



# Raw Wool Marketing & Quality Improvement

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# Wool Council Action Plan

An actionable, evolving plan to support the U.S. wool industry.

## 5 Key Areas

- 1. Quality Improvement**
2. First-Stage Processing
3. Demand, Promotion and Education
4. Small and Mid-Size Mills
5. Traceability

# 1. Improve Quality of Wool

## Goals

- **Reduce Micron:** Decrease average micron by 1 micron in 3 years
- **Reduce VM:** Decrease vegetable matter by 0.5% in each region in 2 years
- **Increase Yield:** Increase yield by 2% over 2 years



	Program Needs		Program Timeline (begin or continue)			Completed
	Bud get	Staff Time	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3+ years	
<b>PROGRAMS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>						
<b>Establish baseline data and annual reporting:</b>						
Obtain data from the wool testing lab to establish a baseline for average micron, yield and VM. Obtain annual reports on improvement.		X	X			X
Determine differences in goals based on region and types.		X	X			X
<b>Collaboration:</b>						
Collaborate with genetics committees to identify methods to improve wool quality.		X	X			
<b>Program Revitalization:</b>						
Re-invigorate and re-brand the existing quality improvement program.		X	X			X
<b>Case Studies:</b>						
Conduct case studies to demonstrate costs/benefits of quality improvement strategies and make available to growers.	TBD	X			X	
<b>Education:</b>						
Develop educational materials - infographics, brochures, presentations and/or videos.	\$6,000	X		X	X	
Provide trainings for shearing crews, Extension personnel, state associations and/or wool/sheep judges.	\$6,000	X			X	
Reinvigorate classing program and handling schools.	\$6,000	X			X	
<b>Industry Communication:</b>						
Communicate with industry on importance of quality through social media, webinars, articles, and/or podcasts.		X	X	X	X	X
Engage warehouses and wool buyers and discuss market demands and quality improvements.		X		X		
Share how the AWA program can be used by smaller producers.		X		X		X
Share incentives for AWA wool.		X		X		
<b>Equipment Cost Analysis:</b>						
Explore the costs and benefits of providing equipment to enhance wool testing and, if advantageous and feasible, provide equipment.	TBD	X		X		
Explore the costs and benefits of providing tarps and/or skirting tables to shearing crews and/or state associations and, if advantageous and feasible, provide equipment.	\$30,000	X			X	
<b>Testing Innovations:</b>						
Discuss what may be done to assist small producers with efficiently pooling, testing, marketing and transporting wool.		X		X		
Discuss with Texas A&M and New Zealand Wool Testing the ways of lowering testing prices and reducing the sample size (e.g., developing a "report" for smaller flocks instead of a full commercial test).		X			X	

## 2024 Core Test Averages

61% of US wool was tested

	<b>Gross weight (lb)</b>	<b>Average Micron</b>	<b>Average Yield</b>	<b>Average VM</b>
<b>US</b>	13,722,099	22.2	54	1.9
<b>Pacific</b>	3,391,950	22.2	50	2.5
<b>Mountain</b>	6,516,822	21.7	55	1.6
<b>South</b>	2,249,908	23.1	54	1.8
<b>East</b>	1,563,419	23.1	53	2.6

# Improve Quality of Wool

Region	Specific Goals
Pacific	Decrease VM, maintaining strength, skirting and classing, selling locally, creating larger lots
Mountain	Decrease micron, skirting and classing
Midwest	Decrease micron, decrease VM, sort by type, skirting, creating larger lots
East	Decreasing VM, sort by type, skirting, selling locally, creating larger lots

# Wool Quality Education

- Brochures, books, videos
- Social media posts
- Presentations
- Wool Classing Schools
  - April- Ukiah, CA
  - November- Hettinger, ND



American Sheep Industry Association

August 5 · 🌐



Genetics are the foundation for wool quality and producing valuable wool. Growing high value fleeces that commercial buyers are willing to pay for starts with lower micron, higher yielding, good staple length wool, which are all influenced by genetics. For webinars on wool, genetic tools, breeding practices and more, visit <https://www.sheepusa.org/education-resources/webinars>

Photo by Julie Hansmire



Jeffrey Clark, Jaelyn Whaley and 313 others

18 comments 38 shares

# American Wool Assurance

- ~700 participants
- Currently, primarily used by niche market growers



# Wool Testing

- 6 OFDA2000 leased to Universities
  - In 2024...
    - 510 growers
    - 16,252 tests
- New FibreLux unit- rented directly to producers
- Lab support
  - Problem solving
  - Equipment



Coming this year...



