MONETIZING YOUR HARVEST

Climate Beneficial™

IMPERIAL YARN

American Grown Luxury

Introduction:

- Stacie Chavez, Terrebonne, Oregon. Bought our first alpacas in 2009, added sheep in 2016. Self proclaimed Fiber **GEEK.** Partner with Lynn Edens - Imperial Yarn, LLC. A 100% American Grown/American Processed Natural Fiber Business. I run day to day operations for Imperial Yarn off our 45-acre ranch in Terrebonne, Oregon. I have been working in the commercial natural fiber business for 7 years. I feel like I have done it all. Make sliver, yarn, fabric, blankets, sweaters, coats, gloves, hats, socks…….. all done by patiently navigating the American Manufacturing Chain.

Success

Months before shearing (late December/Early January)

-Herd Size: Less that 10 animals think about going to a neighboring ranch. (If you are both small alternate shearing on alternate ranch annually)

-Talk to mentors and friends for shearer recommendation.

-Reach out to shearer in December or January and get on their scheduling list. You should have a firm appointment booked by March.

-Shearing yourself? Check all equipment, send blades for sharpening

One Month before Shearing

1

-Start thinking about volunteers

2

-Check back in with shearer to make sure your day is still good

3

-Organize what you need for shearing

- What do you need help with?

Needs:

haltering/walking animals to and from the mat	Toes/shots	Fiber Gatherer?	Sweeper?	Skirting Table?	Will you weigh animals or fiber?

Volunteer Options:

Agisters, Family, Friends, Ranch Workers, co-workers

Make sure and ask your shearer if he/she is bringing help.

I have learned the HARD way sometimes that too many volunteers slow progress. You don’t want people bumping into one another.

Check in with Shearer

When making appointment ask them how they want to communicate? Email, Text, Voice to Voice?

When you confirm appointment make sure and ask if they have any special requests.

Set up requirements

Anything they need (redundant but always good to be prepared)

What's their procedure for rain delays or moving days?

Organize What You Need:

How will you deal with Trash?

Will you Skirt day of shearing

Will you Grade Shearing day

Where will your fiber go?

