

## Tips for New Buyers

At this stage of the industry's development, price is directly related to the individual breeding potential, and the potential quality of the offspring. For example, a gelding (castrated male) has no breeding potential and is therefore the cheapest alpaca to buy. On the other hand, a high quality male with many good progeny on the ground has a very high breeding potential and can be worth many thousands of dollars. He can also command a high income from the stud services he provides. Female prices are a reflection of quality, age, breeding history and to which stud male she is bred. Income from females is derived from selling the offspring. Although the average gestation is eleven and a half months, a projection of three offspring in four years per mature female is more realistic than expectations of one offspring every year.

With the purchase of your first Alpaca you will enter an exciting and rewarding industry. Your Alpaca purchase should be an enjoyable and exciting experience with no surprises. As a service we offer the following alpaca purchase tips to all new participants.

- Visit several Alpaca farms before your first purchase and if possible, feel the fibre. Ask lots of questions, the education you will receive from breeders will be invaluable. Only deal with a breeder you feel comfortable with.
- You are the customer, the breeder is supplying a service, deal where you feel you will get the best "service" that is proportional to your investment.
- Ask for references, names of people that have purchased Alpacas.
- Negotiate a deal that works for you. Discuss fertility guarantees, re-breeding of females, cria health and live birth guarantees, health records, financing, payments, transport, boarding fee (if alpaca delivery is not immediate after purchase), registration, and get a written contract.
- Especially for new people to this industry, a written contract is very important. Get all the details in the contract. Going through this process will lead you through a discussion of the important details of the purchase.

The contract should contain:

- Buyer information
  - Seller information
  - Name of the Alpaca(s), Registration number and Microchip number (the method of permanent identification)
  - Price and payment schedule - This should include a lease agreement, if the alpaca is purchased over time.
  - Any guarantees and additional services
  - Delivery and Transfer of ownership schedule
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- Feel comfortable asking for a pre-purchase veterinary health check. It is a common practice when purchasing breeding stock in other livestock industries.

The Canadian Llama and Alpaca Association (CLAA) is incorporated under the Animal Pedigree Act and as such is recognized as the official Alpaca Registry in Canada. CLAA registrations and transfers are sent to the CLAA office for processing.

Buyers should request and check registration and ownership of the registered Alpacas of interest. Looking at the "**Certificate of Registration**" is the easiest way, however you can also access the herdbook in the Herdbook/Pedigree section of the CLAA web site. You can search by Alpaca Name, Alpaca Registration Number or Owner Name. The owner name is the least desired way to check an animal's information as it is very specific and requires the exact name of ownership.

The Transfer of Ownership form is on the reverse side of the Certificate of Registration. The signature of the seller or authorized agent is required for the transfer to be processed. In Canada, the seller is responsible (under the rules of the Animal Pedigree Act) for the transfer of the registration papers to the new owner. This includes completing the transfer form, fee payment and mailing to the CLAA. As such, do not accept a registration certificate as proof of ownership unless your name appears on the certificate as the registered owner.

**Young Males and Females:** Completed transfer of ownership is required. This is the responsibility of the seller.

**Breeding Males:** As above. The date of ownership is very important. The responsibilities of keeping breeding records and signing as owner of sire at time of service will change with date of ownership change.

**Bred Females:** In order to register the expected cria, you will need the signature of the stud owner, plus the stud's name, registration number, DNA case number, and date of service. It is a good idea to request a completed Application for Registration for the cria at the time of sale.

**Bred Females with Cria at side:** As above for the expected cria. For the cria at side you should request a completed Application for Registration which should include the completed transfer of ownership portion at the bottom of the application. Most important are the two signatures, of the stud owner, and the owner of dam at birth.