

BROCHURE

CERTIFIED GUANACO FIBER FROM PATAGONIA



WCSArgentina

Un Programa de Wildlife Conservation Society

2024



THIS BROCHURE GIVES AN OVERVIEW OF THE QUALITIES OF LIVE-SHEARED GUANACO FIBER AND EXPLAINS WHY ITS USE HAS HIGH POTENTIAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO CONSERVATION OF GUANACOS AND REGENERATION OF PATAGONIAN GRASSLANDS. WE INVITE YOU TO BECOME PART OF THIS SUSTAINABLE AND SUPERB QUALITY GUANACO FIBER SUPPLY CHAIN MODEL.

The guanaco (*Lama guanicoe*) is the dominant wild herbivore in southern South America. More than 90% of its population is found in the Argentinean Patagonia. Historically, its main threats have been poaching and the high density of livestock that excluded them from many areas due to competition for food and space. For almost 2 decades, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), in collaboration with the National Scientific and Technical Research Council of Argentina (CONICET), have undertaken research on biological and economic aspects of live-shearing of guanacos, helping to develop methodologies that ensure the adequate animal welfare of the sheared individuals and sustainability of shearing.

GUANACO FIBER

LIVE-SHEARING OF WILD GUANACOS

**CHARACTERIZED BY ITS
SILKINESS, LIGHT WEIGHT
AND EXCELLENT INSULATING
PROPERTIES.**

DIAMETER

Varies from 14.5 to 17.8 μm , with a coefficient of variation (CV) of 10%. This fineness places it among the "superfine fibers".

FIBER LENGTH

3 to 4.5 cm, with a comfort factor up to 94,5% and a grease content of 1.6%.

COLOR


Varies from reddish brown to light brown and, to a lesser extent, white.

SEASONS

Shearing: October

Stockpiling: November

Available from November



**GUANACO FIBER IS
SUITABLE FOR BOTH
ARTISANAL AND
INDUSTRIAL SPINNING,
WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF
DEVELOPING BLENDS WITH
OTHER NATURAL FIBERS.**

PATAGONIAN PRODUCERS

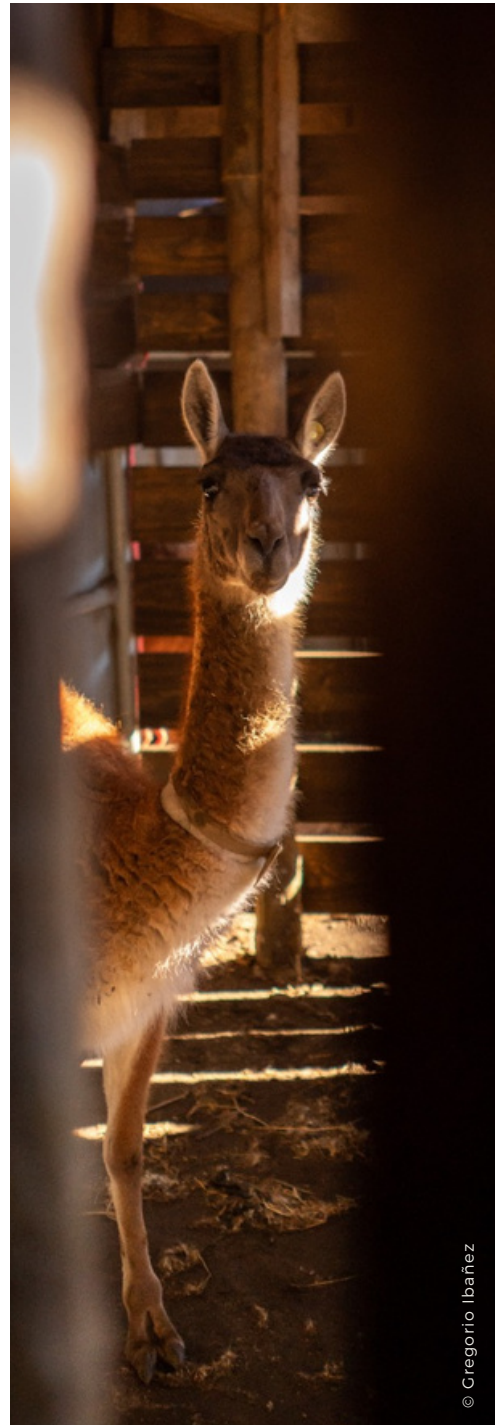
TOWARDS COEXISTENCE AND REGENERATION

THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE USE PROGRAM FOR WILD GUANACO PRESENTS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE PATAGONIAN STEPPE AND ALSO FOR CONSERVING THIS NATIVE SPECIES AND ITS ENVIRONMENT.

Producers have seen the guanaco as a threat for many years, considering it to be in competition for the forage resource.

Small scale, family run livestock production sites, as well as large ranches, coexist with healthy or recovering guanaco populations throughout Patagonia.

The sustainable use of the guanaco through live-shearing can represent a great opportunity to improve the quality of life of producers, to achieve coexistence between wildlife and livestock production, and for the conservation and regeneration of the whole Patagonian steppe ecosystem.



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PATAGONIAN LANDSCAPES

1. Meseta de Somuncura Natural Reserve, Río Negro and Chubut

The Somuncura Plateau is a large basaltic plain located between the center-south of the Province of Río Negro and the center-north of the Province of Chubut. The status of Protected Area is intended to conserve parts of the territory that have been recognized by the scientific community, the public opinion and the authorities as a high patrimonial value site, where the conservation of nature is the main objective.