Plan for: 2nds & 3rds

Plan For: Blankets

Rough Out Your Shearing Place

DRAW A DIAGRAM, HAVE A PLAN

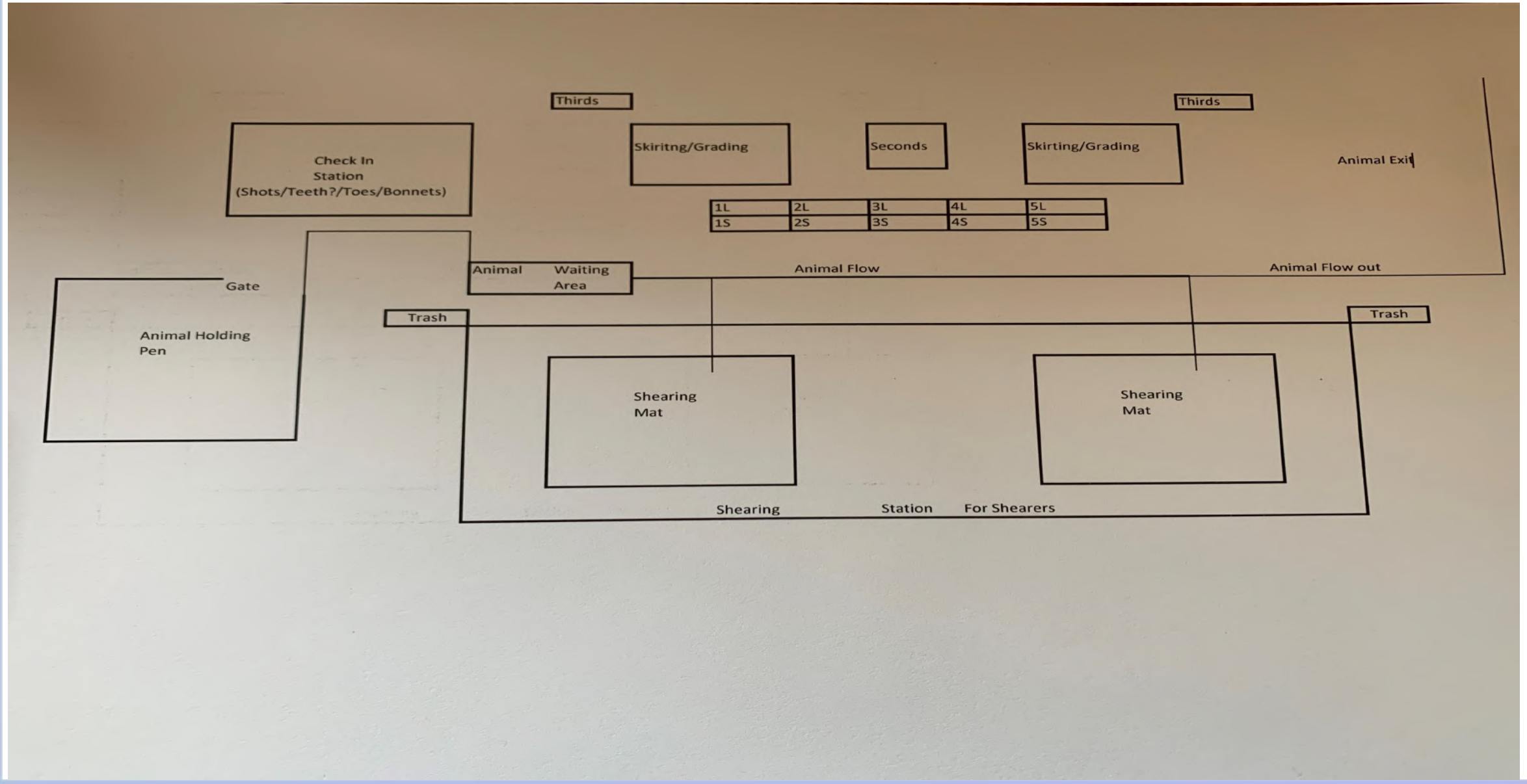
WHERE WILL ANIMALS BE

WHERE WILL MATS BE

SKIRTING TABLE

TRASH

CART OR CARRIER FOR MEDICAL NEEDS


Thirds
Thirds
Check In
Station
(Shots/Teeth?/Toes/Bonnets)
Skiritng/Grading
Seconds
Skirting/Grading
Animal Exit
1L
2L
3L
4L
5L
1S
2S
3S
4S
5S
Animal
Waiting
Area
Animal Flow
Animal Flow out
Gate
Trash
Trash
Animal Holding
Pen
Shearing
Mat
Shearing
Mat
Shearing
Station
For Shearers

Skirting/Grading

Grading & Weighing Sheet

Name	Color	Grade	LB	OZ	Notes

Skirting/Grading Area

- Have a Scale near by to “weigh” fiber or Weigh Animal before and After
  I set up two skirting tables
- Have a grading sheet for all sheared animals
- Bags behind needing to be skirted and graded
- Boxes labeled Grade 1-5 A box for short and long for each grade that’s 10 boxes
- Large White bag for skirting 2nd’s
- Skirtings on the ground – mulch? Compost? Trash

Compact
Efficient
Space

What do you need to have on hand

- Animals: (order/buy/get it on ranch the earlier the better)
  - -Blood Stop Powder
  - -7 Way powder
  - -CDT
  - -Banamine
  - -Neosporin
  - -Neomycin
  - -Flea & Tick Spray
  - -Paper Towels
  - -White Socks
  - -Halters/Leads
  - -Animal Shearing list (spreadsheet)*
  - -Garbage Bags
  - -Noodling Supplies
  - -Clear Trash bags for blankets 33 gallon trash bags with a weight between 0.75 and 1.0 mm
  - -Black Sharpies

Why a Shearing Sheet?

- Keep Track of animals as you shear
- Double Check for shearer on Teeth/Toes
- CDT
- Helps Keep Track of who’s pregnant
- Notes: Cuts/abcess/anything needing attention, write it down so you can forget about it.

Animal Shearing Sheet

Alpaca Name	Gender	Chip #	Breed	Color	Birth Date	Pregnant	Sheared	Teeth	Toes	CDT	Notes
SOUTH MOUNTAIN'S BELLA	Female	674328	Huacaya	White	10/30/2012						
Sky Ridge Alpaca's Belle of the Ball	Female		Huacaya	White	9/3/2019						
SKY RIDGE'S TYGHNY DANCER	Female		Huacaya	White	10/04/2017						
Frankie	Male		Huacaya	White	7/26/2021						
Isabella	Female	136111332	Huacaya	White	9/3/2006						
Kiss me Kate	Female		Huacaya	White	1/25/2009						
Lily	Male		Huacaya	White	6/26/2021						
SNOWMASS SPARKLING SNOW	Female		Huacaya	White	08/17/2001						
ELEGANTE VELLÕN ACCOYO SNOW BIRD	Female		Huacaya	White	12/13/2008						
Silver Reflection	Female		Huacaya	Silver Gray	6/23/2009						
Silver Charm	Female		Huacaya	Silver Gray	7/12/2021						
Pretty In Pink	Female		Huacaya	Rose Gray	8/8/2009						
Hennessy	Male		Huacaya	Mahogany	5/20/2021						
Sweet Liberty	Female		Huacaya	Lt Fawn	7/7/2021						
Bad Bad Leroy Brown	Male		Huacaya	Brown	8/14/2021						

7-10 Days Before Shearing

REVISIT SHEARING PLAN

CHECK TO MAKE SURE ALL SUPPLIES ARE ON RANCH

REACH OUT TO VOLUNTEERS

PLAN SHOPPING OR ORDERING FOOD/ SNACKS/DRINKS

The Day Before Shearing

Draw

Draw CDT or any other meds (I put mine in a cup in the Fridge and then just before shearing I put the cup and bottle of CDT in Cooler) Have extra syringes/needles.

