

GUIDELINES
for PREPARING
and SUBMITTING
FLEECE SAMPLES
for EPD ANALYSIS



OVERVIEW

The AOA shear report and fleece data entry process is provided to help AOA members prepare for, collect, and report fleece data for inclusion in the EPD program. Additionally, the process provides easily printed order forms with all the information required to order your fiber testing. This process can be used for any alpaca in any AOA account that you have, in addition to any alpacas that have been set-up in your contracted and boarded alpaca lists.

PLEASE NOTE

It is beneficial to you, and all AOA members, to submit fiber samples for all your alpacas; "good," "bad," cria over nine months of age, and non-breeders. Samples from every AOA registered alpaca are important to the Expected Progeny Difference (EPD) calculation. EPD results will be tremendously helpful to you when future breeding decisions are made and when evaluating alpacas for sale or purchase.

Submitting fleece samples for only your "best" animals is self-defeating. It raises the average for the National Herd, and all of the EPD values are calculated relative to that average. If the average of the National Herd is higher than it should be because some animals have been omitted, then the EPD values for the good animals will be underestimated!

EPD information is confidential. You are not obligated to publish your EPDs and are private by default. You must manually select the EPDs that you want to be made public. This can be done in bulk (on your whole herd) or by alpaca.

If it turns out your herd contains many lower than average females, there is a silver lining. Being able to show the improvements in EPDs of crias over their "unimproved" dam when bred to an impact sire will increase the value of both the mom and cria. In addition, as more data is received each year, your dam's EPDs will also change and could improve with more information.

EPDs will be tremendously influential in the sale of herdsires, particularly for small farms that don't have the marketing resources of larger farms. In the future, prices of alpaca males will be influenced by their EPD values. Publishing your EPD data on the AOA website will enable prospective buyers to easily find you.

PREPARING FOR SHEARING

OVERVIEW

These initial steps should be completed prior to shearing in order to print off a shear report containing a list of your alpacas. This list will be used to track the necessary information during the shearing process and to complete steps 10 through 22.

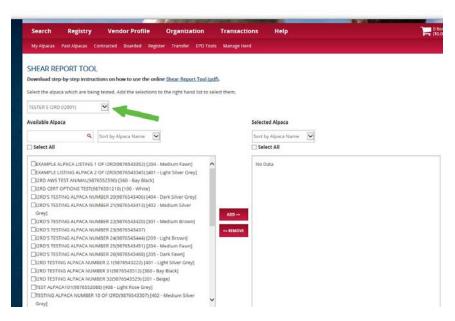
1) Visit the AOA website at www.AlpacaInfo.com and click "LOGIN." Enter your user name, password, and read and check the License Agreement to login.



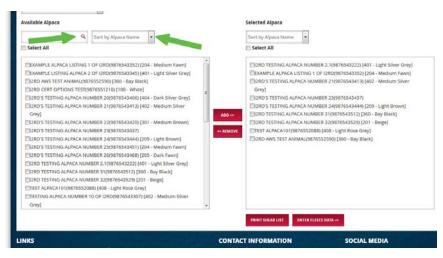
2) Click "Shear Report Tool" on your Dashboard.



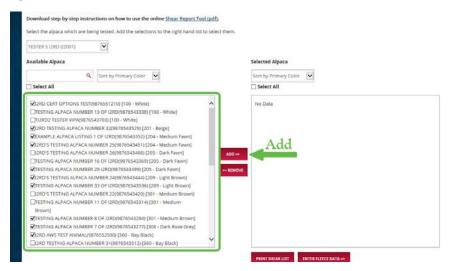
3) Select the account you would like to choose alpacas from to add to the shear list. The shear list can contain alpacas from multiple accounts plus any contracted and boarded alpacas that have been set-up.



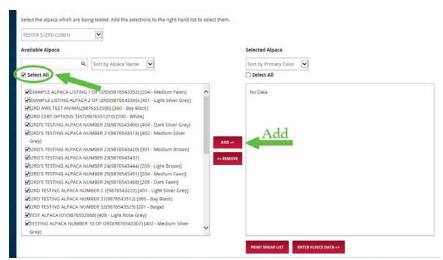
4) You may search or sort the list of alpacas by alpaca name, registry number, or primary color to help you find and select the alpacas for shearing.



