

## THE SURI ALPACA

The Suri alpaca is a member of the camelid family, which includes the Huacaya alpaca, camel, llama, vicuña, and guanaco. The Suri dates back from 5,000 to 20,000 years ago. Archaeological records indicate that alpacas have been domesticated for 6,000 years. The first Suris were imported to the United States from Bolivia, Chile and Peru between 1991 and 1998.

## Advantages to Raising Suri Alpacas

- ✓ **The Suri Alpaca is rare.** Many Suri alpacas were culled from South American herds because commercial fiber mills were not designed to process the smaller amounts of Suri fiber. The Suri accounts for less than 25% of the total U.S. alpaca population and less than 10% of the world-wide population. Suri fiber is one of the rarest types of processed camelid fiber, ranked second only to the Vicuña.
- ✓ **Suri fiber is unique.** Suri alpacas are known for their long, silky, distinctive locks that create a graceful draped appearance, as opposed to the fluffy, crimped look of the Huacaya. Suri fiber is as soft as cashmere, warmer than wool, and offers a hypoallergenic quality with the luster of silk. It is a strong, durable fiber; a characteristic that does not diminish with increased fineness.
- ✓ **Suri fiber is in demand.** Suri fiber is sought-after by the fashion industry and treasured by hand spinners and fiber enthusiasts. The growing Suri population in the U.S. as compared to South America may position the U.S. to become the world's leading producer of Suri fiber in 5 - 10 years.
- ✓ **Suri breeders are organized.** The recently adopted Suri Breed Standard gives the Suri alpaca credibility in the U.S. livestock industry and will help enhance the future development of the breed. The Suri Network, an affiliate of the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association (AOBA), offers marketing, research and educational opportunities for Suri breeders and the public.

Source: Suri Network, "Ten Reasons to Raise Suri Alpacas" flyer, 2012