Make

Make Name Tags for animal bag blanket bags. (I collect fiber separately by animal)

Gather

Gather all medication on a cart or in a caddy (previous list)

Go

Go to Shearing Schematic and decide who you want at each station. (Think about volunteers job before they arrive)

Name Tag Sheet Example

Bella

Pregnant Y/N

Shearing Date

Color

Make Sure to Keep Animals
Clean & Dry

Morning of Shearing

Get	Get your drinks iced down and put in shearing area, so people can grab
Get	Get snacks and food together for easy layout or distribution
Have	Have check to pay shearer
Take	Take several deep breaths you are prepared and ready to go!!!

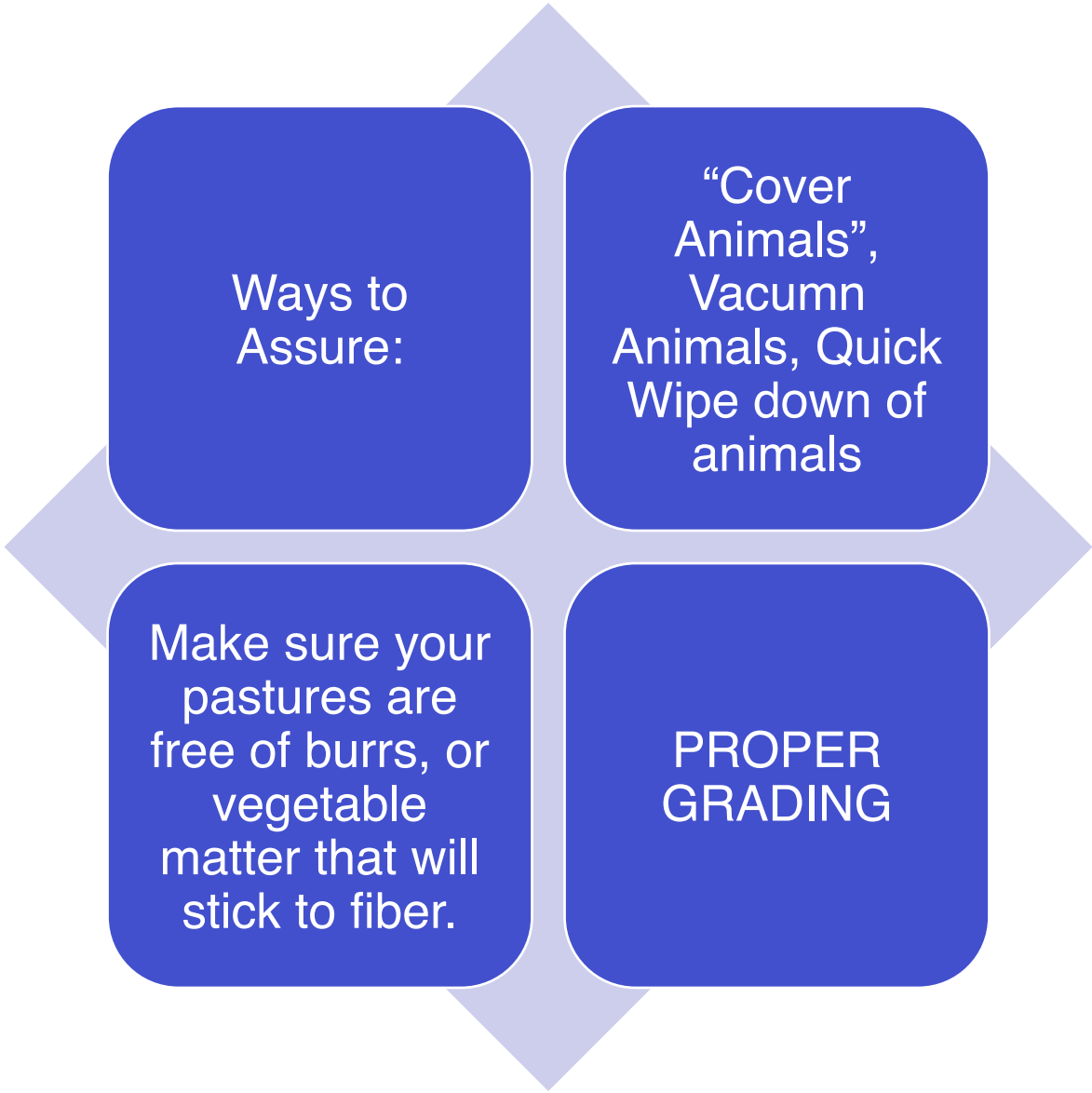
This is the Good Stuff

Basics for Shearing Day Success

Questions?

