



The British Alpaca Society

## **Guidance notes for safe shearing Extra precautions during Covid-19 outbreak**

Alpaca shearing is important for animal welfare reasons and should be done this year but keeping people safe from potential Covid-19 infection now needs to be considered.

Alpaca shearing is seen as an essential task for animal welfare and therefore journeys associated with shearing are essential travel.

- **Plan for a slower process.**
  - Being more careful will probably means shearing takes longer. Don't fight that - better to be careful than quick.
  
- **Keep your distance from you co-workers.**
  - Set up a system that means one person can move alpacas into the holding area before shearing.
  - Generally, two people lift the alpaca off its feet and lie the alpaca on its side. This can be done on the floor or on a table. As shearers are generally contractors, work out a way of restraining the alpaca with only farm labour or only the contracting team so that you don't need to get too close to each other.
  - The shearer and handler will be closer than 2 m as they handle the alpaca. If these two people are someone from the farm and someone from the contracting team the they should both wear masks. Masks reduce the risk of an infected person spreading virus.
  - Think about your system for skirting and storing fleeces so that you can keep a safe distance from each other.
  
- **Plan where your shearing contractor is going to stay if they need accommodation**
  - Finding accommodation in hotels might be tricky so consider using any form of accommodation that is separate from you e.g. caravan, tent or motorhome.
  - Be particularly careful at mealtimes by planning how you are going to serve food and maintain distance.
  
- **Make sure appropriate facilities are available**
  - Hand washing facilities need to be available with hot water and soap for everyone.
  - Each worker should have their own towel or use disposable towels.