

When asked by her father what she wanted to do when she grew up, 16-year-old Jody Hatch responded that she wanted to own her own company. After attending college and taking a more traditional career route by becoming a teacher, Jody liked her job but didn't love it. Ten years into her career and reaching the top of the pay scale, she knew that it was time she follow her original dream of owning a business.

Jody and her husband Chris started looking for opportunities for owning a business and knew that whatever business they chose had to meet three specific criteria: flexible hours that would work when they started a family, an industry that was related to outdoor living, and the potential to generate income. They researched many different ideas, but found nothing that fit all criteria. One day while watching TV, her husband saw an ad for an alpaca business. "I didn't even know what an alpaca was," remembers Jody. After researching the industry online, she realized this was her "a-ha" moment—this was a business that met all of her criteria. She picked up the phone, made

a farm visit, and two days later she purchased two alpaca animals and thus, officially launched the business.

Diving into her new business, Jody researched alpacas—from breeding to shearing and the showing of the animals. She was quick to attend trade shows and learn from the experts. "I learned everything I could about fleece," she says. "The biggest challenge I've faced is keeping myself educated in the industry so we can make the necessary adjustments during periods of growth and change."

Jody's next goal is to export an alpaca—she recently attended a government exporting event and began making connections to see her vision through. "I may be a little farm, but I have a big farm mentality." In addition to exporting, Jody focuses her time on consulting with other alpaca farmers new to or struggling within the industry.

The best part about being an entrepreneur? "Being the mom I want to be," says Jody.



*wise words
of wisdom...*

"Go with your gut... It never fails."

– Jody Hatch

PHOTO BY PHOTOGRAPHY BY HERRMANN // PAGE DESIGN BY ISCA DESIGN STUDIO

WISE HAPPENINGS:

► Check out wisecenter.org/events for a complete list of upcoming events!

The Building Blocks for Starting a Business

March 3, 12:00 - 1:30PM
March 25, 12:00 - 1:30PM

Roundtable Discussion: Women in Creative Businesses

March 5, 12:00 - 1:00PM
March 19, 12:00 - 1:00PM

Meet the Entrepreneur Series

March 10, 12:00 - 1:00PM

Roundtable Discussion: Women in Food and Farming Businesses

March 4, 12:00 - 1:00PM

Roundtable Discussion:

Women in Business Against the Odds

March 12, 12:00 - 1:00PM
March 26, 12:00 - 1:00PM

Take your Business Global: Introduction to Exporting

March 11, 12:00 - 1:00PM

Accounting Practices for Your Business

March 17, 12:00 - 1:30PM (part 1)
March 25, 12:00 - 1:30PM (part 2)

Export Success Story Videos

March 18, 12:00 - 1:00PM

A women's business center... run for women, by women.

All events, unless otherwise indicated, are held at the **WISE Women's Business Center @ The Tech Garden** // 235 Harrison Street // Syracuse, NY 13202

(315) 443-8634 // wisecenter@syr.edu // www.wisecenter.org // **FIND US ON:**  