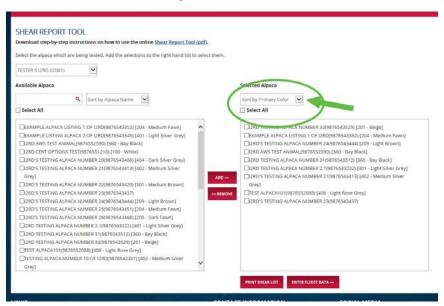
5) Select the alpacas that you wish to include in your shear list from the window on the left and then click "add." Repeat steps three to five for each account that has alpacas you wish to add to your shear list along with any contracted and boarded alpacas.



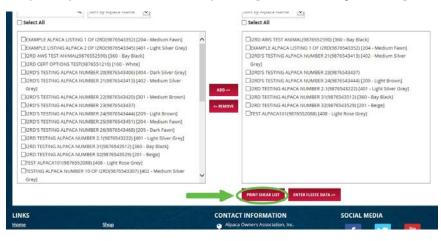
If you wish to add all the alpacas in the account selected, check the "Select All" box and then click "add." You can do this for each account and also for contracted and boarded alpacas.



6) After you have added all the desired alpacas to the right window, the list may be sorted again by alpaca name, registry number, or primary color. This can be quite helpful in working with the shear list. You may want to shear your alpacas in color order to reduce fiber contamination. Selecting primary color as your sort order will reorder the list from light to dark.



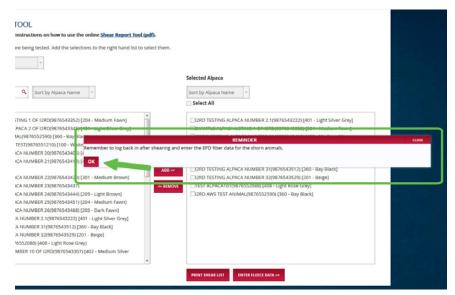
After you have chosen your sort order, click on "print shear list" at the bottom of the screen. This will generate a PDF that you can download, save, and print to easily track your fleece information as you complete the shearing of each alpaca.



NOTE

The shear list will include any microchip, tattoo, or ear tag information that is stored in the AOA database in order to help you identify your alpacas while shearing. Additionally, if there is a last shear date stored in the AOA system, it will automatically show as well. If this date is not filled in, you may enter it manually (if appropriate) along with the account, current shear date, sample date, and fleece weight in step 13 through step 16.

7) Read the reminder pop-up window and click "ok."



NOTE

If you are using Internet Explorer, a dialog box will appear at the bottom of the window giving the options to Open, Save, or Cancel downloading the shear list as a PDF. We recommend saving the PDF to your computer in case you need to reference it at a future time.



SHEARING DAY

NOTE

If possible, AOA recommends you weigh each animal before and after shearing to accurately report the total weight of shorn fleece.

8) As each alpaca is shorn, a 4" x 4" fleece sample is taken from the animal's side. See the following illustration. Please be precise in locating the position of the sample.

The sample should be uniformly cut at the skin level, which is the base of the staple, and should be no smaller than a four-inch square in size. The sample should be kept in the staple configuration, which is its natural growth state from the skin outward on the animal. It should not be brushed out, cleaned up, or folded. Flat bladed shears or clippers are recommended as the safest tools to use in the taking of samples.

The sample must be placed in a moisture-proof sealed freezer bag (AOA recommends gallon sized freezer bags) and retained in the staple configuration.

Mark the bag with the alpaca's identification: it's name, or registry number, or both. Set aside each bag. Later, the fleece testing order form for Yocom-McColl will be included in the bag.



9) To avoid errors, after each alpaca is shorn, use the shear list worksheet to record the total fleece weight (blanket, neck, apron, belly, legs, everything!). Total fleece weight is used in determining EPDs.



8300 Cody Dr, Suite A Lincoln, NE 68512, USA Phone: (402) 437-8484 Fax: (402) 437-8488 Website: www.alpacainfo.com

Registry Number	Alpaca Name	Primary Color	Identifiers (microchip / tattoo / eartag)	Previous Shear Date	Shear Date	Sample Date	Fleece Weight
9876543703	TI2RD2 TESTER VIPA	100 - White					
9876543529	I2RD TESTING ALPACA NUMBER 32	201 - Beige	SDFG				
9876543451	I2RD'S TESTING ALPACA NUMBER 25	204 - Medium Fawn	A123				
9876543369	TESTING ALPACA NUMBER 16 OF I2RD	205 - Dark Fawn					
9876543499	TESTING ALPACA NUMBER 29 I2RD	205 - Dark Fawn					

PREPARING TO SEND DATA FOR FIBER TESTING

OVERVIEW

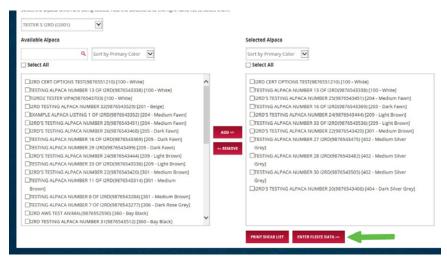
These steps are completed after shearing. Fleece data is entered into the AOA system, which permits the system to automatically generate the order forms needed to submit your fleece to Yocom-McColl.

