainer Cheryl Gehley. Organizing the clinic were Mary Lou Clingan and Stephanie Barnhart from the Judges Training and Certification Committee (JTCC), Margie Ault JTCC Administrator, and Miriam Donaldson and Jim Barker from the Suri Network.

Special thanks go to the staff of Alpaca Jack's for providing all the stalls and bedding. This year Suri Network members brought over 60 Suris to be used in the training. Breeders present were not only from Ohio but from as far away as South Carolina and Tennessee. The Suri Network wishes to thank the following for taking time out of their busy schedules to bring Suris to the clinic and/or act as handlers.

Leonard Bates—Labrador Acres Suris
Jim Barker—Sweetbriar Suri alpaca Farm
Bill, Mary, and Paula Buchner—Alpacas of Greater Tenn.
Mary Lou Clingan—Waywood Farm alpacas
Jack & Miriam Donaldson—Alpaca Jack's Suri Farm
Tim Hirt—Erie Bleu Alpacas
Ed Hinshaw—Sea Ayre Suris
Cathy Hulbert—JC Alpaca Farm
Carolyn Marquette—AlpacaRosa
Bill Pearce—Five Star Alpacas
Joe Osborn—Christies Dream Weaving Suri's
Matt Petty—Alpaca Meadows
Tonia Turner—JCH Farms of West Virginia
Joyce White—Tinkers Creek Alpacas
Erin Williams—A.J's Alpaca Ranch
Marsha Williams—Alpaca Valley Suris

The highlight of the clinic was the last class which saw seventeen white juvenile Suris compete against one another. The poor trainees had quite a time with that class. The trainers commented on and thanked all involved for the high quality of Suris that were presented. You should have been there!

Our sincere thanks to all involved.

by Christine Perala Gardiner, SNPDC Committee Member

Spring is in the air, and for alpaca owners, that means shearing time! As such, we on the Suri Network Product Development Committee thought it would be a great time to pass on some shearing tips for Suri owners that will maximize the return on your fiber.

- Minimize second cuts - Correct shearing to minimize second cuts is an essential step in the process of creating outstanding textiles that display the magic of Suri fiber. Where merino or huacaya fleece stands up perpendicular to the skin, the shears pass easily along the skin surface and under the fiber to cut each fiber only once. However, because of Suri drape, using a standard sheep shearing method of starting along the spine it's very easy to cut the same Suri fibers several times during shearing. This problem renders the Suri fiber potentially ruined on the shearing floor, where it may be cut so many times that even long staple Suri becomes too short to process to anything more than felt.
- To mitigate this problem, we suggest starting at the belly to remove coarse fiber before starting into the prime blanket area. The early blows or passes start along the lower sides from shoulder to hip, then work upward toward the spine. By lifting the fiber with your left hand, and holding the shears in your right hand, pass along the skin, to cut each strand only once.
- How much to leave on the animal? Leave about 1/4" to 1/2" of fleece on the alpaca to reduce temperature shock and prevent sunburn. This leaves enough fiber on the skin that a Suri still looks like a Suri after shearing.
- Leg fiber has worth, so don't pass it up! - Leg fiber that is consistently between 3" and 6" in length can be processed for either warp yarn or rug weft yarn. Longer fiber is nearly impossible to process without hand cutting it in half; a real waste of time! Leg fiber more than 6" in length causes problems for health management, especially during the wet season on our farm. If your leg fiber is short, consider shearing it every other year.
- Consider your method of restraint - At Suri Futures, we are developing a Suri shearing method using tie-down restraint for optimal control in the shearing process. We have a handler dedicated to managing the alpaca's head, providing comfort during shearing that seems to really reduce the alpaca's stress level. Once restrained, the shearer has safe access to the whole fleece including the legs.
- After shearing the first side completely, then turn the alpaca over just once. Some shearers take the blanket on one side, turn over to finish removing the blanket, then shear the other parts.
- Trim the head area - To trim the sensitive area at the top of neck and the base of the head more carefully, switch from more powerful shears to quieter shears. Trimming the jowl area with hand scissors is less scary for the alpaca, and will give the shearer greater control in the final appearance. It takes some time, but a few more minutes more makes such a difference in how nice the alpaca looks all summer and fall.
- Consider trimming around the eyes on a heavy topknot - Trimming the heavy eye wool is critical to the feeling of security for a calm, well-behaved alpaca. If you like keeping some locks over the eyes, you can lift the top layer of fiber and trim all of the locks underneath, thereby thinning the top knot and allowing the Suri to see while maintaining a "Suri look".

