



Llama vs Alpaca

One of the most common questions asked of llama owners is “**What’s the difference between a llama and an alpaca**”. The Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association (RMLA) has created this document to help with the distinction and the similarities between the two.

Body Size and Tails



Adult llamas can stand three to four feet tall at the shoulder and weigh from 250 – 400 pounds.

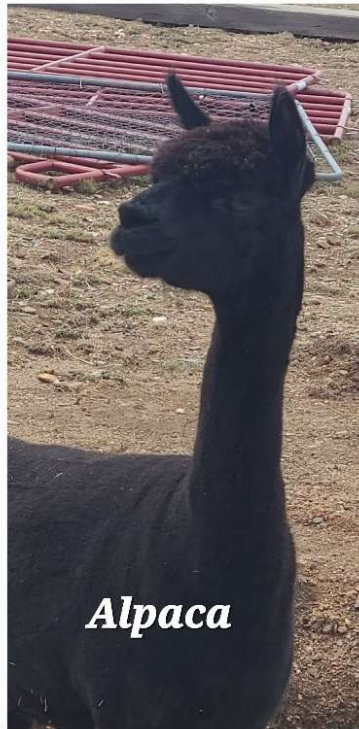
Llama’s tails are set high giving them the air of an aristocrat.

Adult alpacas are more petite and can stand three feet tall at the shoulder. An adult alpaca can weigh up to 150 pounds.

Alpaca’s tails are set low giving the rump a rounded look.



Ears and Faces



Llamas have long, erect, curved “banana” shaped ears that make them seem alert.

Alpacas have short, pointed spear-shaped ears.

Alpacas will also tend to have more fiber coverage on the face and legs.

Llamas have elongated faces while alpacas have smaller more blunt rounded faces.

Personality/Disposition



Llamas are more independent minded, curious, and assertive.

Alpacas are more herd oriented, shy and can be more skittish than llamas.

Both animals hum to communicate.



Cria (Llama and Alpaca Babies)



Baby llamas and alpacas are both called Cria (Spanish for baby)

Llama cria usually weigh between 18 to 35 pounds.

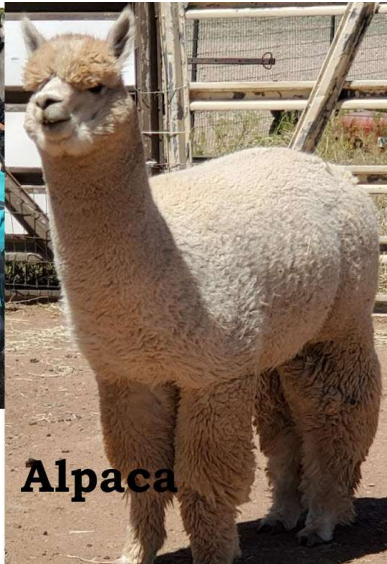
Alpaca cria usually weigh between 16 to 20 pounds.

Gestation periods are similar. Llamas range from 342-355 days and alpaca range from 335-350 days.

Purpose



Llama



Alpaca

Llamas originate from the guanaco. They have historically been bred as pack animals, for fiber and in their country of origin, for meat. Llamas are also used as guard animals for other livestock including alpacas.

Alpacas originate from the vicuña. They have been bred for their fiber.