# Elevate Wool

Elevate Your Flock – Elevate Your Future



# Let's Take A Journey...

## Quality Drives Demand

To sell a product you need to produce something buyers want and are willing to pay for. Explore what is needed for various markets and where value lies.

*February-April*

## Turning Wool into Opportunity

Where to find wool prices and explore how producers are making more from their wool.

*May-July*

## The Path to Success

How to increase your wool's value with genetics, year-round management and best practices at shearing time.

*August-November*

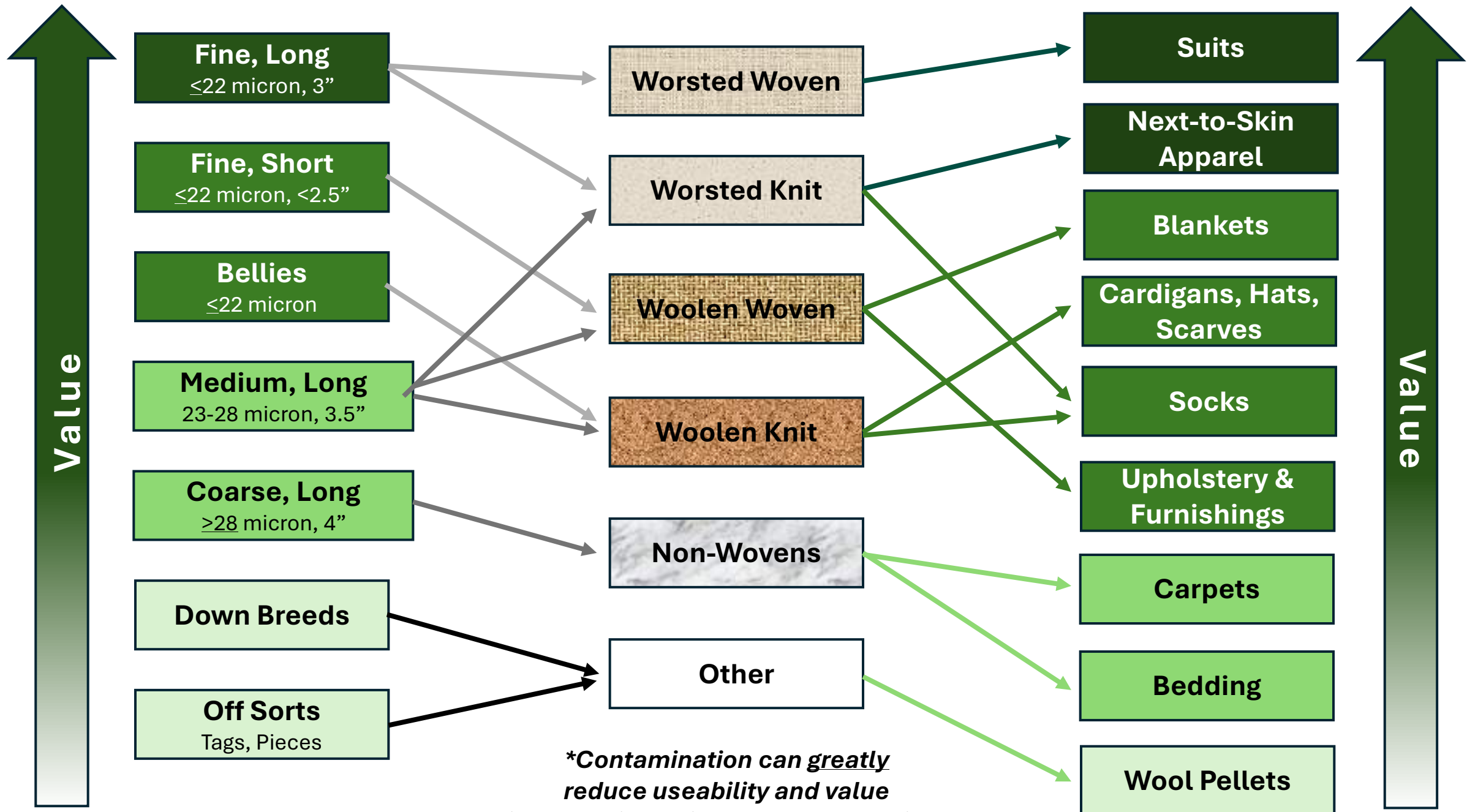


# Messaging

Now is the time!  
With wool prices on the rise,  
now is your time to get in the  
game.

*Like any product, you have to produce  
something that others want and are willing to  
pay for.*

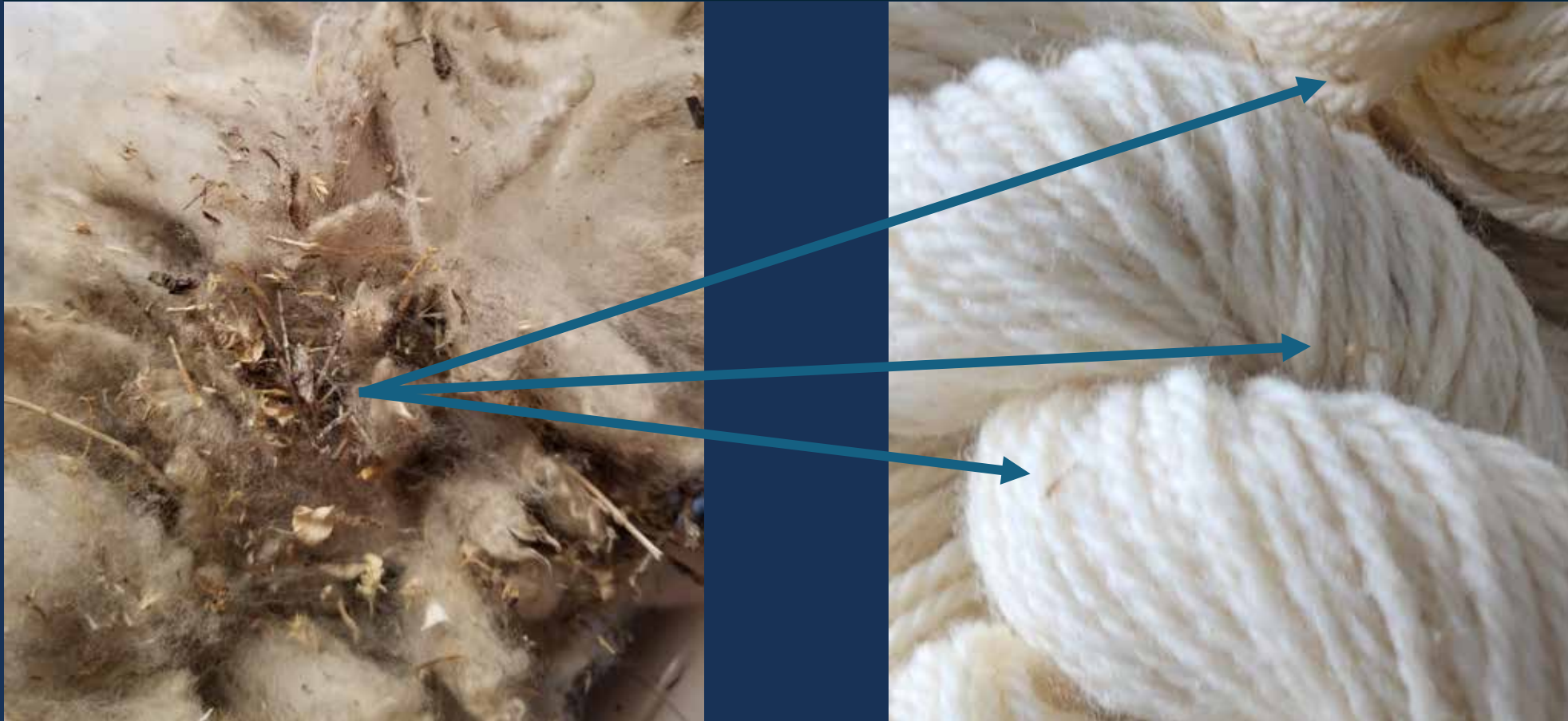
High-value wool doesn't happen by  
chance – it starts with genetics, grows  
with good year-round management  
and is maximized with smart  
preparation and  
packaging.