Looking at Fiber through
Product’s
Eyes

We all Want the Highest ROI for our Fiber



Animal Fiber Covers

www.rockysheep.com or you can make them yourself.

The importance of Grading &
Sorting
Joy-Reyneke
PHOTOGRAPHY

Why is Grading & Sorting Important

Keeping Fiber Sorted together by Grade, length and Color….

- Always check for fiber strength:
  - -Breaking fiber during spinning promotes pills and rat's nests in your yarn.
  - -Not grouping fiber with it’s grade by length causes thick thins in spinning and also can weaken the yarn and promote pilling.
  - In our Wool: my number one requirement: **Tensile Strength** rating, Micron, Length and recently Brightness rating … Why does brightness matter: Allows for more level dyeing.

The importance of Grading/ Sorting

I am constantly thinking when grading:

- Consider what the highest and best use will be for the fiber at hand.
- -Yarn for Hand Knitting
- -Next to Skin
- -Commercial Knitting/Weaving
  - -Sweaters/Scarves next to skin
  - -Rugs/in soles and dryer balls
  - **ALL FIBER HAS VALUE, IT'S OUR JOB TO DECIDE WHAT THE HIGHEST AND BEST USE IS.**

Do not throw shade at dryer balls/in soles Dyer balls sell for $24 for 3 (9 oz of Fiber) Dryer balls yield $42 a pound

Farm Yarn for Hand Knitters
is Loved by All!

Grade 1 Fiber

Grade 2 Fiber

Grade 3 Fiber

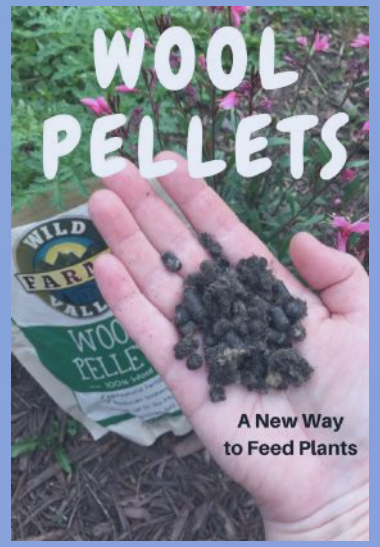
Grade 4

Grade 5

IMPERIAL YARN
Dryer Ball Spri

Felted Soap
By
Imperial Yarn
5850 Hwy 197
Tygh Valley, OR 97063
Office (541) 483-0989
contact@imperialyarn.com
www.imperialyarn.com
Felted Soap
By
Imperial Yarn