By implementing even some of these tips this year, you will begin the process of improving the quality of your fiber while minimizing the stress level of your herd. The SNPDC believes that the North American Suri clip is something to show off and be proud of, and we encourage all Suri farms to give the public your very best!

For more information on Suri shearing technique, visit <http://www.suri-futures.com/shearing>.

!!! SEND US YOUR FIBER OR ROVING !!!

We are setting up booths at fiber festivals to educate spinners about Suri and we will be handing out samples of Suri roving!!! If you send us your fiber, we will put your name up on a Suri Network webpage dedicated to fiber. Spinners that want to find more Suri fiber will be directed to the webpage and you may get a call!

If you've got roving of any color – please consider donating it.

If you've got raw white Suri fiber that still has luster and fineness and is less than 6 inches (or can be cut to 6 inches) send it to us WASHED. Why washed? Because our mill can turn the raw fiber into roving in two weeks time if we send it washed. Otherwise, we have to get in the queue and it may be well past the festival dates when we get our fiber back in roving form. Washing instructions can be found on the Suri Network website.

In either case, send it to:
Ann Mayes, Alpacas d'Auxvasse
9266 County Road 1012
Auxvasse, MO 65231

Don't know how to wash it but want to learn? Bring 4 oz – 1 lb of raw fiber to the Suri Network Symposium in August and we will have a table set up and we'll show you how to wash it! It's easier than you think!

--Thanks! SNPDC Committee

!!!! WE NEED VOLUNTEERS !!!!

The SNPDC needs members to work booths, assist at educational events, offer your spinning skills for a few hours, and help us coordinate events. If you would like to offer your assistance, please check the areas that interest you and mail this form back to the address below:

Spin Off Autumn Retreat (SOAR) – Pocono Manor, PA, October 9th, 10th, 11th

_____ I can work as a greeter (your job as a greeter will be to welcome people into the booth, explain to them our mission, show them around the booth, and encourage them to try spinning Suri at one of the available wheels.)

_____ I can be a spinning mentor. NOTE: To be a spinning mentor, you will need to be confident enough with your spinning of Suri to assist people who come into the booth and want to learn to spin Suri. Your role will be to give pointers to them and make their experience spinning Suri as positive as possible.

Rhinebeck Sheep and Wool Festival – Rhinebeck, NY, October 18th and 19th

_____ I can work as a greeter (your job as a greeter will be to welcome people into the booth, explain to them our mission, show them around the booth, and encourage them to try spinning Suri at one of the available wheels.)

_____ I can be a spinning mentor. NOTE: To be a spinning mentor, you will need to be confident enough with your spinning of Suri to assist people who come into the booth and want to learn to spin Suri. Your role will be to give pointers to them and make their experience spinning Suri as positive as possible.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

_____ I am interested in assisting at educational events throughout the year.

_____ I am interested in coordinating an event for the SNPDC.

_____ I cannot help above, but will donate roving of any color or send in 4 oz – 1 lb of washed Suri fiber to be used at the spinning booths (See Page 15 for mailing instructions).

