

WARATAH ALPACA  
FIBRE  
CO-OPERATIVE LTD



MANUAL

1<sup>st</sup> Edition – June 2018

# **WARATAH ALPACA FIBRE CO-OPERATIVE LTD**

## **FLEECE PREPARATION, SHEARING, SKIRTING AND PRE-CLASSING MANUAL**

This manual is intended to be read in conjunction with the AAA Australian Alpaca Fleece Industry Shearing Shed and Pre-classing Code of Practice and the Alpaca Fleece Classing Code of Practice.

This manual is a recommended ideal practice for the supply of alpaca fibre to the Waratah Alpaca Fibre Co-Operative by growers. The aim of this manual is to provide guidelines to growers on preparing your fleeces for submission to the co-op for sale.

Preparation prior to shearing and thorough skirting will ultimately provide you as a grower with the best financial returns.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The primary objectives of the Co-operative are:

- The sale of Australian Alpaca Fibre
- Development of new markets for Australian Alpaca Fibre for the ultimate profit return to members
- Working collaboratively for success as a collective of members and growers

Although the Co-op has been established primarily for its members, it is committed to the development of the Australian Alpaca industry, supporting sustainable production and growth of herd numbers.

The Co-op will accept all alpaca fleece delivered to the designated collection points by any grower of alpaca fleece.

Members that are shearing at least 300 fleeces destined for the Co-op at any one time will have the opportunity for these fleeces to be classed by Co-op contracted AWEX approved alpaca classers at the time of shearing. These classers will use the Fibrelux micron meter to assist with classing.

All other members and non-members will be required to deliver fleeces individually bagged and with a Waratah Alpaca Wool Card completed for each bag.

The extent to which these guidelines are followed together with the resulting quality of delivered fleece will influence the price paid by the Co-op to the grower.

Members, however will receive a higher price than non-members. Growers will receive payment within 30 days of the fleece being sold to a buyer.. Both members and non-members are strongly encouraged to mid-side test all fleece before shearing.

## **MEMBERSHIP FLEECE WEIGHT**

In accordance with the rules of the Co-op members are required to deliver a minimum 30kg of well skirted saddle quality fleece annually in order to retain their membership. This fleece must be within the length range of 50 to 140mm and be less than 37 micron fleece.

There is no minimum fleece weight requirement for non-members.

## **TESTING**

OFDA 2000 with trim high turned OFF

It is recommended that all growers, have each alpaca mid-side tested within one month before or at shearing. If testing is done using an OFDA 2000 instrument then it is also recommended that tests be carried out with the trim high setting turned OFF. This will ensure that all fibre diameters in the tested sample are included in the results.

When testing is done with the trim high setting turned ON the results can often significantly underestimate the true value of key parameters such as the standard deviation of fibre diameters (SD) and the comfort factor (CF).

A copy of these test results are to be supplied to the Co-Op at the time of fleece delivery.

## **MICRON LINES**

The AAA Alpaca Fleece Classing Code of Practice (Classing COP) divides micron groups into the following lines:

- Sheer Ultra (SU) less than 17 micron (<16.6 $\mu$ )
- Ultrafine (UF) 17 – 18 micron (16.6 – 18.5 $\mu$ )
- Superfine (SF) 19 – 20 micron (18.6 – 20.5 $\mu$ )
- Fine (F) 21 – 24 micron (20.6 – 24.5 $\mu$ )
- Medium (M) 25 – 28 micron (24.6 – 28.5 $\mu$ )
- Strong (S) 29 – 36 micron (28.6 – 36.5 $\mu$ )
- Extra Strong (XS) greater than 36 micron (>36.5 $\mu$ )

The Co-op will class per the Code of Practice

## **SHEARING**

Obviously every effort should be made during shearing to avoid cross-contamination of colours, coarse fibres, vegetable matter and stained fleece.

Any odd coloured spots or patches should be removed at shearing and not included in the bagged fleece.

Fleece for submission to the co-op should be skirted and it is recommended to members and non-members that they attend training as needed to maintain this skill. "Bad" Skirting or "Lack of" skirting will result in lower financial returns to growers.

Directions or Helpful Hints on Skirting Fleeces is available in a download document from the Waratah Alpaca Fibre Web Site.

## **BAGGING FLEECE**

Growers are required to bag individual fleeces ideally in perforated bags.

Each bags is NOT BE LABELLED – but MUST contain a Waratah Alpaca Wool Card or Stud Wool Card equivalent. This is available on the Waratah Co-Op Web Page.

This is to allow the plastic bags to be recycled – reducing not only costs to the Co-op for disposal but lessening the impact on landfill and the environment.

The “Wool Card” should contain – Stud Name, Name or IAR of Alpaca, Micron, Colour, Staple Length, Saddle/Pieces. A template is available on the web site for download.

## **MARKET REQUIREMENTS**

The Co-op will post and call for specific market requirements via

- Direct Email to Members
- Web Site, and
- Facebook page

## **DELIVERY OF FLEECE**

There will be nominated “DAYS” around peak shearing times for drop-offs to Coolaroo. These times and dates will be provided via email initially to members, placed on the calendar of events on the web site and promoted on our Facebook Page. Collection points interstate and other key regions in NSW are also being finalised.

All fleeces that have not been classed and baled at the time of shearing are required to be individually bagged in perforated fleece bags containing the skirted saddle fleece together with separate bags of neck fleece and good pieces of different lengths. (DO NOT LABEL BGS – BUT USE THE WARATAH OR STUD WOOL CARD)

Where in excess of 30kg of saddle fleece is involved delivery should be in bale bags. Skirtings from all fleeces of the same colour can be bagged together – ie LONG HAIRY, SHORT HAIRY

Growers will also be required to complete a Consignment sheet at the time of collection – these forms are also on our web site.