

Fact Finding Mission to US, 2017

In April/May 2017 I was fortunate to have the opportunity to go to California and Oregon on a llama fact finding trip.

I visited several ranches breeding llamas - Hidden Oaks, Sijama Llamas, Rain Dance Llamas, R&G Acres, Llama Dreams, Argentine Aficionados plus a few smaller ones. I also attended the Cascade Llama Show and Auction in Salem.

Here are a few of my findings, a more detailed Report will be available shortly.

Good Ccaras in short supply, pushed aside by many as they pursued fleece via Argentines and Silkies (Argentine/Suri mix).

Now established cooperative for making fleece commercial.

Demand for Ccaras is for trekkers but have to be much bigger/stronger than here – good confirmation tall at the withers, big hoofs,, etc. for long, several days trails, heavy packs,

Argentines appeared relatively short legged, long neck and short squashed up snout triangular face (compared to UK).

Highway road sweeper brushes used widely for llamas to brush up against.

Orchard grass said to be high in protein and greener than ours is predominately used in this part of the US.

Some people own llamas but have them livered and visit at the weekend etc. to take trekking.

Some people don't own llamas but show them in handling classes etc. (H4)

Inject for tetanus, clostridia, vitamins, etc.

Many different designed chutes - sides that open up, bars that turn, ones that can be dismantled and transported. Generally in the \$1K range to buy new.

Fantastic livestock trailers with divisions, water on tap and hay supplies on top.

H4 classes help educate, promote interest future owners, etc. Classes taught, credits given that can be used on their CV etc.

Studs leased

Handled from birth

All very friendly, don't spit.

Some have sagging backs

Good trade in guard llamas

Imports from Australia and S. America, some via embryo transfer

Teenage girls, Mexican workers etc. used to assist.

Poo collected daily

Salt loose rather than as a lick.

Llamas - Tax breaks for many.

Small feed buckets

Some breeders open to culling surplus stock.

Appis popular there as well as here (Goodness knows why!)

Some 100% EBs but exceptionally stocky and wooly.

Some had rooms for showering llamas with warm water, medical, tack, education and trophy rooms generally all neat and tidy.

Carpeted shelter with latrine

Rubber matting on chute floor

Trekking llamas leased to State Forest Dept.

The fibre market was created by llama breeders of Argentines.

As well as fleece and trekking – agility (created by 4H) and why some have arenas like

Different areas have different issues- Washington State – ticks

Most poo test every animal x2 a year, inject/drench/paste vit's.

Embryo transfer technically feasible and very successful in many instances

Restrictions imposed on sale of top stud males.

Minis no longer in demand

Suris mainly for cross breeding, more skittish temperaments, Argentines gentler, more and easier fleece.

In an ideal world – $\frac{3}{4}$ Argentinean 1/4 Suri. Why?- look, size, temperament, quality of fleece, size.