

New Mexico State University
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Wool Judging Terminology

A. Wool Definitions:

- 1 Apparel Wools - Any wool manufactured into cloth for use as clothing
- 2 Black Wool - Fleeces that are gray or black. Sells at discount of approximately 1/3 less. (Black Fibers - See Purity)
- 3 Britch or breech - The coarsest wool in a fleece produced on the twist and lower thigh area.
- 4 Bright Wool - Wool that is whitest and most attractive in color. Contrast too dingy or stained.
- 5 Burry Wool - Wool that contains burrs from any plant. Heavy burrs decrease yield while all burrs increase waste.
- 6 Carbonizing - The use of acids to destroy and remove burrs and other vegetable matter from wool.
- 7 Carding - One of the first steps in preparation of scoured wool. In the process the wool fibers are separated from other fibers in the locks.
- 8 Chaff- Refers to light weight vegetable matter such as straw, leaves, etc. Does not include burrs.
- 9 Character - A broad term which in general refers to all those characteristics which make wool attractive. Crimp, color and handle properties are the most important.
- 10 Clean Basis - Quotations of prices that are based on the estimated fiber weight a particular lot of grease wool may contain.
- 11 Clip - The total wool production from a flock or specific group of animals.
- 12 Clothing Wool - Used chiefly in the manufacture of woolens and felts.
- 13 Combing - Manufacturing process in which the short fibers (noils) are separated from the longer fibers which are combed into a continuous strand of parallel fibers called top.
- 14 Combing Wool - Wool that is strong and long enough to be combed.

- 15 Condition - A term referring to the amount of grease and dirt in wool
- 16 Cotted Fleeces - Fleeces in which fibers are matted and felted. Most common in coarse woolled sheep and may be due to ill health or lack of sufficient yolk. Increase noilage or wastiness as fibers are broken as fleece is torn apart.
- 17 Crimp - The natural waviness in fibers
 - a. Distinct Crimp- crimps are sharp and clear
 - b. Bold Crimp - large crimp (fewer per inch). May or may not be distinct
- 18 Crossbred Wool - Term applied to wool from sheep by crossing Rambouillet or Merino with English longwool breeds. Columbia, Corriedale, etc. Are examples. Wool grades from 1/2 to 1/4 blood fineness. Usually has plenty of length, luster and softness, but may lack in uniformity.
- 19 Crutchings - Wool shorn from the britch and inside of the rear legs.
- 20 Defective Wool - Wool that has been damaged by water, fire, insects or disease. Burry wool may be classed as defective.
- 21 Dingy - Wool that is dark and lusterless.
- 22 Domestic - Wool produced in U.S. as contrasted with foreign wool.
- 23 Down Wool - Wool from breeds that originated in the downs of England. Wool is medium in grade, short, wiry, lacks crimp and often contains black fibers.
- 24 Fleece Wools - Wool from Eastern and Central States.
- 25 Frowsy - Wool that is dry and lifeless with out distinct crimp due to weather and/ or poor quality.
- 26 Grading - Separating the unopened fleeces into piles according to fineness and length.
- 27 Grease Wool - Wool in the condition in which it is shorn before washing or scouring.
- 28 Gummy- Grease wool that has excessive amount of yolk which has set and it stiff and sticky.
- 29 Kemp - Chalky white, brittle, weak fiber which is found mixed with normal fibers of a fleece. Kemp will not dye and lacks strength.

- 30 Lanolin - Refined yolk or wool grease.
- 31 Locks - Individual groups of wool fibers as they exist in the fleece. Also known as "Staple"
- 32 Lofty - A term used to describe a fleece that is bulky in comparison to its weight. A lofty fleece is light in condition and is usually springy to the touch and displays good crimp.
- 33 Luster - Wool that shines or reflects light. Desirable.
- 34 Noils - Short fibers removed in the combing process.
- 35 Original Bag Wools- Sold in bags as packed at shearing. Most from western ranges where sheep produce same grade of wool and there is little need for individual grading of fleeces.
- 36 Purity - Refers to presence or absence of black fibers or kemp.
- 37 Quality - General term often used to fineness but often used in boarder meaning to include overall desirability.
- 38 Scouring - Process by which grease and dirt are removed from wool.
- 39 Second Cuts - Short pieces of wool that result from the shearer clipping off the wool left from a previous stroke. Increase noilage or wastiness in combing wools.
- 40 Shrinkage - The percentage loss in weight due to scouring.
- 41 Soundness - Strength of wool fibers.
- 42 Stained Wool - Wool that has been discolored so that it will not wash white in scouring process. May be due to urine, yolk, phenothiazine or other factors.
- 43 Staple - Two meanings:
 - a) Length classification of wool
 - b) Lock of individual fibers
- 44 Tags - Heavy dung locks.
- 45 Tender Wool - Wool that is weak and breaks anywhere along the length of the fiber. Due to poor nutrition or sickness.

- 46 Territory Wool - Wool from the western areas of the U.S.
- 47 Tippy Wool - That is which the tip or weather end of the fibers are encrusted making the wool wasty in processing (increase noilage)
- 48 Top - Partially manufactured wool. Scoured, carded and combed and the fibers lay parallel in a strand.
- 49 Unsound - Wool that is abnormally weak and that will break when subjected to a slight pull. Two distinctions:
- a) Tender - defined above
 - b) Definite break - a definite weak place that breaks clean across the lock at the same place over the fleece.
- 50 Virgin Wool - Wool that has been used in fabrics for the first time.
- 51 Wasty - Wool that will produce a high amount of noils. (see Tippy Wool)
- 52 Weathered Wool - Wool that has dried out due to action of dust, water, sunlight and insufficient yolk. It is dingy, forwsy, and usually weak-fibered.
- 53 Yield - Opposite of shrinkage. The percentage of clean wool fibers after scouring.
- 54 Yolk - The combined secretion of sebaceous (oil) and sudoriferous (sweat) glands in the skin.