



## LLAMAS

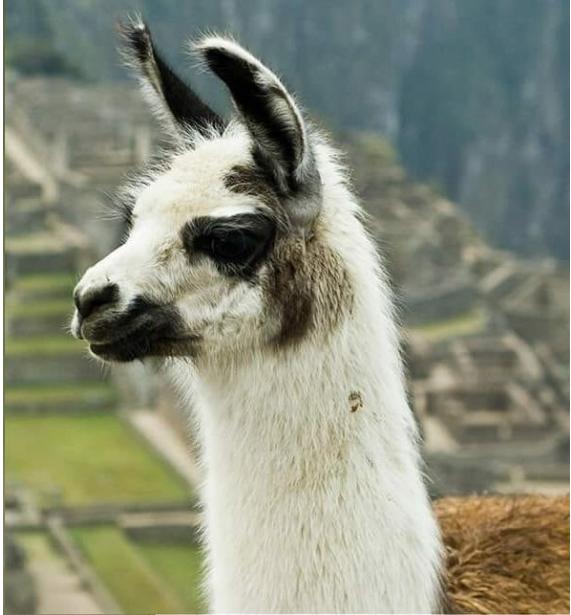




# ORIGIN OF THE LLAMA

- ▶ The ancestors of Llamas are thought to have originated from the central plains of North America about 40 million years ago.
- ▶ They migrated to South America about three million years ago during the Great American Interchange or Ice Age. By the end of the last Ice Age (10,000-12,000 years ago), Llamas were extinct in North America.
- ▶ The llama is relative of the camel, though the Llama does not have a hump.
- ▶ These sturdy creatures are domestic animals used by the peoples of the Andes Mountains.
- ▶ Native peoples have used Llamas as pack animals for centuries. Llamas are willing pack animals but only to a point.
- ▶ An overloaded llama will simply refuse to move. These animals often lie down on the ground and they may spit, hiss, or even kick at their owners until their load is lessened.





# ARE LLAMA & ALPACA THE SAME?

- ▶ Llamas are part of the Camelid family and share many characteristics including excellent water retention, two-toes, prehensile upper lips and a long neck.
- ▶ The Bactrian and Dromedary camels form one branch of the camelid family and evolved from the dry desert environments of Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East.
- ▶ The other branch evolved in the harsh, mountainous conditions of South America and includes Llamas and Alpacas.
- ▶ Llamas are larger than Alpacas with longer banana shaped ears, a straight back and higher tail set.
- ▶ Llamas are usually a two-coated animal with a soft down undercoat protected by a coarser hair type fibre called guard hair. This guard hair protects the under-fibre from rain and dirt.
- ▶ The most important difference is the nature of the llama. Llamas have been used as meat, fibre and packing animals for over 6,000 years. Bad behaviour such as spitting, and kicking have generally been trained out of the llama over the centuries.
- ▶ As alpacas were mainly only used as fibre animals this hasn't generally happened.
- ▶ Traditionally Alpacas were only brought in once a year and shorn so they didn't have as close a relationship with humans as Llamas.

# WESTERN LLAMAS

- ▶ In western countries llamas are primarily recreational animals.
- ▶ They are bred and raised for packing, fibre production, cart pulling, animal facilitated therapy, breeding stock, exhibition in shows and parades, as guardians of other livestock such as sheep and they make excellent pets.
- ▶ Llamas are gentle animals with inquisitive natures. They are safe around children and the elderly and are a delight to keep on either a large or small acreage.
- ▶ Their docile nature ensures children and adults can handle them equally well.
- ▶ Many llamas love crowds and behave very well. They are not spooked by cars, children or loud noises and will almost go anywhere that you can go.