NOTE

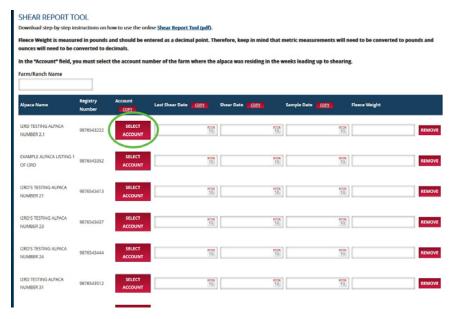
You must use these computer generated order forms from the AOA website to submit your fleece for testing if you wish to be included in the EPD program.

- 10) Log in to the members section of the AOA website at www.AlpacaInfo.com. Click "Shear Report Tool" on your Dashboard. If needed, refer to steps one and two for guidance.
- **11)** By default, your list (on the right) will already include the alpacas that you added when preparing your shear list. Alpacas can be added or removed from the shear list at this time, if needed.

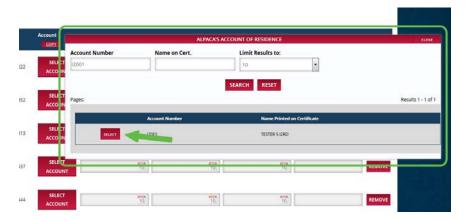
12) After all alpacas you wish to report data on have been copied from the left window to the right window, click "enter fleece data" at the bottom of the screen.



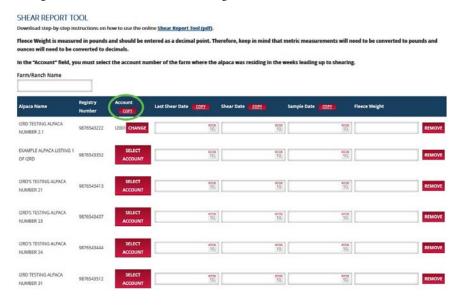
13) To select the account of the farm where the alpaca was residing in the weeks leading up to the shearing click the "select account" button.



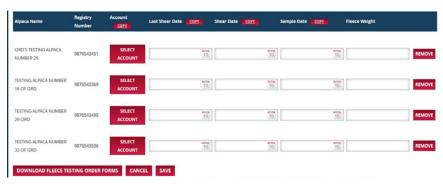
14) Enter the account number or the name on the certificate and click "search." Searching by account number will yield the best results. Click "select" on the correct account.



15) If the account is the same for the entire list of alpacas, click "copy" to repeat the account number down the list. If the account numbers are different, repeat steps 13 and 14 to select the correct account number for each alpaca. If you need to change an account number, click "change" and search for the correct account.



16) Enter Last Shear Date (if not already entered and applicable), Shear Date, Sample Date, and Fleece Weight for each alpaca.



NOTE

Sample date is the date the 4"x4" fleece sample is taken. Typically this date is the same as the shear date, but not always.

NOTE

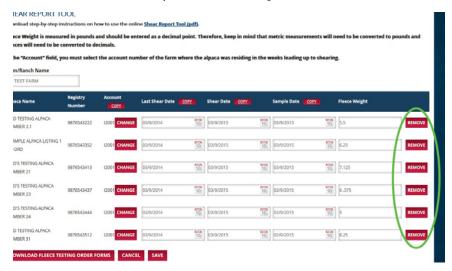
Weight is entered in decimal points, not pounds and ounces. Refer to the following table for the conversion factors if your scale provides pounds and ounces. Example: 9 lb. 7 oz. = 9.4375

Ounces	Pounds
1	.0625
2	.125
3	.1875
4	.25
5	.3125
6	.375
7	.4375
8	.50
9	.5625
10	.625
11	.6875
12	.75
13	.8125
14	.875
15	.9375

