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
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
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
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
Where are we going?

• We are losing our “right to farm” in the public’s eye

• Third party audited programs add creditability

• Programs like these may help stop the downward spiral in consumer confidence

• Should we try to work this program or should ASI help to modify an existing program?