

Embryo Transfer — A Breeders Perspective

The use of embryo transfer (ET) technologies has been a relatively recent advance in breeding technology for alpacas. Canchones' reason to use this technology was to identify and evaluate its genetically superior animals and increase the number of these alpacas to advance their breeding program and business.

Over the last 6 years, working with our veterinarian, Dr Jane Vaughan, Canchones has become a major user of ET in Australia. Canchones uses both multiple and single ovulation. With over 300 ET cria on the ground, the impact has been significant.

Embryo transfer has rapidly increased the number of crias born to superior females. It has been possible to transfer the genes from the top 10 % of the herd (donors) into the bottom 90% of females (recipients). Embryo transfer has allowed Canchones to determine optimal male/female combinations as multiple sires are used over the same female in one year.

Soundness in all the animals used in the program has been the foundation of the successful program. To this end, data is king. It is essential to record and review the results of each ET program. To improve success, Canchones has been willing to make hard decisions about dropping out donor females or males that do not perform in the process and recipients.

During the presentation Robert will provide details of specific changes made to their protocols to impact the success of their multiple and single ovulation embryo transfer programs.