**\*Contamination can greatly reduce useability and value**  
*(hair, colored fibers, high VM, burrs, poly, paint, etc)*

# Vegetable Matter Contamination

(hay, chaff, straw, seeds, burrs)



Creates itchy garments with VM still visible. High VM wool must be combed or carbonized (additional processing).

# Elevate Wool Series

Webinars  
Articles      Brochures  
Social Media

## Elevate Wool

- Exploring Wool Markets
- Boosting Your Wool Check
- Wool Genetics
- Growing Valuable Wool
- Handling Wool at Shearing





# Elevate Wool

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3. Demand, Promotion and Education
4. **Small and Mid-Size Mills**
5. Traceability



## 4. Small and Mid-Size Mills

### Goals

- **Increase processing capacity**

	Program Needs		Program Timeline <i>(begin or continue)</i>		
	Budget	Staff Time	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3+ years
<b>PROGRAMS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>					
<b>Industry Presence and Outreach:</b>					
Provide materials to mills and increase of American Wool at fiber fairs including branded items, fact sheets, and educational materials.	\$10,000	x		x	
<b>Education &amp; Resources</b>					
Develop and distribute resource lists for small and mid-sided mills including sourcing equipment, funding sources, etc.		x	x		
Created educational resources for producers utilizing small to midsize mills including considering wool quality and mill capabilities.	\$2,000	x		x	
<b>Surveys:</b>					
Conduct surveys across small and mid-sized mills to determine capacity, services & products		x	x	x	
<b>Webinars:</b>					
Host webinars to educate and increase efficiencies of small and mid-sized mills.	\$1,000	x		x	x
<b>Clinics:</b>					
Organize in-person clinics for mill owners to educate and increase capacity and facilitate discussion of small mills and mid-size mills.	\$4,000-\$15,000	x			x
<b>New Mills Assistance:</b>					
Communicate with new mills and provide information about programs available, resource lists, and facilitate local/regional connections.		x	x	x	

# Small & Midsize Mill Task Force

- August: created a Task Force
- September–November: calls & discussions

## Largest Challenges

1. Scouring
2. Wool promotion
3. Education & connections

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# 5. Traceability

## Goals

- **Explore feasibility and cost of tracking wool**



# Next Steps



January 2026: gather information during Convention



Summer 2026: cost-benefit analysis of different systems  
military use inquiries



Fall 2026: discuss traceability systems and next steps



Additional Initiatives

# Shearer Support

- Developing Shearer & Mentor Grant
  - 8 shearers, 2 mentors
- Manuals, posters, videos
  - 314 students
- Advanced shearing schools support
  - 48 shearers
- ASSC Beginner Boxes
- Producer education





# Wool LDPs

- Support USDA
- Producer education
  - 3,377 webpage views
- Support producers

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## CURRENT MAL & LDP RATES

CATEGORY	2025 LOAN RATE	EFFECTIVE REPAYMENT RATE 7/16/2025	LDP RATE
<b>GRADED WOOL</b> CLEAN PRICES in \$ per Pound			
<18.6 Micron	4.57	3.80	\$0.77 LDP Available
18.6 - 19.5	3.95	3.80	\$0.35 LDP Available
19.6 - 20.5	3.57	3.47	\$0.11 LDP Available
20.6 - 22.0	3.39	3.39	LDP Not Available
22.1 - 23.5	3.18	3.11	\$0.07 LDP Available
23.6 - 25.9	2.31	2.47	LDP Not Available
26.0 - 28.9	1.07	1.08	LDP Not Available
> 29 Micron	.75	0.79	LDP Not Available
<b>UNGRADED WOOL</b> GREASE PRICES in \$ per Pound			
Ungraded Wool	40 cents	0.04	\$ .36 LDP Available
<b>UNSHORN PELTS</b> Prices in \$ per Pelt			
Unshorn Pelt	6,865 lbs x Ungraded Wool LDP		\$2.75 LDP Available

# Market Updates

- Weekly Market Summaries
- Wool Calculator
  - 1,670 users in 2025

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## WOOL CALCULATOR

Adjust micron, yield and quality of wool percentage below to estimate the value of wool today, or the potential value of wool if genetics or management practices were changed. To determine the Quality of Wool Percentage of AUS Price, see the Quality of Wool Descriptions below.

