

Alpacas are fiber producing animals. Alpaca fiber is one of the finest animal fibers in the world. It is comparable to mohair, cashmere and other rare fibers. The fiber is very soft, light and warm without the prickle of sheep's wool. The fibers are semi-hollow; giving Alpaca fiber added insulating value.

Alpacas have one of the finest hands of any natural fleece. Alpacas are shorn annually in the spring and produce on average 4 lbs of fiber. The fiber sells retail in the U.S. Cottage Industry between \$2.00 & \$3.00 per ounce. The first fleece or baby fleece is the finest, softest fleece the animal will produce and the mostly highly prized and expensive.

Alpacas lack the natural body oils produced by most animals. For processing these oils are often washed out with chemicals or harsh soaps. This washing process and the natural oils can make it unbearable for some people to wear traditional sheep's wool. Alpacas have a single coat which lacks guard hairs. Guard hairs are coarser than the soft undercoat which they are designed to protect. Alpaca fiber is very soft and can be worn next to the skin without irritation.

Alpaca's broad range of natural colors eliminates the need to dye. These colors come in different shades of white, fawn, brown, grey, black and many in-between colors. These attributes make Alpaca fiber a highly sought after product.

In the breeding market some colors are rarer than others. For generations the South American culture has been drawn to bright colors which are not found in livestock naturally. This requires dyeing, thus a white fleece producing animal has been the standard. Today in the U.S. Alpacas of a rare color bring higher prices.

There are many outlets for Alpaca Fiber. The highest price is brought in the Hand-spinners market. Some of the U.S. Alpaca fiber is sent through the North American Alpaca Fiber Co-op to South American for processing and sent back to the U.S. in yarn and finished goods. There are several small regional co-ops being created to deal with the growing amount of North American Fiber. They are beginning to produce some fine Alpaca products from fiber grown in the U.S. and products produced here in the U.S. There are some small processors in the U.S. working with Alpaca fiber and the number grows annually.

The U.S., Italy, and Japan are the largest consumers of Alpaca fiber. Italy has long used the fiber in it's fine clothing which it sells to the upper class. Tipper Gore wore an alpaca suit to the 1997 inauguration. In 1999 the associated press of Australia published an internet post stating that the economic crisis in Asia has not hurt the alpaca fiber market in Japan.

Fiber Co-Ops

The Alpaca Fiber Cooperative of North America (AFCNA) is an agricultural cooperative formed and owned by alpaca producers in North America for the purpose of collecting and processing alpaca fiber and distributing alpaca fiber and related products and the profit from them to its owners (members). Our goal is to maximize the long-term benefits to our members, the individual alpaca fiber producers, and to the alpaca breeding industry as a whole.

Since its founding in 1998, AFCNA has grown to over 1,000 members. We welcome all North American alpaca owners to join the Co-op and work with us to build a sustainable and successful alpaca fiber industry.

<http://www.afcna.com/>

The **Canadian Camelid Fibre Co-operative, CAN CAM**, is a service co-op that on behalf of it's camelid farm members collects, classes (by certified classers), and processes alpaca and llama fibre into quality finished product including woolen yarn, worsted yarn, socks, blankets and rugs. This finished product is then distributed back to CAN CAM members for individual farm gate sales or consigned to the Creation Centre for central marketing. CAN CAM works closely with breeders and mills to ensure quality begins at the farm and carries through to the consumer.

<http://www.cancamco-op.com/>

RMLA (Rocky Mountain Llama & Alpaca Association) continues to support and promote the very successful [Fiber Co-op](#). The Co-op has been successful in creating a marketplace for llama fiber and has given RMLA members a sales outlet for the wonderfully soft, warm fiber their animals are naturally producing.

<http://www.rmla.com/fibercoopbooth.htm#Guidelines>

NEAFP (New England Alpaca Fiber Pool) collects fiber from U.S. Alpaca Farms and works exclusively with U.S. Mills to produce high quality apparel. Items are returned to the farms for resale allowing the farm to control all aspects of their venture. NEAFP's approach provides direct benefit to the Alpaca community in many ways. In the short term, it provides farmers with an immediate alternative source of income while demonstrating the tremendous quality of their fiber. Over the long term, NEAFP revitalizes American Mills and builds alpaca processing expertise here at home. We invite you to join in our efforts in building a strong and versatile alpaca manufacturing capability in the U.S.