So we can contact you about the dates and times you would be available at any of these events, please provide your name, street address, phone and e-mail address below:

Name: _____ Farm/Ranch Name: _____

Address/City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

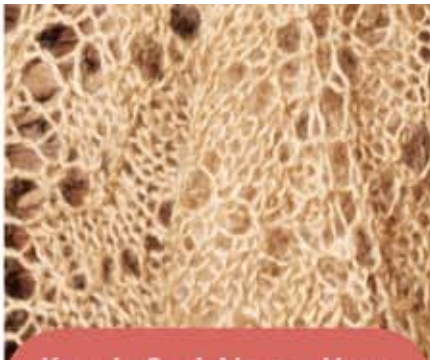
Please mail this back to:
Liz Vahlkamp
7200 Waterman Ave.
St Louis, MO 63130

Or fax Liz at:
314-727-0701

Or e-mail Liz at:
saltriveralpacas@yahoo.com

REMEMBER: It will take all of us to get this endeavor moving!!

THANK YOU to *Spin-Off Magazine* for providing the following excerpt from an article from their Summer 2008 issue. For more information, please visit their website at www.interweave.com



Kaye's Suri Alpaca Yarn

Fiber: 4 oz suri alpaca from Liz Valkamp of Salt River Alpacas.

Preparation: Semiworsted, carded, but fibers were aligned.

Drafting method: Worsted.

Wheel: Lendrum double treadle.

Wheel system: Flyer driven, scotch tension on bobbin.

Ratio (singles/plying): High speed, 17.5:1 for both singles and plying.

Singles direction spun: Z.

Singles twists per inch: 8–9.

Singles wraps per inch: 32.

Plies: 2-ply.

Plied direction spun: S.

Plied twists per inch: 4, but 3.5 after blocking.

Plied wraps per inch: 18–20.

Total yards: 600.

Yards per pound: 2,100.

Yarn classification: Laceweight.

Yardage used: 386.

Needles: U.S. size 4 needles, or size to obtain gauge.*

Supplies: 3 stitch markers; tapestry needle; rustproof pins for blocking.

Optional supplies: Waste yarn and crochet hook for provisional cast-on; blocking wires.

Gauge: 18 sts = 4" in stockinette stitch.

Finished size: 28" x 56".

*Note: To determine needle size for other weights of yarn, knit a gauge swatch in stockinette stitch. Gauge should be relaxed, but stitches should not be stringy.



Kaye D. Collins spun 4 oz of suri alpaca from Liz Valkamp of Salt River Alpacas into a 2-ply laceweight yarn.

Kaye made sure to sample the amount of twist in her yarn while spinning. The perfect amount of twist allows her yarn to maintain its strength while still feeling soft.



Suri Alpaca BY KAYE D. COLLINS

The tawny soft curls of suri fiber exhibited light highlights and reminded me of a young girl's golden hair. After washing the suri, the sheen and color shades were even more apparent. The staple was 5 to 7 inches, which would allow for combing or carding preparation. I sampled combing, and although it made a lovely, even, smooth sliver with no neps or noils, I found that combing with fine minicombs left a great deal of fiber on the combs as waste. I decided to drumcard the suri, as that allowed for easy blending of the various shades of beige, and the slick suri fibers easily aligned themselves to make a smooth, even roving.

I split the drumcarded batts lengthwise and pulled the fibers into long, sleek rovings. I spun the fiber using a short forward worsted-style draft. With my front hand sliding toward my back hand as the twist entered the fiber, I allowed my thumb and middle finger to slightly compress the fibers as twist entered the yarn. Suri fiber has a certain strength, similar to silk, that makes it important to sample in order to get the appropriate amount of twist—too little twist and the fibers slip and drift apart, too much twist and the yarn seems harsh or ropy. This was a very fine fleece, with a micron count of 18.8, close to cashmere in softness, and I wanted the yarn to reflect that softness. The smoothness of the suri fiber made the yarn feel very luxurious.

I finished the yarn by wrapping it around a 2-yard niddy-noddy made from PVC pipe. I wet the yarn thoroughly and allowed it to dry completely while still on the niddy-noddy.