



Asociación  
Internacional  
de la Alpaca  
International Alpaca Association



# BULLETIN

MARCH 2022



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# EDITORIAL

## CHALLENGES IN THE ALPACA TEXTILE INDUSTRY - IAA

The International Alpaca Association-IAA was founded in 1984 with the aim of promoting and protecting the image of alpaca fiber in Peru and the world. Today, after more than 37 years of institutional life, the IAA reaffirms this commitment to its associates, consumers, and the alpaca value chain in the world.

These last years has been difficult for the Alpaca textile industry, facing great challenges. Covid-19 had a strong impact worldwide, the alpaca textile industry was no exception, forcing all involved to redefine their strategies. On the other hand, the new demands of consumers regarding the sustainability of textile fibers that guarantee animal welfare, respect for the environment and the worker, as well as traceability, have marked the new trends of sustainable consumption.

In this context, the role of IAA in 2020 has been very important, being part of the International Working Group for the elaboration of the **RAS** (Responsible Alpaca Standard) of Textile Exchange since its formation, participating very actively in all the round tables/work meetings convened by that organization. Likewise, in 2021 the IAA focused its efforts on organizing the first digital edition of **Alpaca Fiesta 2021**, which I had the honor of presiding over and which allowed to show through exhibitions and micro documentaries the good livestock practices and sustainable breeding of a wonderful species of Peru: the alpaca.

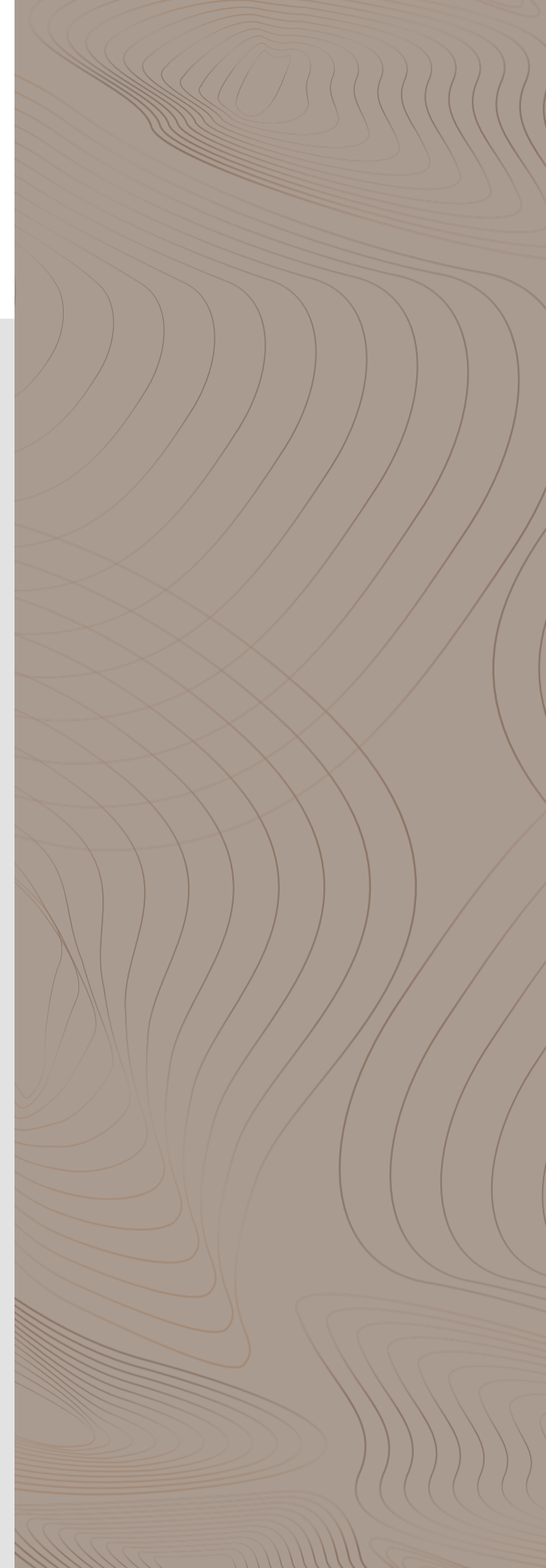
Currently, IAA and its technical association ASCALPE (Alpaca of Peru Civil Association) are leading the **RAS Implementation Project in Peru** that guarantees the certification and traceability of at least 15% of the alpaca fiber produced in Peru during the next 5 years.