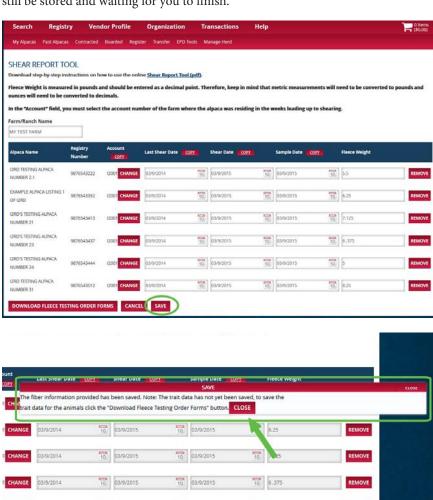
17) The "copy" button allows you to save time if all the dates are the same for a particular date (Last Shear Date, Shear Date, Sample Date) by copying the date in the first row down the entire column. This feature will overwrite any existing dates in the column with the date you entered in the first row.



18) The "remove" button allows you to remove an alpaca from the list.



19) The "save" button is a temporary save only! It WILL NOT permanently write the information you have entered to the alpaca's trait data. If you need to take a break from entering data on this page, click "save," and then read and close the pop-up window. Clicking "save" will protect you from the system timing out while you are gone and losing any information you have entered. After clicking "save" you can even log out and when you log back in the information you have entered will still be stored and waiting for you to finish.



CANCEL SAVE

03/9/2014

10 03/9/2015

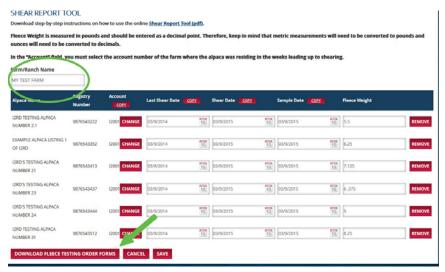
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10 03/9/2015

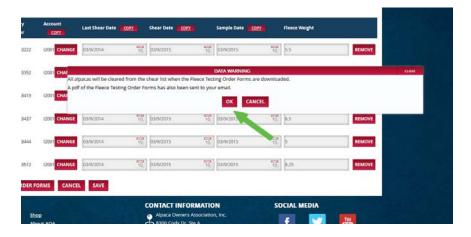
10 8.25

REMOVE

20) Enter your Farm/Ranch Name in the field provided. After all the information is entered please verify for accuracy. Click "download fleece testing order forms" to generate a PDF of the fleece testing order forms.



A data warning pop-up box will appear, please read. Click "ok" if you have verified the information and you are ready to print your fleece order forms. All alpacas will be cleared from the screen and the data you have entered will be saved permanently. Click "cancel" if you wish to return to the data entry screen and change any information. A PDF of the order forms will also be sent to the email on file.



21) This PDF will contain a one-page order form for each alpaca that you selected for the shear report. Download, print, sign, and date the fleece testing order forms.

Registry Number: 9876543260		0 009876 543260	ALPACA
Alpaca Name: TESTING ALP		NUMBER	Owners Association Inc
AOA Shear ID:	92751		. ulika

By submitting your sample for the Alpaca Owners Association, Inc. (AOA) EPD program, your data, generated using an OFDA laboratory fiber testing instrument, will be sent directly to the AOA. The following characteristics will be measured and used in the AOA EPD program:

Mean Fiber Diameter, Standard Deviation, Coefficient of Variation, Spin Fineness, Fibers >30 Microns, Comfort Factor, Mean Staple Length, Length of Standard Deviation, Length Coefficient of Variation, Mean Curvature, Standard Deviation of Curvature, and % Medullated Fibers (white and light fleeces only).

Please submit a mid-side 4" x 4" square fiber sample retained in the staple configuration in a gallon-sized freezer bag. Fold and insert this printed and signed form into the freezer bag and seal. Please include the fee of \$11.50 per sample to Yocom-McColl and ship to the laboratory address below.

Ship to: Yocom-McColl Testing Laboratories, Inc.

540 West Elk Place Denver, CO 80216-1823

Customer	ln'	forma	tion:
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Farm/Ranch Name:

Submitter's Name: TEST FARM

Address:

TEST FARM

8300 CODY DR, STE A Lincoln, NE 68512

Email: TEST@EMAIL.COM

Phone: +1 (402) 437-8484

Alpaca Information:

Gender:

Color: 204 - Medium Fawn

Breed: Huacaya

Date of Birth: January 1 1991

Date Sample Taken: March 24 2015

This Sample's Shear Date: March 24 2015

Previous Shear Date: March 24 2014

Total Fleece Weight (pounds): 5.0

Listed Indicated Owner (in AOA system):

TEST FARM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/CONSENT: I hereby consent to the royalty-free and perpetual use, reproduction, distribution, testing, and processing of all data submitted by me to Alpaca Owners Association, Inc. (AOA) and its employees, agents, and contractors, including testing laboratories, in connection with AOA's EPD program. Such permission is transferable by AOA in connection with its business purposes.

