

## Body Condition

The ideal North American Paco-Vicuña is best described as elegant looking. The body type is of a finer bone structure, with fine legs lightly covered with fiber, a clean open belly, long delicate neck, and a very refined head. The nose is finely tapered, eyes are larger and rounder than a regular alpaca. Ears are set slightly forward and are spear shaped without any excess fiber. The body type is much lighter in bone structure, with slightly longer leg/neck to body ratios. The back is often slightly rounded with a gentle curve. Tail set is lower and held close to the body. There is a general absence of topknot or a minimal one at best. A pronounced chest bib of guard hair is present.

## Fiber

The fleece exhibits an extreme density in its best form, with readily discernible guard {hair} present throughout the fleece. The prime blanket area is the dominant fiber product, with very little neck/leg/belly coverage. Fiber structure is distinguished by a highly disorganized crinkle rather than an organized crimp as is present in most regular alpacas. The fleece has a very uniform and low micron throughout the blanket, with very little seconds from neck and leg.



Photo Credit: Thomas Victor



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## Coloration

The coloration of the North American Paco-Vicuña comes in a range of 6 basic colors: white, beige, light/medium/ dark vicuña and mahogany. Pattern of markings often show a pronounced 'ancestral line' with a lighter color line angling downward mid body from shoulder to hip. Often the pattern is a distinctive color change from dark to lighter from spine towards belly, with a much lighter underbelly and the inside of the legs. White markings are sometimes seen on the face and lower legs, as are darker tips of ears, nose, and feet. A pinto pattern of one color on the prime fleece with lighter legs/belly is occasionally seen and is not a defect. A patterned color variation or spotting across the blanket is not desirable nor is it commonly seen.

## Fiber Fineness

The general micron range is 12-16 microns as most desirable, with fineness less than 20 microns acceptable for general breeding stock. Above 20 microns is not desirable, (but will occasionally be used for outside bloodlines).



*Photo Credit: Jane Levene*

## Benefits of a Breed Standard

- a) A breed standard, once widely accepted, can be a strong unifying force within the industry. The breed standard serves as a target or goal to aim at or aspire to.
- b) A breed standard will discourage crossbreeding.
- c) A breed standard having been developed by consensus of all major stake holders will discourage the development of multiple competing standards. Multiple standards would retard progress toward overall national herd improvement by confusing breeders as to which target to shoot for.
- d) A breed standard will serve the new buyer by serving as a yardstick against which to measure potential purchases.
- e) A breed standard can facilitate the development of evaluation tools that established and new breeders alike can use to determine the success of their breeding program. Such evaluations can augment show ring performance as a means of such evaluation.
- f) In the future a breed standard can facilitate the development of data sets that breeders can utilize to track performance thus facilitating selection based on objective performance criteria.
- g) A breed standard will help bring better objectivity to the show ring.