



Empire Alpaca Association CODE OF ETHICS

Revision October 1, 2003

Association members resolve - to be responsible breeders basing their actions on the ethical principles set forth below, to promote the breed honestly, to discourage people from buying on impulse, to ensure customers can adequately provide for alpacas, to serve as role models for future breeders, to

contribute to the integrity of the Alpaca Industry, and to promote the long-term health and vitality of the North American Alpaca Herd.

Responsibilities of Association Members

A. To the Alpaca Industry

1. Breed alpacas with the future of the alpaca gene pool foremost in mind by selecting breeding pairs that can improve the next generation.
2. Participate in the ARI registration process for the alpaca industry to ensure the maintenance of the genetic history for the North American Alpaca including reporting deaths.
3. Provide proper housing, nutrition and health care for all alpacas whether owned, boarded or under temporary custody.
4. Ascertain that any alpaca sold will have access to appropriate housing, nutrition and health care, including companionship of at least one other camelid.
5. Maintain current and when known historical written medical and breeding records for all alpacas whether owned, boarded or under temporary custody.
6. Members should be responsive, professional and honest in all dealings and communications.

B. To Buyers

1. Provide full disclosure of the animal's known physical condition, fiber, health care, vaccinations, and breeding history. The husbandry records in written format will be provided to the buyer.
2. Assure animals offered for sale are behaviorally sound, living or capable of living within a herd.
3. All animal sales agreements and guarantees will be in writing and signed by both seller and buyer.
4. Provide the buyer with a copy of the registration certificate containing the pedigree record of each purchased alpaca and comply in a timely manner with current procedures for transferring ownership.
5. At the time designated for delivery of the alpaca(s) to the buyer, the alpaca(s) will be current for vaccinations, worming, toenail and teeth trimming consistent with the husbandry practices of the selling breeder.
6. Provide information, training and advice about alpaca care, diet, pasturage, shelter and other necessary information to the buyer.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors (Board or BOD)

- Develop and present to the membership for approval a Code of Ethics consistent with the organization's charter.
- Designate an Ethics Committee and appoint, review and relieve committee members as established by Board policies.
- Review the Code of Ethics statement and procedures at least annually and advise of all changes to the membership.
- Review and evaluate a report by the Ethics Committee no less than annually.
- Determine and carryout appropriate actions as indicated based on Ethics Committee findings or recommendations related to any unresolved ethical complaints against members.

Responsibilities of the Ethics Committee (Committee)

- Using the Association by-laws and the statement of Code of Ethics as a guide, act as the review body for complaints against any Association member(s).
- Establish written procedures for methods of operation of the Committee, including but not limited to determining a Chairperson, meeting format, notification to the Board of Committee resignations, forms and record retention.
- Receive, evaluate and assist in resolution of complaints presented against Association members. Report to and recommend to the BOD disciplinary action as appropriate.
- Provide the Board a written summary report of the Committee recommendations for individual cases and of Committee activity. This report will be provided annually or more frequently if requested by the Board. The report should include items such as the type and number of issues resolved and unresolved as well as recommended changes to Committee functions and to the Code of Ethics

Grievance Procedure

Questions about the ethical behavior and or practices of Association members should be brought to the attention of the Committee. There will be no attempt under the Code of Ethics procedures to adjudicate written contractual agreements or attempt to resolve issues between suppliers or non-Association members. Contract disagreements should be handled by the appropriate legal process or complaint resolution agency. Communications, whether oral or written, dealing with ethic questions will be strictly confidential.

A. Complaint Filing

- The complainant must submit the issue in writing to the Committee Chair. Each complaint must clearly state the nature of the issue and a brief description of the complainant member's action to resolve the issue. This submission should be clear and to the point, yet provide sufficient detail for the Chair to decide if the issue is within the purview of the Committee's charter. The Chair will determine within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the complaint if the Committee will handle the issue. Prompt notification of the Chair's decision will be provided in writing to the complainant.
- If accepted, The Chair will review the complaint with the Committee and appoint one or more member(s) to act as a liaison between the parties and the committee.
- The parties will be provided the names of the Committee member(s) who will be their committee contacts regarding the issue. The parties will supply any additional facts and documentation requested by the committee member(s).

B. Complaint Process

- Within ten (10) business days of receiving the assigned case, the member(s) handling the issue will:
 - Thoroughly review all related documents submitted by the complainant.
 - Contact the respondent and request respondent's responding statement and any supporting documentation.
 - Provide a schedule to each party for the investigation and resolution of the issue.
- Within twenty (20) business days of the assignment to investigate the issue and upon careful consideration of both sides of the disagreement, the member(s) will recommend to the parties a method to resolve the issue and settle the complaint.
 - If the proposed resolution is acceptable to the parties, advise the Chair the complaint has been resolved, write a closing report and forward all documents to the Chair to place in confidential committee files. The Chair will write a letter to the complainant closing out the issue.
 - If the proposed resolution is not acceptable to the parties, notify the Chair by a written report covering the actions taken, proposed resolution and response of complainant and attach all related documents. The Chair will then refer the issue to the entire Committee.
- The Chair will review all unresolved issues in full Committee within ten (10) business days of receipt of a member's report of non-resolution. The complainant must be informed that the full Committee is considering the issue.
- After careful consideration, reviewing any additional documents, the Committee will render a decision in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days of a decision.

- If the full Committee decision is still unacceptable to either party, that party will have thirty (30) business days from receipt of the Committee's decision to file an appeal for a review of the decision, to supply any additional documentation or evidence felt pertinent to the issue and to request a hearing before the Committee.
- The Committee will evaluate the appeal and render a final and binding decision to the parties.

C. Disciplinary Actions or Sanctions

- The Committee may recommend to the Board that a member or members be subject to disciplinary action as a result of the failure to resolve a complaint. The disciplinary action recommendation will cite specific reasons for such action based on the association by-laws and or the Ethics Code.
- The Board, by affirmative vote of the majority of directors, may take any disciplinary action against a member, including suspension or revocation of the member's participation in association events or membership status of such person if, in the judgment of the Board, such disciplinary action is in the best interests of the association. Any members removed or suspended from the membership by the BOD as a result of ethical violations will forfeit Association membership dues.
- The Board will notify the member in writing of the grounds for removal from membership.
- The affected member may appeal suspension/loss of membership within thirty (30) days of Board notification by a process established by the Board.

Administration:

The Committee Chair will review all appropriate written requests for information about an individual's own or member's complaint history. The Committee summary information about a particular association member's complaint history will be provided at no cost. Requests considered by the Committee to not be in good faith may be denied.

- Detailed Complaint specifics, supporting documentation and written reports will be maintained for a period of three years in confidential Committee files. Summary reports of individual actions and annual committee reports to the Board of Directors will be maintained in Committee files for a period not to exceed five years from date of issue. Records beyond the retention date will be destroyed.