

# Alpacas take to the Hills

TERESE MURRAY

THEY'RE woolly, sometimes come with dreadlocks, and can be very high fashion.

Alpacas abound in the Hills district and the Australian alpaca industry is preparing to celebrate its 21st anniversary.

During National Alpaca Week, studs will open their farm gates to the public between Saturday and May 10.

Australian Alpaca Association's Hawkesbury/Blue Mountains Region secretary Sue Maynard has the Gunnamatta Stud at Galston.

"Here in the Hills and Hawkesbury areas, a range of exciting events will be happening during National Alpaca Week," she said.

"Some of the finest alpacas in NSW will be competing in the prestigious Hawkesbury Show on May 2.

"This is a great way to see just how much the industry has progressed over the past two decades."

Ms Maynard said breeders will be on hand again on May 3, with some of their best alpacas, to answer questions about this fascinating industry and its future in Australia.

Association president Chris Taylor said National Alpaca Week was a chance for people to talk to breeders, handle a range of alpacas and see the stunning range of end-products which are being



Sue Maynard with a pair of alpacas.

produced with the exquisite fibre of the alpaca.

"Since 1988, when the first three alpacas arrived in Australia, the national herd has grown to 100,000," he said.

"The number of registered breeders is now 2300, of whom 150

are located in the Hills, Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains area."

Mr Taylor said a number of Hills breeders would have open days in the week after the show.

Inquiries: [www.hbmalpaca.com.au](http://www.hbmalpaca.com.au).

## Dreadlocks in a range of colours

THERE are two distinct types of alpaca and they are distinguished by their fleece.

They are the more commonly seen huacaya with a crimped fleece similar to a merino, and the rarer suri, with a fleece which hangs in twisted

dreadlocks. From a commercial standpoint, white will always be the colour of choice for the fickle fashion industry, but for those who prefer not to use dyed fibre, alpaca comes in a range of 12 natural colours.

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**DATE:** Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April

**TIME:** 12-2pm

**ADDRESS:** Level 1, South Building, Supa Centre, Cnr Hudson Ave and Victoria Ave, Castle Hill

**RSVP:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April

**EMAIL:** [anna.hewett@au.domayne.com](mailto:anna.hewett@au.domayne.com)

**PHONE:** 02 9846 8820

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