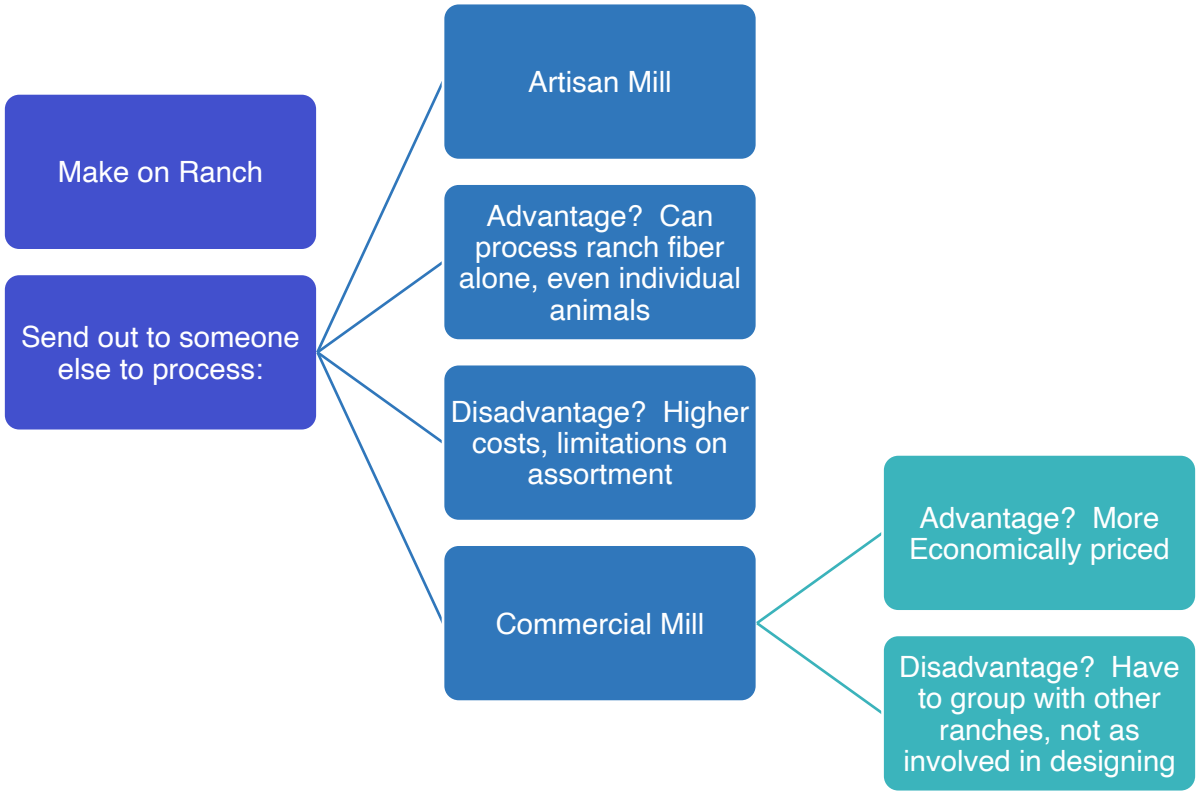
2nd's & 3rd's


WOOL
PELLETS
A New Way
to Feed Plants

WOOL IN BAGS
Havelock Wool
WOOL IN BAGS

URAL WATER RETENTION
WOOL
OMPOST
COMPOST

How do you accomplish?



Start an Affiliate Collection?

Come together as an affiliate and pool fiber.

-Spin Yarn?

-Make Felt?

-Affiliate sock program?

Start with something EASY.

The power of combining fiber

-Raises money for Affiliate

-Unifies your group and making it stronger

-Capitalize on larger batches & better pricing

-Everyone Wins Fiber is on the move Turning into $$

Work together:

Helps to create a demand for Common Fiber Stats to grow more volume –you will all be working to create a common length, micron, color

Come together to grade/ sort and pack (Make it an event) Promoting Fellowship

Product from your own herd

How do you start?

Call	Call to Action
Create	Create a committee
Get	Get the word out
Set	Set Goals

Set a Time to come together

1. Bring Fiber
2. Keep stats by ranch
3. Build spread sheet detailing each ranches contribution
4. Distribute socks based on involvement
5. Offer to full affiliate if extras are available

How Long does it take?

- Washing 4-6 Weeks
- Spinning 3-4 months
- Dyeing 4-6 weeks
- Knitting 1-2 months
- Total time 4-9 months

For your individual structure:

- Do you make goods with all your fiber?
- Do you send some fiber off ranch for processing?
- Do you sell all your fiber?

I do a little of all the above:

I hand felt fiber onto soap at the ranch level.

I sell my fiber to a dryer ball maker and buy dryer balls back made with our fiber.

I send some of our fiber to an artisan mill for small batch runs.

I send most of our fiber to a central location to be consolidated and made into bigger batches of goods that we sell through Imperial Yarn. (I run the two business's independently of one another).

Let’s take a minute and look at your fiber…..

- Do you:
  - Sell
  - process at ranch
  - process off ranch
  - participate in a larger collection

  - Let’s apply %’s to each section……

Our Ranch……

1

Use on Ranch 10%

2

Sell to others 25%

3

Send to process small batch 15%

4

Send to a bigger collection for consolidation 50%

This is our clip’s distribution

Fiber is a commodity & we need to think about it this way.

Every year at shearing, we are “harvesting” our fiber that we worked 12 months to grow…. It has **VALUE**.

QUESTIONS?

Quick 8 minute break

What is Marketing?

The process of exploring, creating and delivering value to meet the needs of a targeted market in terms of goods and services.

We all Have The Same Common Goal

Finding ways to support our ranches…

There are several options/ revenue streams:

1. Animal Sales
2. Animal Agisting
3. Animal Breeding
4. Fiber/Hay/Other Veggies/Eggs/Etc.
5. Goods Made from your fiber
6. Store to sell your fiber goods and purchased goods.

Finding your Secret Sauce…..

What do you have to offer, how do you standout?

How does it differ from what others are doing….

What makes your ranch better or more desirable from others…(Again think secret ingredient).

We all have talents….

Marketing changes and evolves constantly. With the awakening of our current “audience/customer base” I find we are all sitting in the driver’s seat. We are perfectly positioned to engage and share our process and create a “loyal” customer. Meaning a customer that keeps coming back. They want to feel like they are “part” of something bigger. They want to feel needed. (Everyone wants to feel connected).