3. Chubut Province

Different private ranches in this province are committed to developing sustainable livestock production in harmony with the native wildlife, promoting the coexistence and regeneration of the soil and vegetation. The sustainable use of guanaco fiber in silvestry represents a great opportunity for the development of local economies in this area.

2. La Payunia Natural Reserve, Mendoza

This 66.410 hectare protected area is home to one of the largest, best protected and least disturbed wild guanaco populations in Patagonia. On the other hand, the extreme aridity and topography of the region have limited human settlement and livestock raising over a large part of its surface. Possibly, this low human impact has allowed the Payunia guanaco population to maintain seasonal migration, a unique behavior in nature.

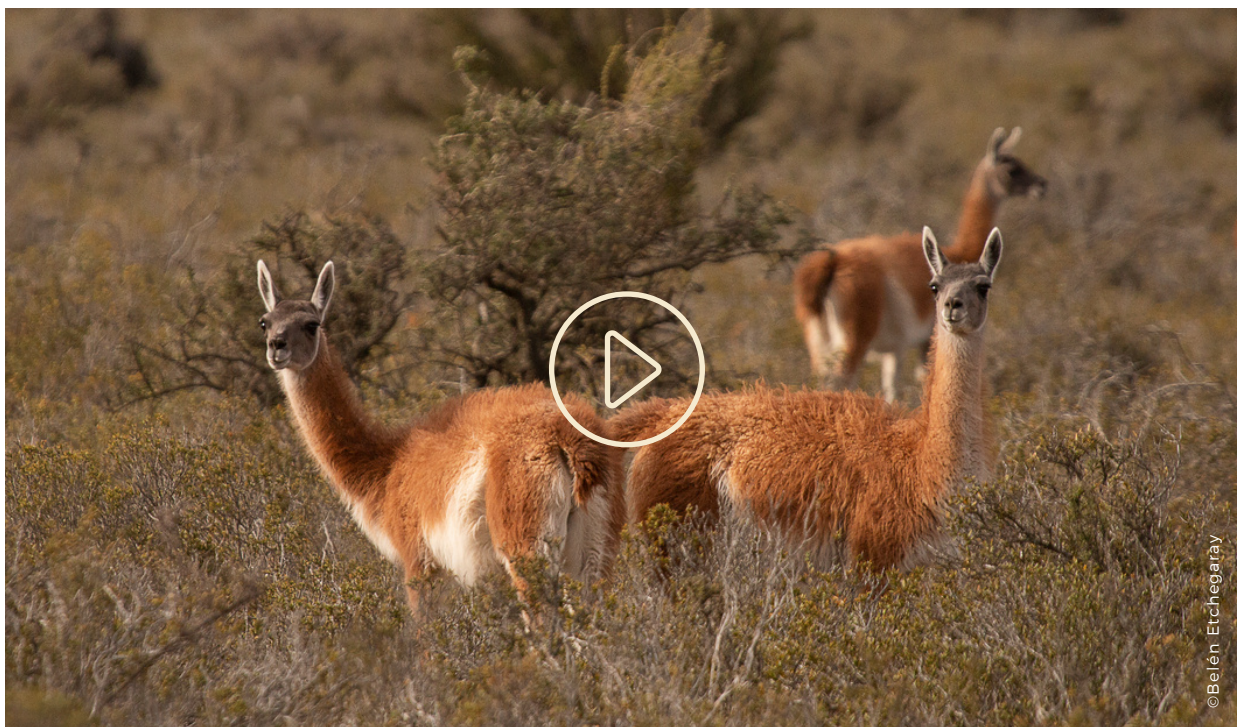
4. Santa Cruz Province

In an area of about 70,000 hectares on the west bank of the Santa Cruz River, producers who seek to coexist with the guanaco develop their livestock activity, and are convinced that the presence of this camelid also means a productive and economic opportunity.

ANCIENT MIGRANTS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

It is estimated that in the last 200 years the guanaco population has decreased from more than 30 million individuals to a little more than 2 million. It is now believed that 90% of its original population has disappeared and is present in only 40% of its former range. Although in some areas of Patagonia the species is showing signs of recovery, in many others there has been a sharp decline, which also affects the entire ecosystem dynamics.

In areas of Patagonia where live-shearing of wild guanacos takes place, studies show that abundance of guanacos remained similar after the shearing event. In this way, **live-shearing of wild guanacos could work as a complementary activity to livestock ranching and contribute to conserve their populations.**



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ALLIES FOR REGENERATION AND COEXISTENCE

THERE IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE GUANACO IN THE LUXURY FIBER MARKET. ITS SUSTAINABLE USE CAN RESULT IN A GREATER PROTECTION OF THE SPECIES AS WELL AS CONSERVATION OF THE PATAGONIAN STEPPE.

- ✓ Live shearing can **promote coexistence**, increasing tolerance of ranchers towards guanacos.
- ✓ It diversifies and **increases sustainability of local economies** under progressively drier and variable weather conditions.
- ✓ Guanaco fiber **is a renewable resource**, 100% biodegradable, from a native and wild species.
- ✓ Its **carbon footprint is very low**: production requires low energy costs and doesn't require fossil fuels for its manufacture.
- ✓ Having evolved with the environment in which it lives, this wild camelid is **better adapted to environmental conditions** than domestic livestock. This factor is of utmost importance due to long-term forecasts regarding global warming and landscape desertification.



LET'S CONTINUE THIS STORY!

CONTACT US:

EZEQUIEL INFANTINO - WCS ARGENTINA
EINFANTINO@WCS.ORG

MARÍA JOSÉ BOLGERI - WCS ARGENTINA
MBOLGERI@WCS.ORG

CHRISTINE LIPPAI - WFEN
CHRISTINE@WILDLIFEFRIENDLY.ORG



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