Likewise, the AIA will soon implement **The Home of Alpaca**, a web platform of centralized information about alpaca. In addition, this year the IAA will organize the **Alpaca Summit 2022** and will also be co-organizer of the **Natural Fiber Connect Conference**, along with other fibers such as wool, mohair, and cashmere, which will take place the first week of September.

On behalf of the International Alpaca Association, we appreciate the support of its associate members and IAA's allied organizations that have contributed from various aspects to the alpaca textile industry.



President at International Alpaca Association





# ALPACA FIESTA 2021

The International Association of Alpaca-IAA in alliance with the Commission for the Promotion of Peru Export and Tourism-PROMPERÚ of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru-MINCETUR carried out ALPACA FIESTA 2021, the most important alpaca event in the world that aims to disseminate and promote alpaca and its derivatives in the global textile market.

ALPACA FIESTA 2021 was held between October 25 and November 12, in a fully digital edition and on the year of Bicentennial Anniversary of Peru and included transcendental activities of the entire alpaca value chain.



## Alpacas Exhibition

Through 5 micro documentaries, exhibitions of good livestock practices of alpaca breeders from 4 regions of Peru were presented: Puno, Cusco, Arequipa, and Pasco.

To achieve this, 14 leading and representative breeders of Peru were visited and the audiovisual record (photography and video) of the natural breeding habitat, alpacas, infrastructure and mainly testimonies of breeders was carried out; resulting in a record of 4,500 photographs and 3,207 video clips that is part of IAA's current Audiovisual Material.



## Fashion Shows

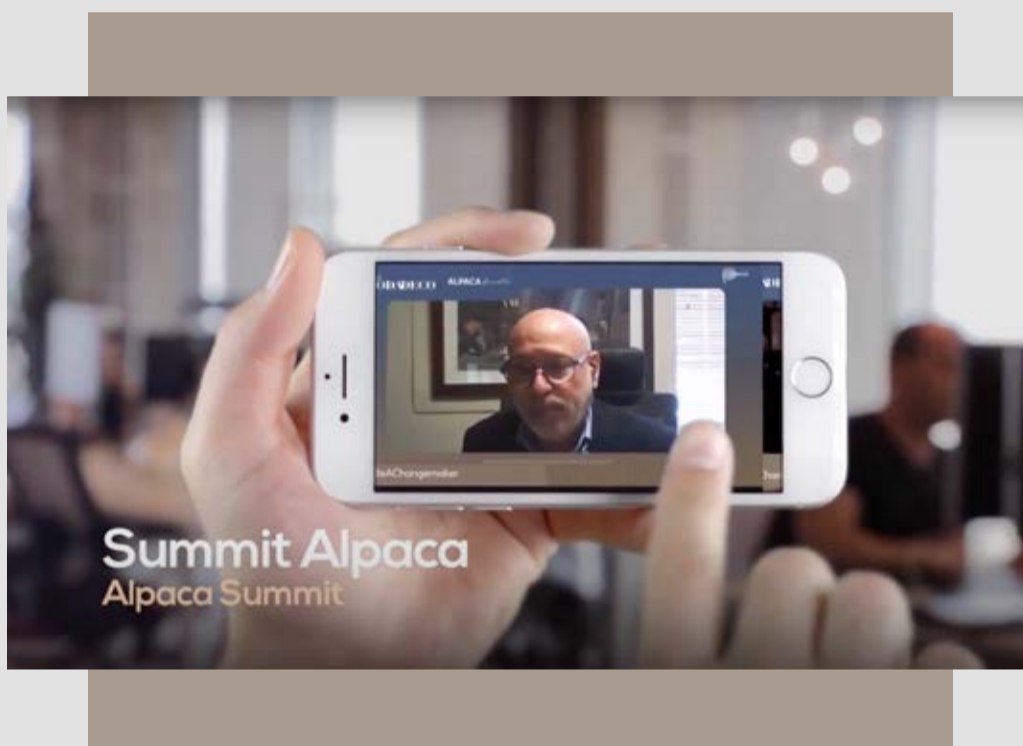
4 blocks of parades were presented:

- Alpaca Awards, design proposals were presented by 4 winning students of the contest at ESMOD Paris, and garments designed by the student of the ESNE Madrid contest.
- Emerging, 6 Peruvian brands participated: Inkamoda, Sophie Ottaner, Norgate, Lana Lina, Manos del Perú and Alwa.
- Consecrated, 5 Peruvian brands participated: Sitka Semsch, Royal Knit, Wayra, Colca Fabrics and Itala Testino.
- Stellar, 6 Peruvian brands participated: Sol Alpaca, Anntarah, Itessa, Kuna, Kero Design and Sol Vicuña.



## Business Roundtables

This activity was overseen by PROMPERU and had the participation of 81 Peruvian companies from the alpaca industry with a export potential and 58 international buyers from the United States, Europe, Asia and Latin America interested in alpaca, generating various business appointments and resulting in a projection of commercial opportunities for participating companies in the alpaca industry, to 12 months with a worth of US\$ 13,980,000.00.



## Alpaca Summit

The Alpaca Summit, academic activity of the Alpaca Fiesta, was structured according to thematic axes and included 16 exhibitions by national and international experts in the various fields of the Alpaca value chain around Sustainability, and 5 Discussion Panels in which 16 exhibitors and 10 outstanding panelists participated. The total number of attendees was 450 people from various countries such as Germany, Argentina, Bolivia, Spain, United States, South Africa, Switzerland, Chile, Austria, United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, and Peru.

## Virtual exhibitions of textile art

The virtual exhibition of the XL Art Michell and its Catalog was held, in 3D, being a virtual reality experience where millenary textile art could be observed in the categories of Creativity, Traditional and Classified.

Also, within the framework of the event, the visit of the Spanish press (Press Tour Madrid) was received, and publications were made on various international platforms such as Fuera de Serie, Vanitatis-El Confidencial, Flash Moda TV and others.

Finally, Alpaca Fiesta 2021 was possible thanks to the sponsorship of 7 AIA Associates: Michell & Cia., Filitaly-Lab, Andes Textiles Peru (Wayra), Silkeborg Uldspinderi, Itessa, Allpa, Texao Lanas, and 5 external entities: La Joya Mining, DHL, Compañía Minera Bateas, CITEtextil camelidos Arequipa (ITP CITE network of the Ministry of Production) and CEVA Logistics; to whom we give special thanks.





# RESPONSIBLE ALPACA STANDARD - RAS

The RAS is a voluntary international standard that addresses the well-being of alpacas in the supply chain and chain of custody of alpaca fiber material from certified farms to the final product (see chart).

The RAS 1.0 was published by Textile Exchange on April 21, 2021, after a hard work of the International Working Group (IWG) made up of representatives of the Alpaca fiber value chain (breeders, processing companies, clothing brands and academics) who participated in its design between June and December 2020.

Certification offers a way to verify environmental, social, and animal welfare best practices at the beginning of the supply chain and trace the material back to the final product, providing a reliable traceability mechanism from the origin of the fiber. The RAS has a user guide, which presents the compliance criteria (animal welfare, land management and social welfare), indicates the requirements, their implications and other information of relevance for its implementation.

As for the certification options at the farm level, there are three: an individual certification, aimed at a single breeder with a farm with many animals; a group certification, for more than two breeders (organized farms); and a community certification, which covers many productive units of small producers at the same time.

