



**For Immediate Release**

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**Fashions from the field – Australian alpaca makes debut at Shanghai Fashion Week**

The Australian Alpaca industry has made some significant inroads into the international fashion scene, set to take centre stage in Shanghai during the Austrade ‘Celebrate Australia’ event at Shanghai Fashion Week October 28 – 31. As gold sponsors of the Austrade celebration, Australian Alpaca Fleece Ltd. (AAFL) will showcase Australian alpaca fashion designs and home wares as well as launch the new *Australian Alpaca Connection* label.

“As one of the premier events on the international fashion calendar, Shanghai Fashion Week is a fitting way to officially launch Australian alpaca in China. We’ve been successfully selling alpaca fleece products to China for many years, but they’ve never seen alpaca products quite like this,” said Mr Michael Talbot, Managing Director, AAFL. “And there will be alpacas on the catwalk for an even greater impact.”

Following a successful partnership with the Australian Alpaca Association Inc. (AAA) during the L’Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival in 2004, Melbourne-based Japanese designer Hoshika Oshimi and co-designer Tatsuyoshi Kawabata have been invited to show her Spring/Summer collection in Shanghai. Known for her experimental, intricate designs Hoshika has worked alpaca fleece into parts of her new collection using felted alpaca/silk made especially by Judy Craig of Becreatif Alpacas in Victoria.

“The collection to be shown during Shanghai Fashion Week will illustrate the versatility of alpaca fleece in creating beautifully textured garments. Alpaca fleece feels divine to touch and even better to wear! Its softness and lightweight qualities make it easy to combine with other fabrics such as cotton and silk,” said Hoshika. “I am so excited to be able to work alpaca fleece into my collections, and sharing that with an international audience is a great honour.”

A range of Australian alpaca homeware products will also be paraded including blankets, pillows and quilts. Models will be creatively styled by Hoshika with the home wares, customised belts and accessories for a unique look.

Around 600 people are expected to attend the launch including local and international media, as well as prospective retail and wholesale buyers. The launch is timely given that it will coincide with the AAFL’s first shipment to China of its new wholesale label, *Australian Alpaca Connection*. A first for the industry, the label will be attached to home ware and fashion products, and will be sold both locally and internationally.

“Being part of the Shanghai event is a great opportunity for Australia to promote not only alpaca fleece but also the alpaca industry as a whole. I anticipate it will lead to a rise in local interest and export orders along with creating new partnerships for the *Australian Alpaca Connection* label,” said Mr Talbot.

“The Australian Alpaca industry is continuing to move from strength to strength, and this is delighting its members and participants. The alpaca sector is now a sustainable primary industry with an exciting and developing future. Our relationship with China is the first of many milestones,” he said.

The Australian Alpaca Association Inc. currently has in excess of 2,100 members and there are approximately 85,000 alpacas in Australia. As national herd numbers continue to grow at 18 percent per annum and with world leading prices for fleece, the Australian Alpaca industry is shaping up to be one of the most progressive and dynamic agribusinesses in the country.

If you would like to find out more about alpacas, please contact the Australian Alpaca Association Inc. on 03 9873 7700 or visit [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

To find out about the Australian Alpaca Connection label, please contact Australian Alpaca Fleece Ltd on 03 9311 0933 or visit [www.aafll.com.au](http://www.aafll.com.au)

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