<http://www.neafp.com/index.php>

Fiber Processing Services

NY - [A + Alpaca Fiber Mill](#) (USA): In their newly built mill, they can individually process your fiber into high quality rovings, batts and yarn. Their mill comes from their own need and desire to have yarn that comes from only their animals - yarn from their farm. It is so exciting to raise these beautiful animals with their wonderful fiber. How frustrating it has been to get that special fiber, which you worked so hard to breed for and to raise, turned into yarn. A+ Alpaca Fiber Mill will create yarn from your farm so you can show off that special fiber! Every farm can have their own yarn to market or turn into garments.

MO - [ABC Ranch](#) (USA): Fiber will be weighed upon arrival and pricing is based on arrival weight. If there is excessive vegetable matter or trash, fiber will be returned unprocessed at your expense. Prices are subject to change without notice. They reserve the right to rewash any fibers sent in for processing. Their equipment requires the fiber to be free from grease and vegetable matter to run properly. Any fiber not meeting the standards needed to run the equipment would have to be rewashed and the charges will be set accordingly. Fleeces that are very slick such as mohair, angora, alpaca, etc. will process into a better-finished product if they are blended with at least twenty per cent wool. the wool should be of a crimp type and of similar length of the exotic fiber. This will give more body to the resulting product in the roving form, later in the yarn and again in the finished article made from the yarn. Wool has a memory and retains its original configuration whereas the slicker fibers tend to grow and become misshapen.

MT - [Big Sky Quality Wool](#) : PICKING SCOURING KNITTING & SPINNING CLASSES CARDING

WI - [Blackberry-Ridge](#) (USA): Specializing in natural fiber hand knitting yarns; also offering custom carding and spinning services.

WA - [Blue-Moon Farm](#) : they do the final preparation and spinning your wool at their mill. If you have a raw fleece, it needs to be washed and carded first so it goes to Dawn's Custom Carding and comes back in the form of a loose roving. Note: if you send them a roving that has been wound into a bump, they have to unwind it and put it into loose form again so it can be fed into the pin drafter. They need to charge extra for the unwinding.

OR - [Fantasy Fibers](#) : People with solutions for your fiber, fleece and yarn processing needs. Custom exotic fiber washing, dehairing, carding, blending, and spinning. Complete fiber processing and sales for Alpaca, Angora,

Cashmere, Hemp, Llama, Mohair, Merino, Pygora, Qiviut, and many other fibers. Processed fibers available in batts, roving, or yarn. Design your own blends or try one of theirs. Complete fiber processing and sales for Alpaca, Angora, Cashmere, Hemp, Llama, Mohair, Merino, Pygora, Qiviut and many other fibers. Processed fibers available in batts, roving or yarn. Design your own blends or try one of theirs.

ME - [The Fiber Company](#) (USA): The Fiber Company uses modern equipment engineered to process small lots of fiber yet is flexible enough to handle large runs of a variety of blends from fiber herds around the world. The result is highly customized services and products that are well crafted, unique and stylish. Come visit them at their studio on the working waterfront of Portland, Maine.

[Fingerlakes Yarns](#) (USA): Fingerlakes Woolen Mill is located in the Finger Lakes region of New York, just north of Ithaca. It is the only US mill that manufactures angora yarns for the hand-knitting market in addition to its wool and wool/silk yarns. Fingerlakes produces carded wool and wool/angora blends for hand-spinning, felting and other craft uses. Fingerlakes Un-spun™ is the popular brand of pencil roving, also known to some as the "yarn" the Icelandics use in their famous yoke sweaters.

GA - [Georgia Mountain Fiber](#) (USA): Georgia Mountain Fiber is a family-owned and operated fiber processing mill in the beautiful mountains of Blue Ridge, Georgia. Being Alpaca owners themselves, they appreciate the value and beauty of their animal's fiber. Their focus at Georgia Mountain Fiber is to produce the best and most luxurious product from your Alpaca, Llama and/or Cashmere Goat.

MI - [Jehovah Jireh Farm](#) (USA): their business is aimed at small-scale producers of animal fibers as well as artisans and crafters who enjoy working with these natural materials. While the bulk of their business is in sheep's wool, they also have a particular interest in exotic fibers and can blend and process them to order. They are able to process fiber sent to them or fill orders from their own stock.

[Koenig Farms](#) (USA): they are proud to present a variety of homespun yarns produced entirely on their family farm in Arlington, Ky. In order to produce their luxurious mohair yarns, their Angora Goats share their mohair with them twice a year. First, they shear the mohair and gently wash it. Then, the fiber is processed into yarn in their spinning mill. After the yarn is spun, they either keep it natural or it is hand painted into a wide spectrum of luscious colors for your knitting pleasure.

