



British Llama Society

INFORMATION LEAFLET

Guard llamas

Studies have shown that male llamas can make excellent flock guards as it is their nature to protect their group from predators such as foxes and dogs. This instinct can be transferred to guarding field stock such as sheep or goats, and even free-range poultry and ducks.

For maximum chance of success, certain criteria need to be met...

- The llama should have spent the first year of his life with other llamas so that he knows he is a llama!
- He should be castrated, not before 18 months and ideally not later than 36 months. An entire adult male might otherwise try to mate female field stock such as ewes.
- Ideally he will never have been used for stud work, for the same reason as above.
- He should be put with his new herd by the time he is 3 years old. Much later than this and he might not adapt to his new role.
- A single gelding is most effective, and females have been used successfully. There is anecdotal evidence that pairs or even groups of llamas can be effective but this is less reliable as clearly llamas together are likely to be more interested in each other and less likely to take an interest in looking after the field stock.
- Temperament. If he is too docile and friendly, he may not be effective in guarding. Equally, he should certainly not be aggressive in his general nature.
- A guard llama should be halter-trained and handleable. He is likely to be less laid back than the ideal companion llama and have a more independent and 'alpha male' spirit.
- He should **not** be:
 - unhandleable or uncontrollable
 - an older ex-stud or difficult to handle male that someone no longer wants.
- Make the introduction to his new charges slowly and carefully until he is used to them. Allow a few weeks for the llama and stock to 'bond' before expecting results.

The Society has prepared these guidelines in good faith. It cannot, however, accept any responsibility or liability for accidents or damage caused by or to owners, walkers, the llamas or third persons when they are being used as guard llamas in accordance with these guidelines and cannot accept any liability arising there from.