There is also the RAS certification for industrial companies, which allows them to offer products and by-products with this certification and above all guarantee the chain of custody.

Nowadays buyers of alpaca garments are a select market niche and willing to pay more if Animal Welfare is evidenced through this certification. Both the alpaca breeder and the industrial companies are benefited because the RAS facilitates access to the market obtaining greater sustainability and profitability in their products.

After almost 1 year of publication of the RAS 1.0, the first experiences of audit and certification are available in 04 individual farms and 02 associations (group certification), in the regions of Puno and Cusco; it also has two companies from Arequipa and one company in Italy with RAF certification (RWS and RAS) in industrial transforming. To date, only one company has managed to have the complete RAS Certification, from the breeding to the production of tops and yarns.



Source: Textile Exchange 2021



## INTERVIEW- CALLIE WELDON

Callie Weldon has over a decade of experience working with sustainable textiles. As the Standards Engagement at Textile Exchange, Callie consults with stakeholders on their sustainability goals and how Textile Exchange standards, traceability, and verification can be a tool for driving impact. She specializes in animal fiber content knowledge, specifically alpaca, and helps to manage the Responsible Alpaca Standard.

### **Why is the RAS important for the Alpaca Value Chain?**

The RAS certification plays an important role in the alpaca value chain because it recognizes the best practices of farmers and allows them to communicate this directly to buyers.

Historically, buyers have been willing to pay a premium for this type of certified fiber to ensure that animal welfare, land management, and social aspects are met on the farm. The RAS also gives more equity and selling power to alpaca breeders since they will be the owners of this certification and know exactly the quality and value of what they are selling. It also recognizes supply chain members who are implementing best practice to handle this certified material and shows their commitment to the standard.

### **Which are the benefits that alpaca breeders will have by implementing and certifying the RAS?**

There is a huge demand for certified fiber right now. Many apparel brands have publicly committed to sourcing exclusively RAS fiber for their clothing going forward. Getting certified to the RAS gives farmers a great opportunity to have high demand and premiums paid for their clip. There is also an opportunity for long-term contracts and direct relationships with buyers so that alpaca breeders and groups have more negotiation power. Individual farmers can come together in groups to get certified and share costs - this will allow them to work together to implement certification as a community and sell fiber as a certified business of their own. Supply chain members can also realize the premium in their operations and advertise to their buyers that they are able to sell RAS fiber. It creates transparency throughout the entire process which is something the apparel industry has been working towards and is in high demand.

### **Why is important that the other members of the value chain also certify it?**

All sites in the alpaca value chain (including processors and brands) must get certified. They are certified to ensure that they know how to handle the certified fiber that is coming from the farms. Supply chain certification also ensures that the integrity of the goods is upheld and reduces risk of fraudulent activity. When a brand advertises the certification of RAS on their product, the standard system has verified that the claim is in fact true. Customers can have confidence that the product they purchase is coming from a certified farm in Peru that has been working hard on the RAS and a supply chain that is dedicated to the values of the RAS.

### **Do you think there are other favorable attributes of the alpaca and its breeders that are not yet evidenced by the current certifications?**

Standards and certification often recognize practices that are already occurring on farms. In reality, most often we are writing requirements based on what the farmers have been doing for years while trying to push the industry forward bit by bit in a continuous improvement. Alpaca breeders know their land the best, they know their animals the best, they know their communities the best. I personally believe that alpaca breeders are some of the most sustainable and climate forward-thinking people in the industry because raising alpacas is a sacred family practice that has been done for centuries. They know the land and see it shifting with climate change first-hand. They are the ones who will inform us where the standard should go in the future and will push the industry forward towards what community, land, and animals need in order to thrive. I'm very proud to work on this initiative and extremely grateful that the entire industry has come together in a monumental way to support this effort. Every player in the value chain is committed to the RAS and sees the potential it has for the alpaca industry.



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