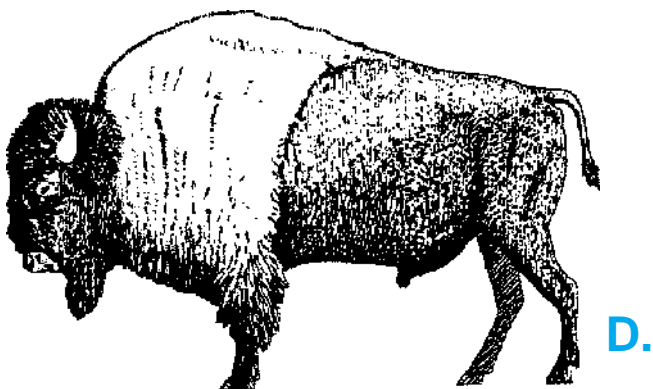
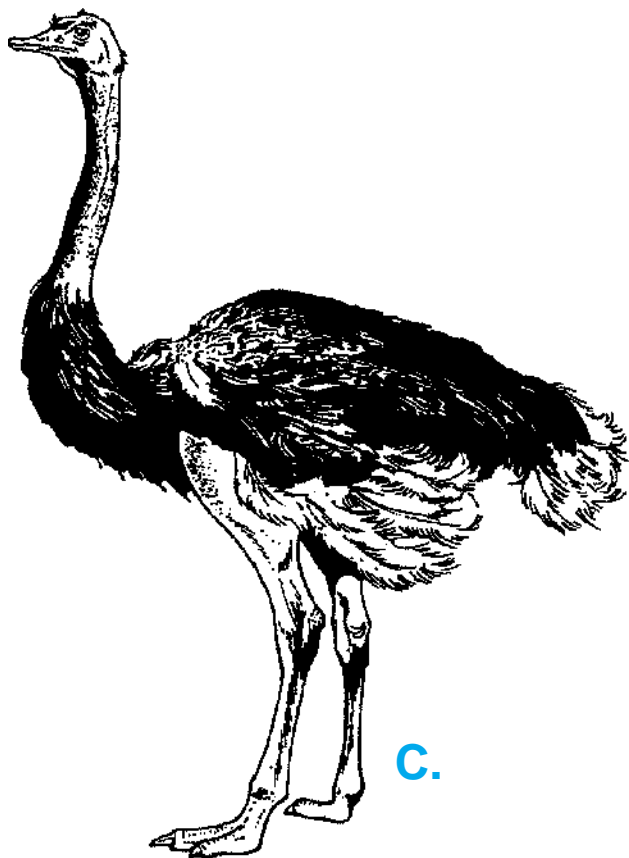
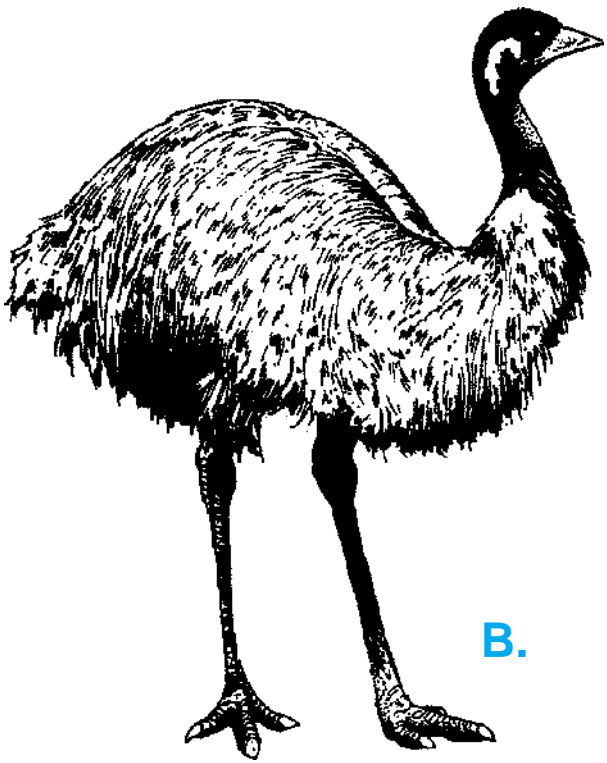
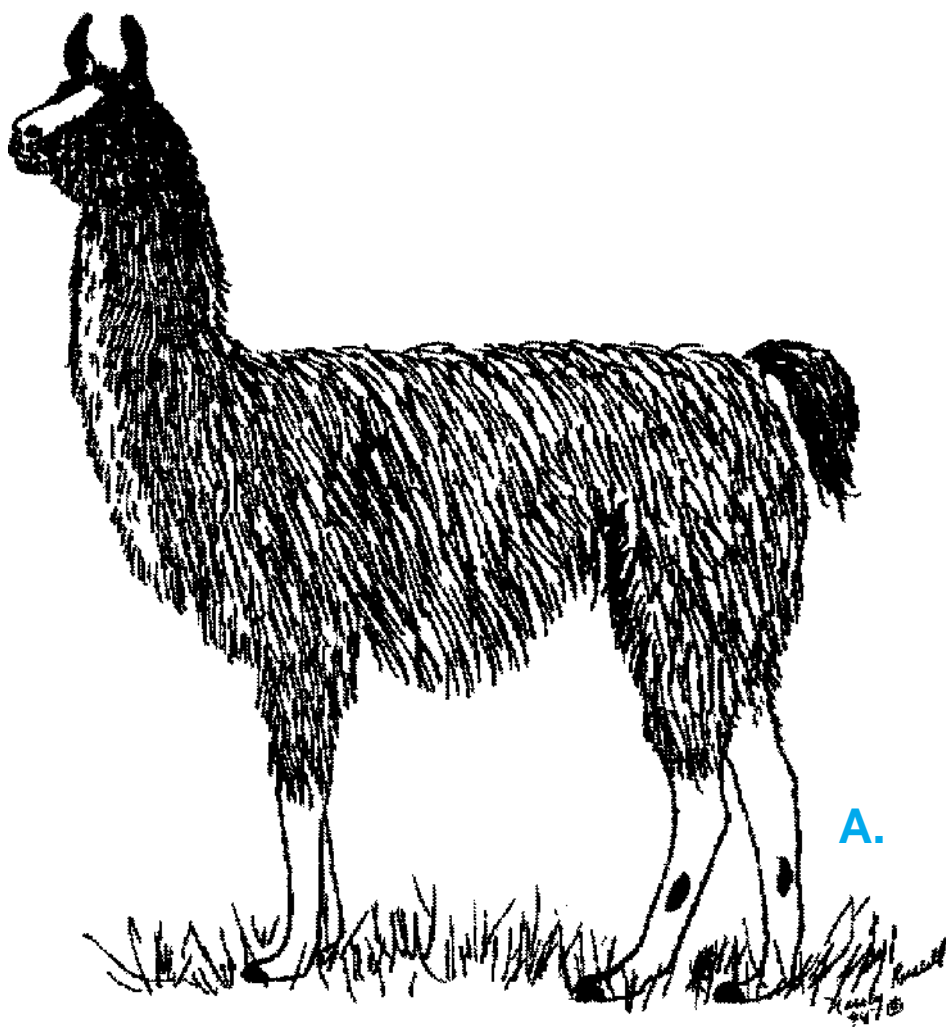


# ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK



# ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK

## ON THE FRONT

### A. Llama

Llamas are a part of the camelid family, which includes alpacas and camels. When they are born they are called crias and weigh between 20-35 pounds. They are two toed which makes them very agile and are calm and easy to train. They are used as pack animals, as guard animals, in animal-assisted therapy and also for their wool. Llama fiber is hollow, making it lighter and warmer than sheep wool.

### B. Emu

The emu is native to Australia and are the second largest living birds in the world. At full maturity, the emu will reach 110 to 140 pounds and range between 5 to 6 feet tall. Female emus are often more aggressive and the males incubate the dark green eggs. Eggs are about one third the size of an ostrich egg. The emu can live from 30 to 40 years or more and communicate with a unique noise that sounds like the beating of a drum.

### C. Ostrich

The ostrich is native to Africa and was introduced to the United States in the 1890's when the demand for ostrich feathers was high. The ostrich is the largest living bird in the world. It weighs between 250-400 pounds and reaches a height of 6 to 8 feet. Ostriches reach maturity at 2 to 3 years of age, and have a life span of up to 50 years. An ostrich egg is about the size of a muskmelon, weighing 3 to 5 pounds, or the equivalent to 2 or 3 dozen chicken eggs.

### D. Bison

The bison is the largest and oldest game animal in North America. When mature bison can reach a weight of approximately 1,000 lbs for cows (females), and 1,500-2000 lb for bulls (males). The young are referred to as calves. The buffalo is a ruminant, which means they have four compartments in their stomach, much like cattle and sheep. Although once considered an endangered species, more than 300,000 buffalo live on private and public land.

### What's in a Name?

*Which is correct bison or buffalo?*

Bison is the scientific name and buffalo is the common name for bison. They are so closely compared with the history and heritage of our country, that most people use them interchangeably.

### The Alternative Livestock Industry

The alternative livestock industry includes species that are not considered "traditional" farm animals. These species include bison, ostriches, emus, llamas and alpacas to name a few. They are often raised for their unique commodities, which are sold through niche markets. These markets are flexible as new by-products and knowledge are developed about each species.

### Meat and By Products

Meat from bison, ostrich, and emu is proven to be lower in fat and cholesterol when compared with "traditional" meat products. Each species has their own by – products, most of which have been used for many years. These include:

#### *Ostrich – Meat, Leather and Feathers*

- Ostrich meat is red, much like beef, but lower in fat and cholesterol
- Ostrich leather is used to make items such as boots, and handbags
- Ostrich feathers are used in art and decorations.

#### *Emu – Meat, Feathers and Oil*

- Emu meat is red and leaner than most "traditional" meat.
- Emu oil is used to treat burns and other skin abrasions. It is also used in lotions and soaps.
- Emu feathers are used for decoration and art.

#### *Bison – Meat, Hide*

- Bison meat is a leaner choice for beef.
- Bison hides and skulls are used for ceremonial and decoration purposes.

#### *Llamas – Wool, Used as a Pack Animal*

- Llama wool is used as an alternative to sheep wool in clothing items.
- Llamas can be effectively trained to be gentle pack animals

#### **Did You Know.....**

- 200 million bison once roamed North America.
- The bison can jump a 6 foot fence from a standing position and dig as deep as four feet into the snow to find food.
- The bison is the only mammal that does not develop cancer.
- Buffalo can run at speeds up to 35 mph.
- The ostrich is the largest living bird and the second fastest animal in the world.
- Ostriches do not bury their heads in the sand, but lay their heads and necks flat on the ground.
- A ratite is a large, flightless bird. There are five species of birds that fall in this category. They are ostrich, emu, rhea, cassowary and the kiwi. All are raised in the United States except for the cassowary (Australia) and the kiwi (New Zealand).
- Emu oil is anti-inflammatory.
- Llama wool, unlike sheep wool, does not contain lanolin.

