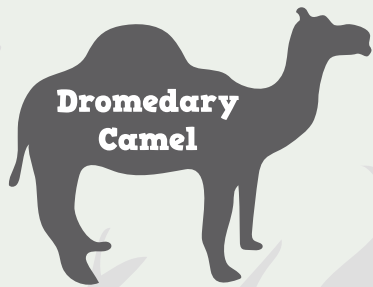


Alpacas & The Camelidae Family

Camelids

Alpacas are members of the camel family Camelidae, which also includes the dromedary camel of Africa and Bactrian camel of Asia.



There are four living camelid species indigenous to South America. In addition to being herd animals, the four species share certain physical features. These include their long necks, slender legs, and two-toed padded feet. Although alpacas and llamas are commonly misidentified, they are separate and distinct species. The llama descended from the undomesticated guanaco, while the alpaca originated from the vicuña.

Llamas weigh 200-380 lbs and make great pack animals. Llama fiber is considered less valuable than alpaca due to extensive coarse guard hair.



Llama

Wild guanacos are similar in size to their llama relatives, but are distinguished by their brown coats.



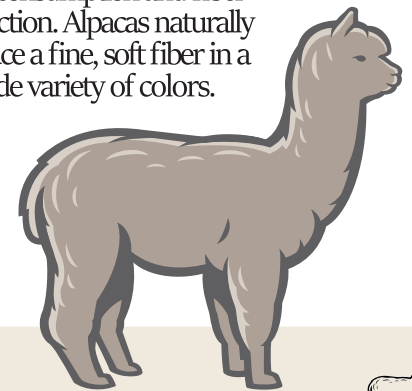
Guanaco

The smallest of the camelids, the wild vicuña is world renown for its extremely fine fiber.



Vicuña

Weighing 100-185 lbs, alpacas were traditionally raised for meat consumption and fiber production. Alpacas naturally produce a fine, soft fiber in a wide variety of colors.



Alpaca

Alpacas: Suri or Huacaya?



Suri Alpaca



Huacaya Alpaca

The two breeds of alpaca, suri and huacaya, are distinguished by their coat.

The less common suri alpaca has lustrous straight fiber that forms into spiraling locks. Huacaya alpaca fiber is fluffy and spongy with more wave and crimp.