

# Your First Purchase



**surico**  
ALPACA

**We have put together some quick tips to help you make your first purchase**

## **SURI**

Ask the owner to open up the fleece to show you the lustre. Does the fleece feel cool and slippery when you run your hand down the neck? Does she look shiny? Does it look slightly wet? Does she look elegant? Does the fleece hang in ringlets or locks? When was it last shorn i.e. length of fleece?

## **HUACAYA**

Ask the owner to open the fleece and show you the character i.e. crimp, staple, length and brightness. Is it soft to touch? Does it feel soft all over? Does it look even? Is the colour even? When was it last shorn?

**Alpacas offered for sale will not all have all these qualities and that should be reflected in the price. When you are looking make sure you know the difference in quality; the higher quality has the higher price. Ask the breeder to explain why one costs more than the other.**

## ***Genetic Background***

Understanding the genetic background or ancestry of an alpaca can be daunting when first introduced to the industry, but nevertheless it is very important when selecting high quality alpacas. You will need to ask the vendor to explain the genetic background and show you the family tree of the alpaca. The more you look at this information the more you will begin to build up knowledge of the different genetic lines in the industry.

## ***Questions to ask about Breeding Females***

- Can you assure me she is registered with Alpaca Association NZ?
- Will you arrange and pay for the transfer to me?
- Will you show me how to apply to become a member of Alpaca Association NZ and get a Herd Code?
- Is she pregnant? Is the pregnancy guaranteed? What is the guarantee? Who is the covering sire? What was the last mating date (LMD)?
- Will you have her health checked by a vet before you deliver her?
- Can I phone you at birthing or any other time with questions?
- Can you advise me on breeding options after she has unpacked (delivered the cria)?
- Do you guarantee her fertility with a replacement? Do you have replacements readily available?
- Will you help me with shearing?
- Will you help me with husbandry advice and training?
- Will you guide me through the Facial Eczema season?
- Will you deliver my alpacas free?
- Can you provide me with more information?

## ***Buying Tips***

- Buy local. If you live in the North Is buy in the North Is. If you live in the South Is buy in the South Is. It can be difficult to obtain or honour guarantees from overseas or the other end of the country.
- If the vendor does not deliver, find out how much it costs to get your alpaca home before you commit.
- Have your property assessed by the vendor for suitability and to make sure there are no poisonous plants.
- Fleece statistics are sometimes provided, make sure they are current and that you understand them. Fleece stats are more valuable for in house comparison.



***Above all, select your breeder, the one that you like and trust. One with a good reputation and experience. One who can answer your questions and teach you the attributes of alpacas. One that will provide you with experienced ongoing service.***

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