Marketing is a system of layering & repetition is very important

How do you create this?

Case Study: An American Yarn Company

Company Made up of: (4 Revenue Streams)

1. Hand Knitting Yarn Business
2. Cone Yarn business focused at Commercial Knitting & Weaving
3. Clothing & Accessories
4. Home Goods

Balancing it all:

Very different and varied Audiences….

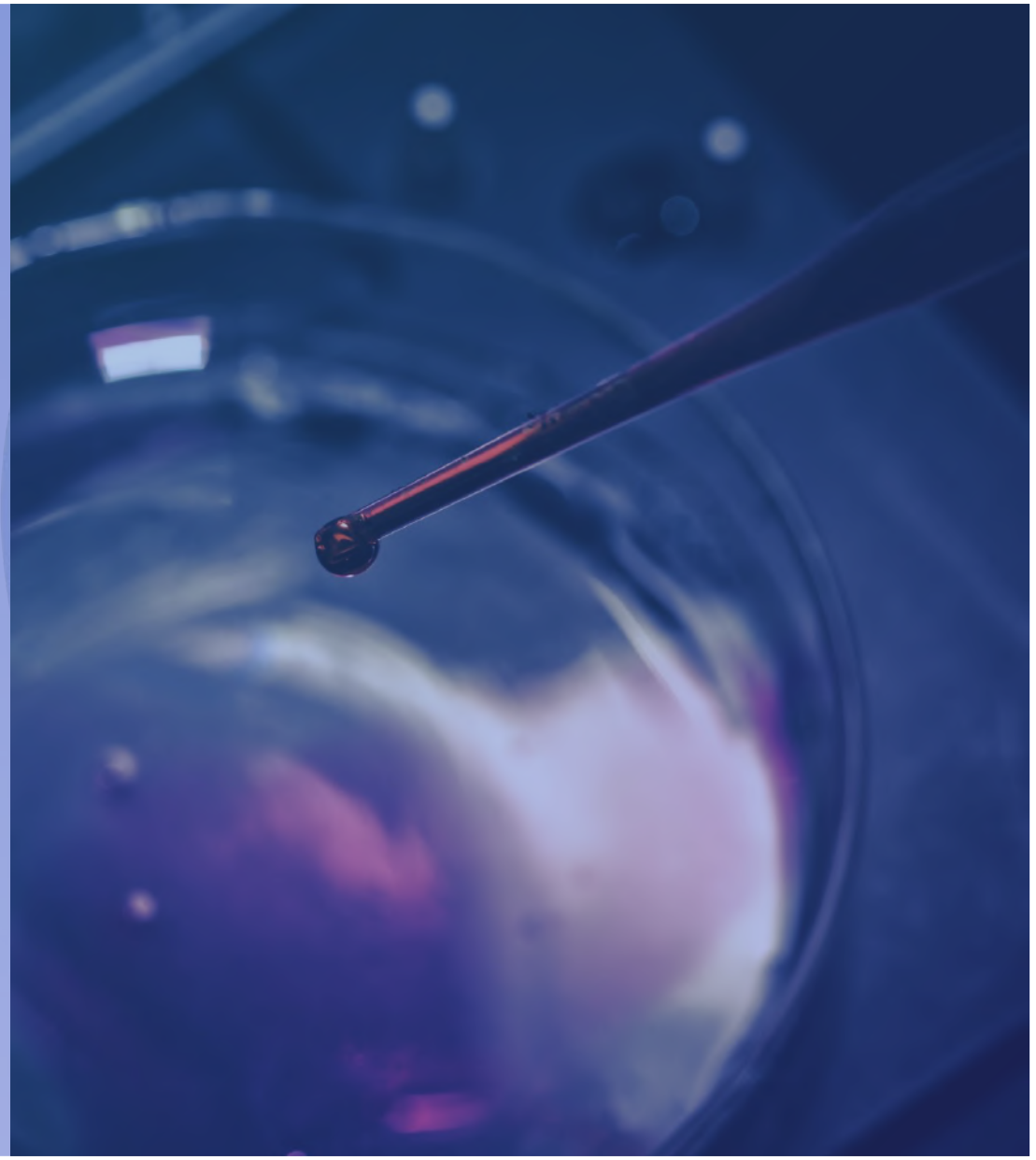
Our Secret Sauce:

-

Traceable domestically grown fiber utilizing American Commercial Manufacturing

First Step:

- **Identifying your secret sauce**



What Makes you special?

Care to share?

What will you sell?

- Animals
- Breedings
- Fiber
- Manure
- Soft Goods

Second Step : Where will you sell?

- Onsite store/ranch?
- Web Presence Only?
- Brick and mortar store?
- Off ranch events?

Third Step: How will you get the word out?

