

Everyone needs some Alpacas

Description

They are the cutest beasties. And the yarn made from their fleece is sooooo soft. And warm. Did I mention that they are cute?! One of our stops on the DFW yarn crawl last summer was Trinity Ridge Alpacas. The folks were so friendly and turns out it's a six degree thing 'cause Janet is a nurse and worked at one of the hospitals my Tom frequents. Anyway, we weren't able to meet up with any beasties while there but we did have fun asking the Hancocks about their experience as alpaca tenders. Sounds like it's a Lay's potato chip thing; you can't stop at just one.



Just shorn, this gal used to be one of our neighbors in the Hill Country

I have yarn that contains alpaca from other people and places. I've noticed it isn't as itchy on me as merino is. And, as I started reading about alpacas, I learned the fibers hold more warmth than wool. Alpaca fibers are hollow so more air gets trapped than in wool where the fibers have only pockets of trapped air. One reason Alpaca fibers can be less itchy is because there isn't any lanolin in them. Wool has that. If you see wool yarn that says it is 'super wash' that means it has been processed to remove the lanolin. So, less itchy but the process to remove it may involve chemicals. Also, itchiness can be caused by bigger fibers; microns, my friends, are important as well. The diameter of the fibers are measured in microns (1 micron=1 millionth of a meter). The smaller the diameter, the smoother the fiber.

The yarn I brought home from Trinity Ridge is tagged with the names of the the alpacas whose fleece contributed to the skeins. Janet told me that she has customers who ask specifically for fibre from different alpacas, partly because the coloring is so different on each animal. Mine came from Angel, Mattissa and Pharaoh.

Alpacas are a relative of the llama and of the camel. They have been bred to be used primarily for their fleece while llamas have been bred to be guard and pack animals. They are around 3 ft tall at the shoulder and between 120-180 pounds. Llamas are much bigger and bulkier. Since the alpacas aren't fighters, they need guard animals to keep them safe from predators. You may see llamas

included in the alpaca herd to be used for this purpose.

Tomâ??s been saying for many years that if he canâ??t have a pony, he wants a llamaâ?!.if we were at our ranchette (less than 10 acres so it doesnâ??t really qualify as a ranch) in the Hill Country more (read permanently) and if we had alpacas that needed protecting, maybe, just maybe he could have that llama. And a pony tooâ?!.but thatâ??s in another life ð???

Until next week! Stay warm.

Category

1. Uncategorized

Tags

1. alpacas
2. yarn

Date Created

November 15, 2018

Author

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