[Mill Canyon](#) : Mill Canyon is a unique business in that they are able to control the processing of fiber from start to finish. The breeding program plays a huge part in the quality of the fiber. Then it's on to lambing and selection of the individuals who will remain in the flock. Then shearing and sorting fleeces according to quality; then onto the mill where the processing begins. At the end is a quality yarn that they put their name on. If it comes from Mill Canyon you can rest assured that it is 100% natural fiber.

OK - [Ozark Carding Mill](#) (USA): they offer custom fiber processing and produce quality roving, batts and webs. Explore their site to learn more about how they can turn your raw wool, angora, mohair or exotic fiber into a product spinners will love. They offer individualized attention to each and every fleece. They use the finest cottage industry machines available, set up for fine to coarse fibers. They take care not to over process your fiber

MN - [Royal Spin](#) (USA): their Mission: to process as much fiber as an animal can produce and develop a market that will allow our partners and clients to build their herds.

MN - [St. Peter Woolen Mill](#) (USA): (will only process alpaca fiber into batting and will have to add 1/3 wool to the process) natures comfort wool batting for quilting, spinning, felting and crafting. Custom Carding and re-carding of wool and acrylics for quilt batting, spinning, felting, or weaving.

CT - [Still River Mill](#) (USA): they are a family-owned full service fiber processing mill able to turn your raw fiber into high quality batts, roving, and yarns from fingering to bulky weight. Located in Eastford, Connecticut, they are dedicated to serving sheep, alpaca, goat, and llama growers in the Northeast and beyond. They will return your fiber

back to you whether you have one pound, or two hundred for processing. They aim to provide you with the best quality end product for your needs in a timely fashion.

[MI - Stone Hedge Fiber Mill](#) (USA) : Stone Hedge is an over 139 year old working farm that has recently added another dimension to the farm operation. In addition to their fiber shop is their custom fiber processing mill, which opened February 1st, 1999. They have been working with fiber and fiber animals for over 14 years. They have a shepherd, spinner, and fiber artist. In addition to processing, they are offering roving or batts processed from their own spinners flock of eight breeds of sheep, angora goats, angora rabbits, llamas and alpacas, as well as yarn and finished items from their animals and quality fiber they buy. They also now offer custom spinning, sock knitting, and weaving to their customers.

[Taos Valley Wool Mill](#) : is a premium quality, semi-worsted spinning mill. We offer the most versatile custom spinning options in the fiber industry. More than likely, if you can imagine it, we can spin it. We are long wool and exotic fiber specialists, working with from one pound to thousands of pounds of natural fiber with the same precision and attention to detail and quality.

[Vermont Premium Fiber Company](#) (USA) : they operate out of a 160-year-old historic fiber mill that was shut down 54 years ago. This location created yarn and fabric for the world renowned Johnson Woolen Mills. Vermont Premium Fiber has re-outfitted the mill with machinery to cater to the growing fine fiber industry in the United States & Canada.

[WA - Willow Creek Farm \(Dawns Custom Carding\)](#) (USA) : their farm is a family business and they have been processing wool and wool products for the past 10 years. They process long to fine wools, alpaca, llama and mohair. They offer custom fiber processing and produce quality roving, batts and webs. They recently purchased an M-26 industrial carding machine to compliment their two Patrick Green Carders, which will increase their processing capacity considerably.

[MI - Zeilinger Wool Company](#) (USA) : Zeilinger Wool Co.'s history spans over four generations. Their traditional quality and personal service have been valuable trademarks of the Abraham/Zeilinger family for the past eighty-nine years. They opened their doors to the public in 1985. Visitors can shop in their retail shop, which features all the products that their talented staff has handcrafted. Zeilinger Wool Co. processor of sheep wool, angora goat hair (mohair), rabbit hair (angora), llama, alpaca, dog hair, and other exotic animal fibers. They can turn your own fibers, such as wool, into comforters, mattress pads, bed pillows, quilts, batting for felting and crafting. All additional fibers can be processed for spinning, weaving and custom yarns. They also sell wool filled comforters, mattress pads, pillows, quilts, bedding accessories, rovings, yarns, socks, and sheep related crafts.

[CA - Yolo Wool Products](#)

Yolo Wool Products have the capability of carding and spinning both worsted and woolen yarns. They can also do sliver, batts for quilting, roving, and French combed top.

[NH - Harrisville Designs](#)

Harrisville Designs offers a custom spinning service for the wool grower. Minimum orders are 200 lbs. washed fleece, or 400 lbs. in the grease.

[OH - Ohio Valley Natural Fibers](#)

Fibre processing, custom spinning, wool batts, spinning and weaving supplies.

[VA - Crescent Moon Fiber Mill](#)

Washing, picking, carding and spinning of wool and exotic blends.