

## X. GLOSSARY OF WOOL TERMS

**Belly Wool** That which grows on the belly of the sheep. It typically is uneven and tender, and shorter than wool from other parts of the body. It is often stained and seedy.

**Belly Wool Fault** A defect that is often associated with and commonly referred to as "belly wool" in which the staple length is comparable to the rest of the fleece but is not as dense and, like belly wool, is often discolored, with the crimp appearing to be more prominent and sometimes finer. The fault starts on the side of the sheep and can reach the top of the back in extreme cases. This fault has been correlated with lower clean fleece weight production.

**Blending** The mixing together of various qualities of materials in either the raw or semi-manufactured state in order to modify color, quality, or price of the resultant bulk. Blending can include mixing of various grades of wool, other natural fibers and synthetic fibers.

**Break Wool** A wool flaw which, due to illness of the sheep at some time during the growth of the wool, is weak at one particular point of the staple, but sound above and below the break.

**Britch or Breech Wool** Wool from the hindquarters of the sheep, usually the coarsest on the body, on occasion approaching hair in its characteristics.

**Burr** A rough or prickly seed-vessel which becomes entangled in the wool.

**Burry Wool** The fibers of which are entangled with burrs.

**Carbonizing** The extracting of vegetable matter from wool, oil, wastes or rags after converting it into carbon by the action of acid and heat. Carbonized wool has decreased fiber strength and a harsher handle.

**Carpet Wool** Coarse wool used in the manufacture of carpets.

**Classing (Wool)** The allocating of the fleece to any particular standard quality. It may be considered as the preliminary sorting. Each class represents a distinct, salable line.

**Clean Wool Fibers Present (C.W.F.P.)** That portion of the wool which consists exclusively of wool free of all vegetable and other foreign material; woolbase 86% bone dry fiber, alcohol extract 1.5%, ash ½% and moisture 12%.

**Clip** One season's yield of wool. (See REPUTATION CLIP)

**Coarse-Edge** Refers to the extreme coarse fibers in a given lot of wool. There is evidence that the coarse fibers may be largely responsible for "prickle", a serious disadvantage of some wool fabrics when worn close to the skin. For most practical purposes during normal spinning, the coarse-edge does not exist as long as there are enough of these coarse fibers to be dispersed uniformly along the yarn. The exception is the spinning of light weight yarns with a cross section of 38 to 40 fibers in quest of light weight fabrics.

**Color Defect** Presence of colors, other than white, which cannot be removed in scouring.

**Colored Fiber Ratio** An important factor when manufacturing pastel or white fabrics. It is the ratio of colored to white fibers in a given lot of wool. Sources are colored and blackface sheep, colored genetic faults (spots) in white woolled sheep, stained wool and contamination from other animals such as cattle and goats.

**Combing** Process by which the short and tangled fibers (noil) are separated from the long fibers and the latter are drawn (straightened) out and laid parallel to each other.

**Cotted Fleeces** A cotted fleece is one in which the fibers are matted or tangled.

**Crimp** The natural waviness of a wool fiber.

**Density** The number of fibers produced on a given area of the sheep's body. The more numerous the fibers, the greater the density. Cotted wool will often have the appearance of having greater density than it actually has.

**Felting** The property of wool fibers to interlock with each other if they are rubbed together under pressure and in a moist condition while heated. Controlled felting is accomplished in the mill on a fulling machine using the aforementioned conditions.

**Fleece** The entire coat of wool shorn from the sheep at one time.

**Grade** The quality or relative fineness of the wool.

**Grading** Classifying the fleece according to fineness and length of staple.

**Grease (Greasy) Wool** Wool taken from the living sheep that has not been scoured.

**Greasy - Heavily Conditioned Wool** Refers to low yielding wool with a high content of grease and suint and its ability to attract and react with dirt, moisture and atmospheric conditions.

**Hair** Usually straight, non-elastic and glossy. Stronger, smoother and usually coarser than wool. Lacks felting properties.

**Handle** This term denotes the degree to which all the attributes comprise quality, such as softness, fineness, length, and elasticity — noticeable when wool is judged by the feel.

**Kemp** An opaque and nonconforming fiber (due to poor genetics) which will not dye uniformly, and consequently appears prominent in the finished fabric.

**Lambs Wool** Wool shorn from lambs. Soft, and possessing good spinning properties.

**Lanolin** Purified wool grease.

**Length** Describes the length of a wool fiber or group of fibers. (SEE STAPLE.)

**Lofty Wool** Open wool, full of "life", springs back into normal position after being crushed in the hand.

**Luster** The natural gloss of mohair, alpaca, Leicester, Lincoln and other wool. Depending on the end use of the fabric, luster may or may not be desirable.

**Noil** The short and tangled fibers which are separated on a worsted comb from the long fibers which are used in the manufacture of top.

**Reputation Clip** In western range flocks there are individuals who have earned the designation of "reputation clip". It means that year after year the producer markets a wool clip which is uniform in fiber diameter, has good staple length free of poly twine and has a low colored fiber ratio. This producer will receive more than one bid for his wool as he has applied genetic uniformity with management techniques of wool harvesting and preparation.

**Scouring** The removal of grease, dirt and suint from wool by washing with water in a neutral scour with a non-ionic detergent.

**Second Cuts** Careless shearing sometimes results in cutting wool which has already been shorn once.

**Seedy** A term applied to wools containing grass and weed seeds of various descriptions which are difficult to remove.

**Shrinkage** The loss due to removal of grease, suint and foreign matter when wool is scoured.

**Skirting** A practice of removing from the edges of whole fleeces the stained or inferior locks, such as grown on the belly, legs, and neck of the sheep.

**Stained Wool** Wool which has become discolored through the effects of urine and fecal matter. When scoured it has a burnt appearance.

**Staple** Staple refers to the length of the fiber, but in a more restricted sense it is used in describing a lock of wool in the fleece. Worsted processing requires a minimum of 2.85 inches of top staple length. Long wools (6.5 inches and longer), possibly may not be processed satisfactorily on modern high speed woolen cards unless they represent only a small percentage of the blend. Territory fine combing wool is always referred to as territory fine staple.

**Suint** Excretions from sweat glands deposited on the wool.

**Tender Fleeces** A type of wool separated in wool sorting from others. Tender fleeces have weak places in the fibers and consequently are usually limited to blends with sound wools. The tender areas are not critical enough to preclude their use in worsted systems when used in limited quantities.

**Top** A continuous untwisted strand of longer fiber from which the shorter fibers or noil have been removed by the worsted comb.

**Wool Sorting** The process of dividing the fleece into different qualities or counts, according to length, fineness, soundness and color of staple.

**Woolen System** After carding, the card web is split into rovings using a condenser. Then the rovings are spun directly into yarns on the spindle of this system. The fibers are criss-crossed and do not lie in any general order. The woolen system produces a more bulky, low twist yarn with low linear density. These yarns typically require a minimum of 200 fibers on the cross section.

**Worsted System** Yarn spun from top. The wool fibers are paralleled and equalized, and the yarn is smooth compared with woolen yarns. Owing to its structure, a worsted thread does not possess felting properties to the same extent as a woolen system yarn. Most short fibers are removed in the combing process. The resulting yarn has a high twist level, requiring as few as 38 to 40 fibers in the cross section for very fine yarns.

**Yolk** A combination of suint and grease deposited on the wool fibers from the sweat and oil glands.