

Llamas as livestock guards



Graeme Tyrell & Rob Hunt

Use of Livestock Guarding Animals (LGA's)



Llama trial Hume/Cooma/Yass RLPB

- started in 2004 (funded by NPWS DECC)
- 21 Llamas across 13 properties – 2 year trial
- Llamas purchased or handed back after 2 years
- currently all Llamas have remained on farm
- landholders identified consistent trend
 - decrease in number of stock attacks – wild dogs
 - over longer term – more than 2 years
 - Llama behaviour – moving sheep
 - increase in lambing rates – finding dead lambs



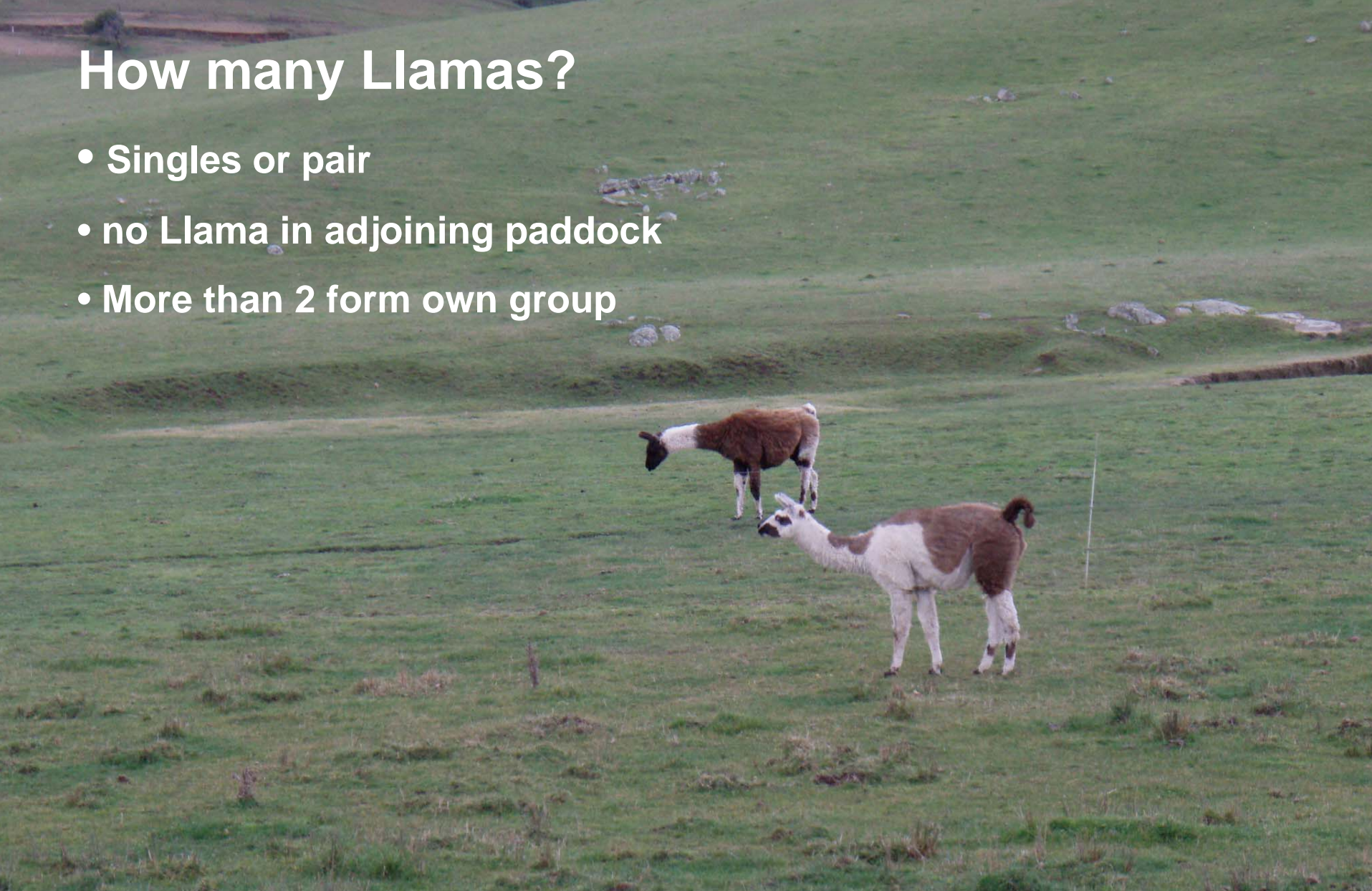
A llama with brown and white fur stands in a grassy field. In the background, there is a dense forest of green trees. Several sheep are visible grazing in the distance. A fallen log and a red barrel are on the right side of the field.

How do they work?

- Llamas naturally aggressive towards canids
- role reversal – advance towards threat
- observant - vigilant - high ground
- stand between threat and sheep
- lead sheep away

How many Llamas?

- Singles or pair
- no Llama in adjoining paddock
- More than 2 form own group



- **Female or gelded male** (crush injury risk to sheep)
- **2 years or older** – live to around 15 – 20 yrs
- **Cost** - \$400 - \$500 (transport?)



Llama vs

Alpaca



Department of Environment & Climate Change NSW



Bonding- key to success

- small paddock
- 10 - 20 sheep
- same sheep to be protected
- initial avoidance
- about a week
- before lambing
- bonding is vital
- no bonding = no protection
- introduce Llama when things are quiet (no kills)



Llamas can only guard what they can see

- small paddock 20 – 30 hectares
- around 300 sheep

Photo: G. Tyrell



Llama maintenance

- Shear 2/3 years (barrel)
- separation anxiety sheep shearing
- 5 in 1 injection (shoulder not neck)
- Broad spectrum drench (injected)
- Trim toe nails
- not susceptible to OJD
- can carry BJD (no cases in Aust)
- live 15 – 20 years



Llamas

“as well as not instead of”



- Consistent decrease in wild dog attacks
- Increased lambing rates
- Live for 15 – 20 years
- Low maintenance
- Cost \$400 - \$500

Llamas as livestock guards – Why not?



Acknowledgements

- NPWS DECC for funding support
- Hume, Cooma & Yass RLPB
- Local wild dog working groups
- Landholders involved