### Enter Micron & Yield

Micron

Yield

Quality of Wool Percentage of AUS Price

### Quality of Wool Descriptions

#### 80% of Australian Price

#### Fine Wool (<25.0 micron)

- Preparation: Bellies Out; May be lightly skirted on shearing floor or table to remove top knots, cheeks and shank wool, but not always.
- Length/Strength: Wools range from 76 mm in length (3.0"), some 80-90 mm (3.15-3.5"). Short, tender and coarse wool may have been removed, but sometimes not.
- Contamination: No polypropylene. Minimal medulated fiber, kemp or paint contamination.
- Yield/Style: Yield in the 45 - 55% range. Colors range from creamy to white. Style is MXFS-6.
- Wootop Colored Fiber: Black and colored fiber counts in the 20 - 50 per 100 grams range (= 5.7 - 14.2 per oz) - can only be used in mid-dark shades provided there is little or no medulated fiber contamination.
- Wootop Romaine: In wool top will achieve approx. 12 - 17% Romaine.
- Other: Bottom end of the ranges shown. These wools are more variable for micron, length, strength and tenderness. 1 - 2 percent VM. Presence of excessive burr, cockle burr, hay chaff, shive, etc can cause processing problems & will usually result in the wool being discounted. This is your information element content.

#### Coarse Wool (>25.1 micron)

- Preparation: Often will range in micron from 25.1 to 26.9 micron, some coarser. Bellies Out, skirted on shearing floor to remove most top knots, cheeks, shanks and tender wool. Short, tender, coarse and stained wool also removed.
- Length/Strength: Staple length at least 76 mm (3.00 inches), most will be 80 - 90mm (3.15 - 3.5 inches). No tender wool.
- Contamination: No polypropylene, medulated fiber, kemp or paint contamination.
- Yield/Style: XFS style, usually light creamy in color. Yield 50 - 60%
- Wootop Colored Fiber: Will still have relatively high black and colored fiber counts. 30 - 50 per 100 grams (8.5-14.2 per oz), so can only be used in medium and dark fabrics.
- Wootop Romaine: Will achieve 10 - 15% Romaine.
- Other: 2.0% max VM. Presence of excessive burr, cockle burr, hay chaff, shive, etc can cause processing problems & will usually result in the wool being discounted. Most are Rambouillet/Columbia cross breeds. Top end of Ranges shown.

