

Responsible Wool Standard Update

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Outline:

- History
- Five freedoms
- Review of other animal welfare standards
- Who is the Textile Exchange?
- What is the Responsible Wool Standard?
- Options for US sheep producers
- Where are we going?



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Historical Perspective:

- Movement toward more globally responsible food and clothing production – “Green movement”
 - More people want to know where their food and fiber comes from and how that production impacts the environment
 - Cotton is a classic example
 - Created the “standard” of all standards
- Animal rights campaigns targeting livestock production
 - Down industry
 - Sheep industry – PETA shearing video
 - Dairy industry



A M E R I C A N W O O L

The welfare of an animal, which includes its physical and mental state, has been defined as the Five Freedoms:

- Freedom from Hunger and Thirst: by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
- Freedom from Discomfort: by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease: by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
- Freedom to Express Normal Behavior: by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- Freedom from Fear and Distress: by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.



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Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare:

- Basis for the actions for professional groups, including veterinarians and animal welfare organizations
- Most of the animal welfare audits developed for implementation on farms and in processing facilities are based on the Five Freedoms.
- Animal welfare is a science
 - New university programs formed
- ASI has made a concerted effort to address animal welfare



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Other welfare standards:

- Sheep Safety & Quality Assurance
 - Developed by ASI and CSU
 - Ensures maximum consumer confidence in products generated by the U.S. sheep industry
 - Primarily targeted at the food industry and not textile
 - Manuals, Levels: 1 Participation, 2 Certification, 3 Verification
 - On farm audits available through certified trainers
 - Industry self-audit
 - Excellent foundation



INTRODUCTION

LEVEL1, PART1 | LEVEL1, PART2 | LEVEL1 ASSESSMENT

Introduction :: Welcome!

The sheep industry is dependent on providing safe, high-quality products to each and every customer.



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LEVEL 1, Part 2 :: Q.2 Wool Contamination

Wool quality depends upon:

- ❖ The absence of colored fiber.
- ❖ Vegetable matter.
- ❖ Paint.
- ❖ Polypropylene.
- ❖ Kemp and medulated fibers.

**HOWEVER, it doesn't specifically address:
Shearing
Castration
Docking
Land Management**



Q.1 Injection Sites

Q.2 Wool Contamination



Q.3 Carcass Composition

Click on the Resources tab to access and print the Certified Wool Program, the Certified Shearing Document, the Producer Choice Declaration, the Producer Premium Declaration, the Poly/Contamination Brochure, the Pricing

Other Welfare Standards:



- USDA ISO Technical Specification 34700 Animal Welfare Assessment Program
 - Voluntary conformity assessment service provided by the Quality Assessment Division under the Quality Systems Verification Program
 - This program facilitates the marketing and distribution of certified agricultural products
 - No sheep specific reference
 - Designed for food industry and not for textile industry
- Could use this program to verify SSQA certification standards
- Add more creditability to our self-auditing system



Other Welfare Standards:

- IWTO Guide to Wool Sheep Welfare
 - General guidelines for animal welfare based on Five Freedoms
 - Nutrition, Environment, Health, Behavior, Handling
 - Guidelines and not a certification/standard program
 - No certification arm
 - Linked to specific country welfare codes of practice
 - US – Sheep Care Guide
- Self audit



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Who is the Textile Exchange?



- A global nonprofit organization, formed in 2002 that works to make the textile industry more sustainable
 - Cotton
 - Down
 - Wool
- Brand funded, 197 brand members
 - NIKE, Patagonia
- Companies/Brands join TE because they want to be more sustainable
- NOT formed to create standards of production



What is the Responsible Wool Standard?



- RWS is a voluntary global standard that addresses the welfare of sheep and the land they graze developed by TE
- History of RWS
 - H&M expressed concerns about origin of wool, pressure from ARG regarding mulesing
 - 2014 TE reached out to stakeholders, 70 in all
 - Recognized not only an animal welfare component was absolutely necessary but also a land management component addressing sustainable land use
- RWS was funding by brands



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RWS Challenges



- RWS addresses the “big three”
 - Shearing
 - Castration
 - Methodology and timeframe very specific
 - Docking
 - Tail docking length, methodology and timeframe to dock very specific
- Sustainable land management component
- Parallel production
- Detailed record keeping
- Audit process and costs
- Push back from producers to brands to guarantee they will buy wool and pay up for it



RWS Positives:



- Better record keeping increases the potential for improved profitability
- Dialogue between consumers and farmers and farmers to consumers that will keep agriculture alive
- Preserve the reputation of wool, the farmers, and the brands
- RWS Kickstarter Program – Three goals
 - Brand publicly sign up supporting RWS
 - % of their wool as RWS by a certain time
 - Make financial contribution to the farmers to help with cost of audit process
 - Earmark funds for US farmers for certification costs
- Support US wool, US products, supporting use of public lands



A M E R I C A N W O O L

Where are we going?



- We are losing our “right to farm” in the public’s eye
- Third party audited programs add creditability
- Programs that will maybe stop the downward spiral
- Should we try to work this program or should ASI help to modify an existing program?



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