# KEEPING LLAMAS AS PETS

- ▶ Llamas evolved in the harsh environment of the Andean Highlands so are generally easy to care for under Australian conditions.
- ▶ They need to be checked regularly and any small difference in behaviour noted. Observation is the key to early detection of problems.
- ▶ Llamas are herd animals. They seek safety in numbers and thrive in the company of their own kind. A minimum of two llamas is required for your llamas' happiness and well-being.
- ▶ Although some llamas do not need to be shorn, it is valuable to the health of long woolled llamas to be shorn every one to two years.
- ▶ Short woolled llamas do not need to be shorn but like the long woolled animals will benefit from an occasional brushing to keep the coat clean and remove shedding fibre.
- ▶ Llamas are a modified ruminant with a three-compartment stomach and like sheep and cattle chew their cud. Because of their relatively low protein requirement and efficient digestive system they can generally be fed most types of pastures and hay.
- ▶ Llamas cost much less to feed than other comparable sized animals.
- ▶ Veterinary advice should be sought regarding feed, vitamin, and mineral requirements for specific regions.



## LLAMA TERMINOLOGY

- ▶ An Llama pregnancy lasts around 11.5 months or 350 days.
- ▶ The Llama female is called a Dam (or Hembra in Spanish) and
- ▶ The Llama male is called a Sire (Macho).
- ▶ The baby Llama is called a cria, meaning 'create' in Spanish.

# The Camelid Family



## Size Comparison





## HEALTH CARE, PESTS & DISEASES

- ▶ Animal health, welfare and biosecurity are all important stages of the livestock production chain. If managed poorly each can have adverse impacts on productivity.
- ▶ Biosecurity programs for farming industries are designed to prevent the spread of infectious disease and contain disease outbreaks when they occur.
- ▶ Parasites and disease impact on all animals, including Alpacas. Animals affected by disease may not always show obvious clinical signs.
- ▶ Biosecurity is important at the national, regional and property level.
- ▶ Producers are governed by Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines. State and territory governments are responsible for animal welfare laws and their enforcement. These are enforced through animal welfare or prevention of cruelty to animals' legislation.



# RISKS & CHALLENGES

- ▶ Like any primary production enterprise there are risks associated with commercial production of Alpacas. Some will be outside of a producer's control however experienced producers are usually able to manage these risks.
- ▶ Risks include the loss of vital export markets. The COVID-19 outbreak had a massive impact on a lot of our export markets.
- ▶ Disease and pests, it is extremely important that we maintain Australia's freedom from major diseases through strict quarantine laws and procedures.
- ▶ Here in Australia weather events such as drought, fires and flooding take a huge toll on our farming communities. They really need our support.



# POP QUIZ

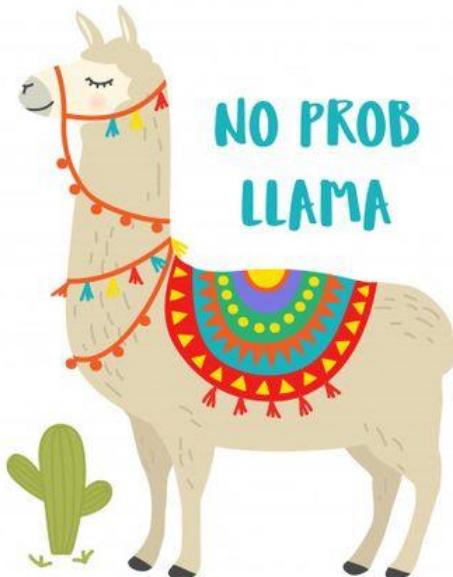
- ▶ The male is called a \_\_\_\_\_ and the female is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ A baby Llama is called a \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Llama pregnancy last for about \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ A Llamas average natural lifespan is \_\_\_\_\_ years.
- ▶ Llamas are apart of the Camelid family TRUE/FALSE
- ▶ Llamas have a 4 chamber stomach TRUE/FALSE
- ▶ What are two differences between Alpacas and Llamas  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Alpacas and Llamas are exactly the same TRUE/FALSE.
- ▶ Do you know any children's movies that feature Llamas \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ What are three challenges farmers face in Australia \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

# NOTES



# LLAMAS





## RESOURCES

Wikipedia

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com>

<https://www.llama.asn.au>