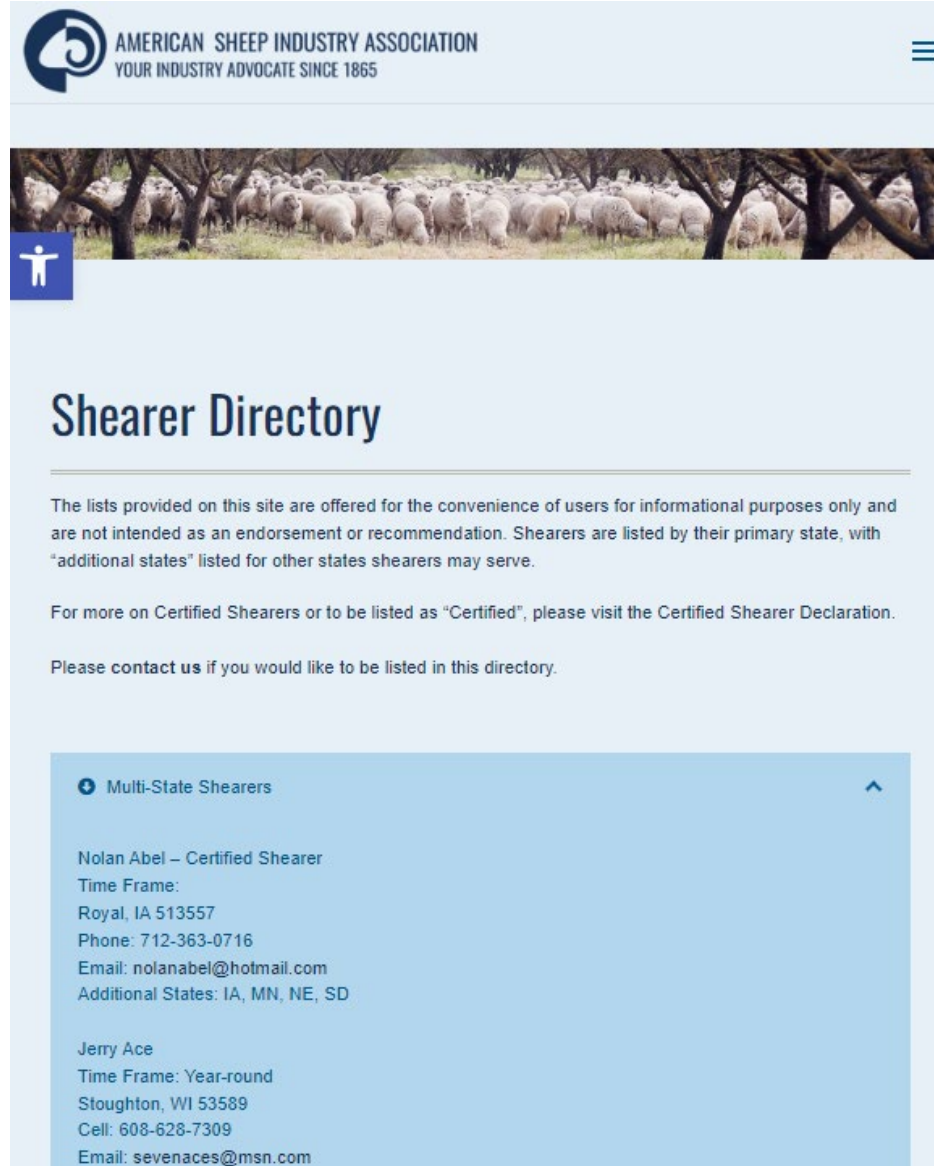
**Clean Price (\$/lb)**  
**4.11**

**Greasy Price (\$/lb)**  
**2.14**

\* \$0.00 indicates no price was recorded for this micron.

# Online Wool Directories

- Shearer
  - 8,538 views in 2025
- Warehouse
- Buyers
  - 3,600 views in 2025
- Testing
- Small Mills
- Large Mills



The screenshot shows the website for the American Sheep Industry Association. The header includes the logo and the text "AMERICAN SHEEP INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION YOUR INDUSTRY ADVOCATE SINCE 1865". Below the header is a banner image of sheep in a field. The main heading is "Shearer Directory". A disclaimer states: "The lists provided on this site are offered for the convenience of users for informational purposes only and are not intended as an endorsement or recommendation. Shearers are listed by their primary state, with 'additional states' listed for other states shearers may serve." It also mentions a link to the "Certified Shearer Declaration" and a contact instruction: "Please contact us if you would like to be listed in this directory." A section titled "Multi-State Shearers" lists two individuals: Nolan Abel and Jerry Ace, with their respective contact information and additional states served.

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## Shearer Directory

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For more on Certified Shearers or to be listed as "Certified", please visit the [Certified Shearer Declaration](#).

Please contact us if you would like to be listed in this directory.

### Multi-State Shearers

Nolan Abel – Certified Shearer  
Time Frame:  
Royal, IA 513557  
Phone: 712-363-0716  
Email: nolanabel@hotmail.com  
Additional States: IA, MN, NE, SD

Jerry Ace  
Time Frame: Year-round  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
Cell: 608-628-7309  
Email: sevenaces@msn.com



# Youth Education

- Education resources
- Reimagine Wool curriculum
- Next Steps:
  - Summer 2026:  
Explore effective avenues



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