	Signature:	Date:	
	Print Name:		

22) Fold and insert the printed order form into the corresponding alpaca's freezer bag of fleece. Ship all samples with payment to the address provided on the order form. The current fee for fiber testing can be located on the order form. Please make checks payable to Yocom-McColl.



NOTE

By completing this process, the system will save your fleece weight data so that you will not have to enter it again.

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

After the fiber testing is complete, you will receive the histogram results for each animal directly from Yocom-McColl. An electronic copy of the results are forwarded to AOA for inclusion in their EPD calculation.

The EPD results will be calculated yearly (usually in the late fall) and posted for each participating alpaca in the members area of the AOA website. You may view EPD information for each alpaca on their page and trait data can be viewed on the "Trait Data" tab.

NOTE

Remember, EPD results are private by default. If you would like to publish your EPDs, so that potential buyers/breeders can search for your data, you must manually mark it public.

User Entered Trait Data

PLEASE NOTE

These traits may be entered by the alpaca owner. All other fleece traits must be sent to AOA directly from Yocom-McColl. To request that previously tested fleece samples from Yocom-McColl be sent to AOA for inclusion in the EPD program, download, complete, and submit the Historical Histogram Data Request Form found at www.AlpacaInfo.com to Yocom-McColl.

BIRTH WEIGHT

Allow cria to dry completely (or dry it via a warm/hot air dryer) and weigh as soon after birth as possible, but not later than 12 hours. Report weight in units of pounds and tenths of pounds.

WEANING WEIGHT

Weigh cria on day of weaning (or final weaning if a process is followed). Report weight in units of pounds and tenths of pounds. Record the date the weight was taken.

BIRTHING EASE

Record your observations on birthing ease of the female. This is somewhat subjective but should fit into the following categories.

BIRTHING EASE TABLE				
DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY	BIRTHING EASE SCORE			
No Problem (or unobserved)	1			
Slight Problem	2			
Needed Assistance	3			
Considerable Force	4			
Extreme Difficulty	5			

Birthing ease scores should be assigned using the scale given in the table. Most farms will have far more births that receive scores of one and two than births that receive scores of three, four, and five. If a female births normally without anyone noticing (or assisting), the birth should typically be scored as one. If a Caesarean section is needed, the birth should be scored as five. It is best if the person who actually supervises the birthing assigns the birthing ease scores. For purposes of genetic evaluation, birthing ease scores are divided into two categories: Scores of one, two, and three indicate relatively easy births; and categories four and five indicate difficult births. Twin births are excluded from the genetic analysis.

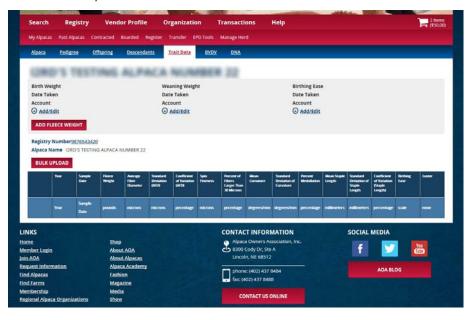
User Entered Trait Data

SHEARED FLEECE WEIGHT

Report complete weight of fleece. This may be done by weighing the shorn fleece in bags following shearing. This is a total fleece weight and is understood not to reflect a total usable fleece and may be skewed somewhat by the extent to which shearing of legs is done.

OVERVIEW

To enter birth weight, weaning weight, birthing ease, or fleece weight for your alpaca, login at www.AlpacaInfo.com. Click "View My Alpacas" on your dashboard. Search for the alpaca you would like to enter data for and click the registry number. On the "Trait Data" tab you can view historical trait data or enter new data.



NOTE

If you prefer to upload your data in bulk, instead of one by one, click the "bulk upload" button. You will be directed to the "EPD Bulk Upload" page where you can download a spreadsheet to use for your data along with further instructions.



Alpaca Owners Association, Inc. 8300 Cody Dr, Ste A Lincoln, NE 68512

> phone 402-437-8484 fax 402-437-8488

www.AlpacaInfo.com