



Llamas *for* Guarding Livestock

Llamas, who are long-lived, can provide an effective, long-term and economical alternative for predator control in a variety of farm and ranch conditions.

Effective Guard llamas are highly successful in preventing predation in sheep and goat flocks. A survey of guard llama users indicates that over 50% of the guard llamas were 100% effective, and another 40% to 45% were highly effective in reducing losses of sheep to predators. Llamas are equally effective guarding milk, meat and wool producing goats. Even producers who reported losses of over 100 lambs per year either completely eliminated or drastically reduced predation after introducing a llama to their flocks.

No Training Llamas do not have to be trained or raised with sheep or goats to be effective guards. A llama should be introduced to a flock while in a small pasture or corral and remain in a small area until the llama and the sheep or goats bond with one another. Introducing the llama into the flock just prior to birthing may be the best and most convenient time. A single llama per flock is more effective than two or more llamas. Although intact male llamas are effective guards, an intact male may attempt to breed the sheep.

Flock Size Llamas are equally successful guarding a small farm flock or a large band of sheep. Many producers have

successfully used llamas to guard flocks of 200 to 1,000 animals in all types of terrain and pasture sizes.

Llama Care Llamas eat the same foods as sheep or goats. No special foods or supplements are necessary. Sheep and goat producers can usually use the same regimen of vaccinations, worming and hoof trimming (toe nails for llamas) as they do for their flocks. Llamas have few medical problems and guard llama mortality is very low. An Iowa State University study reported the mortality of only 5% of the 204 guard llamas in their study.

Types of Predators Guard llamas are particularly effective against coyotes and dogs. Studies conducted in the western United States, where most predator losses occur, show that 76% to 100% of sheep losses to predators were due to coyotes. Some predators such as cougars and bears may be too large for llamas to deter. Llamas have been known to alert herders of large predator attacks.

Age of Llamas Llamas of a variety of ages at the time of initial introduction have proven to be effective guards. Using llamas younger than one year is not recommended.

Economical Llamas live a long time, have low maintenance, require no training, eat the same food as sheep and goats, and generally have good health, all of which help to make llamas economical even for the small farm flock owner.

For more information on using llamas as livestock guards, please order the International Llama Association (ILA) educational brochure *Guard Llamas*. They can be purchased for 50¢ per copy (40¢ each in quantities of 50 or more) from ILA, 2755 S. Locust St., Ste. 114, Denver, CO 80222.

This card was written by ILA's Guard Llama Committee: Doyle Markham, Chair, Pat Hilton, Darlene Hochsprung, Dan Schreiner, John Tompkins, Gale Yohe.

GARY SANDERS
415.726.6250



TUNING CREEK LLAMAS
ONE TUNING CREEK BLANCH RD
HALF MOON BAY CALIFORNIA 94048
TEL 415 726 8249