-Sign on your Property

-Ads/Flyers around town

-Publications (local/national)

-Social Media

Fourth Step: Creating a Plan

Taking the previous slide and developing a plan in writing. This is as important as having a business plan.

You want your messaging to have an identifiable repeated “look”…as simple as always including your logo.

This is a plan, just like a business plan you create a daily, weekly, monthly, annual “schematic”.

Fifth Step: REPETITION

This is one of the HARDEST things for me to have patience with.

Repeating the same message builds on itself. I always repeat the same message 3 times. (Sometimes it can take presenting the same message 3 times…before you get engagement).

Once your plan is created

You have to be consistent with your message and your timing of posts

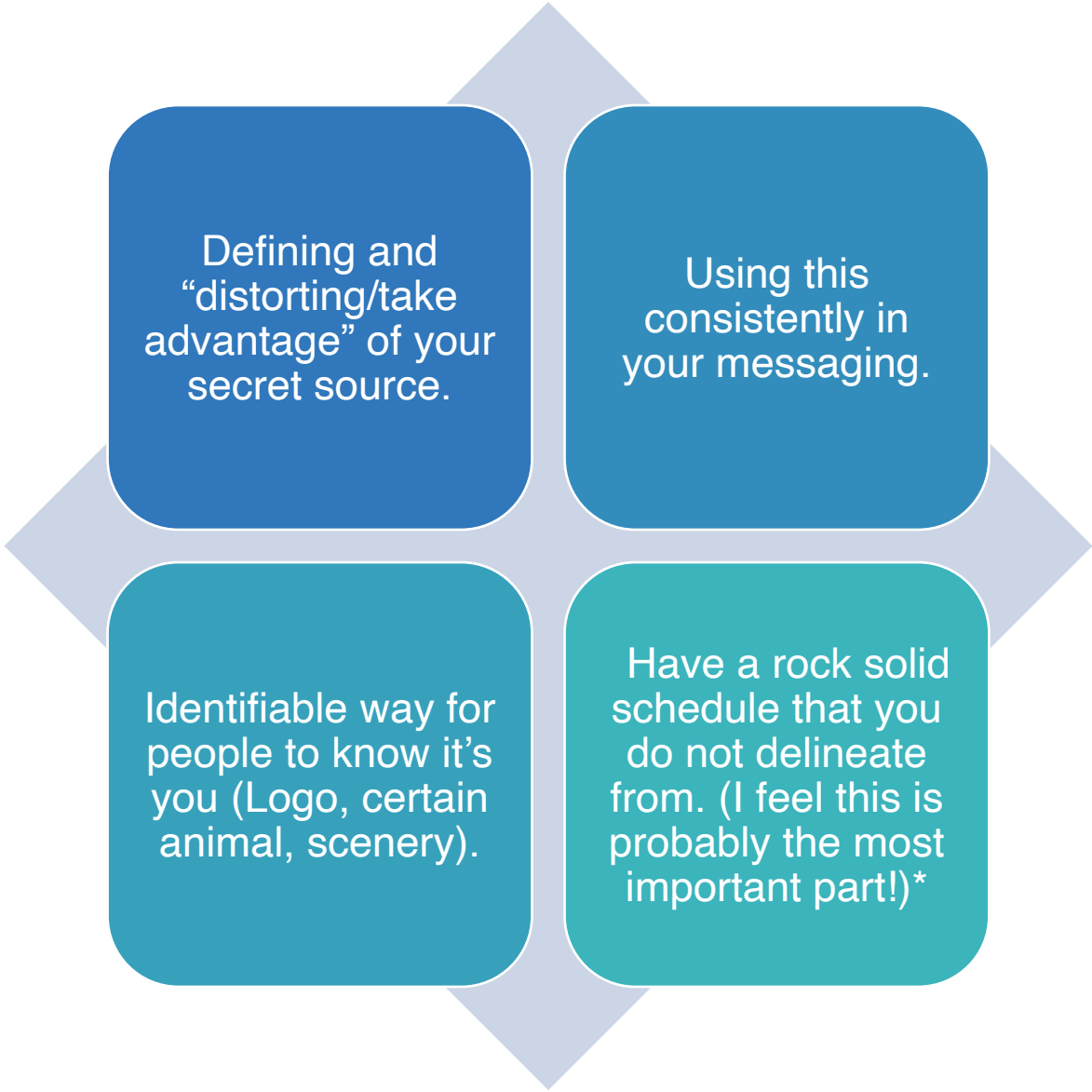
(We have a weekly mailing that goes out with a special…if that does not go out on the same day and time – people call thinking they have been removed from our list)….This is a sign to me that our efforts are working.

