

## **OFDA 2000 Manufacturer Recommends Setting Change**

BSC Electronics Pty Ltd, manufacturer of the OFDA 100 and 2000 fiber testing machines has issued a recommendation that the settings used to date for the OFDA 2000 be changed to show all fiber measurements to a maximum of 80 micron instead of trimming them off the histogram at the level of 4 Standard Deviations from the mean, which the factory setting is set at today.

What has happened in the past is that the program trims those high micron counts from the hard copy histogram but records them in the fibers over 30 micron category and does not take them into account in the Standard Deviation calculation except as being over 30 microns.

**This has been the case for alpaca testing with the OFDA 2000 since it entered the marketplace some years ago and has never been questioned until very recently.**

It is my contention that knowing the individual counts of those fibers over 30 micron serves little purpose to breeders looking to apply selection pressure against their production fleece traits. It is worth noting that the occasional very high micron fiber has the potential to significantly affect SD out of all proportion to its place in the fleece structure. Biopsy work shows that in the vast majority of cases, those very high micron fibers are truly outliers sitting outside the follicle structure and subsequent searches of siblings and progeny do not appear to support an assumption that these fibers carry over from one generation to the next.

Given these errant high micron fibers are both individual and stand-alone fibers, it would seem that to apply a selection choice against them in particular, as against all fibers over 30 micron regardless of magnitude, would be a wasted selection trait – in other words, selecting against all fibers over 30 micron, regardless of diameter using the over 30 micron count is a more logical and easily understood approach.

However, it is within our capability to accommodate the wishes of those who wish to have their data untrimmed on the Premium Test histogram and we are now making that option available – simply tick the box on the Information Sheet accompanying your order. Your histogram may look different as might your SD and the service comes with the warning that this histogram and SD cannot be reliably compared with current or previous test results.

An unchecked box will signify that the test results will follow the same format we have used for the past twelve years which will continue to allow comparisons year on year as before.

**We would point out that, in our opinion, it is only the more primitive' lower density and slower-growing fleeces that will 'blow out' in SD (and show a longer 'tail' to the right hand side of the histogram) .... and not the higher density, faster-growing fleeces that exhibit highly defined character and uniform length within the staples.**