Print/Flyers/Social Media:

- I have an employee that maintains all the routine posts…
  - Eblast
  - Social Media Posts

I insert the “unexpected”, something happened or something I want to share (randomly)

Marketing:


Defining and “distorting/take advantage” of your secret source.
Using this consistently in your messaging.
Identifiable way for people to know it’s you (Logo, certain animal, scenery).
Have a rock solid schedule that you do not delineate from. (I feel this is probably the most important part!)*

*Schedule and Adhering to it

You don’t need alarms or an employee that does this.

There are schedulers out there: Buffer, Monday, Loomly

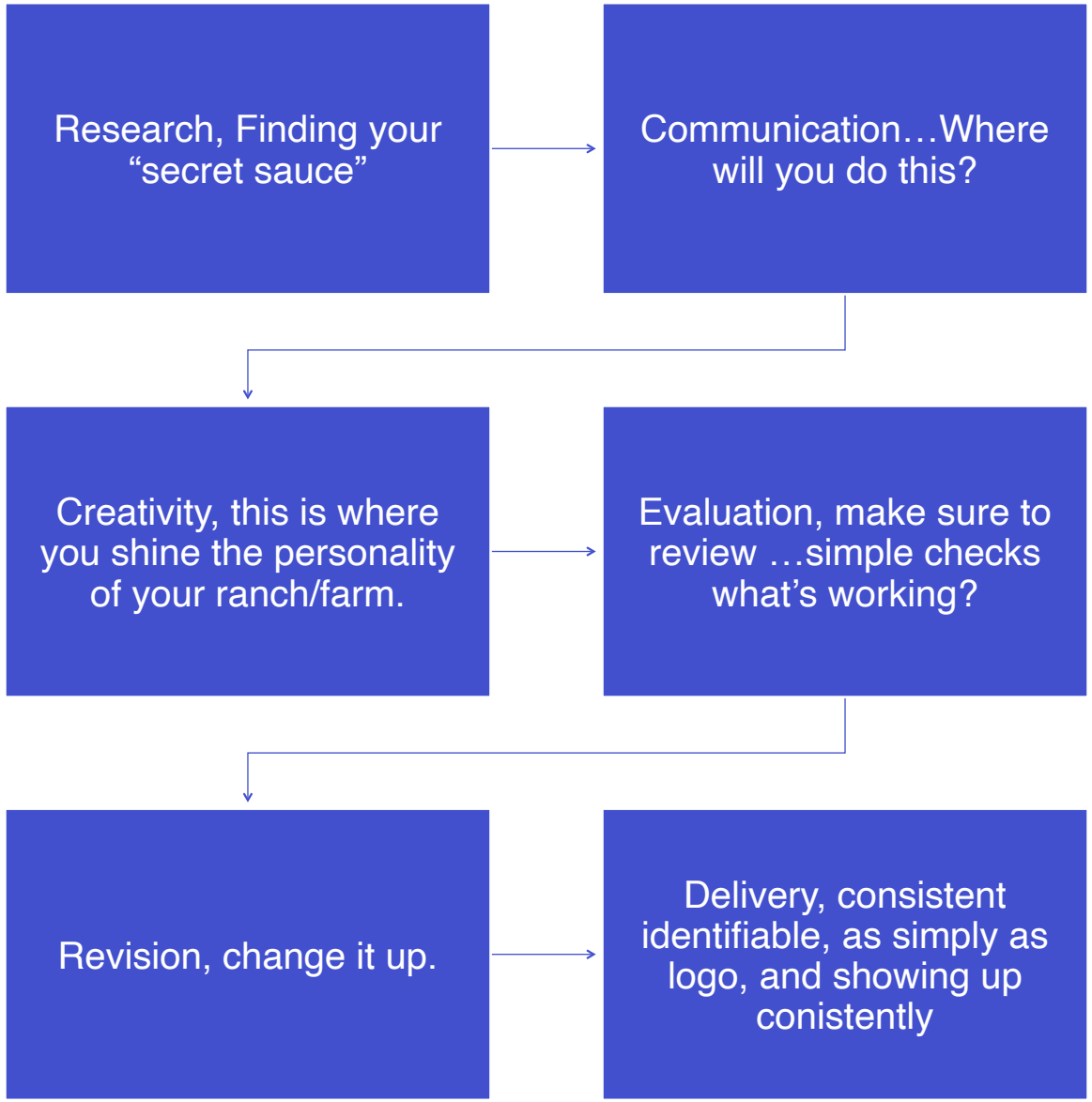
Marketing Alpaca

The fiber and personalities of the animals do so much of the work for us.

The Fiber: heat regulating, lighter than wool, THE DRAPE, moisture wicking, Antimicrobial…. NO BRAINER

The Animals: Curious, friendly, soft on the land, efficient eaters, oh and their Manure??

Basic Fundamentals of marketing:



Questions

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