



**SHAVE 'EM
TO SAVE 'EM**
A LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY INITIATIVE

RareWool.org | 919-542-5704
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SHAVE 'EM TO SAVE 'EM FLEECE AND FIBER BUYING GUIDE

Buying a fleece (or rare wool products) is an investment in your time and money, so make sure you know what to expect from the breed and what you are purchasing. Do your due diligence.

Know the breed you are considering/purchasing:

The [breed organization web page](#) will outline the breed “Standard” or “Matrix” which lists the specific qualities breeders look for in registered stock. This includes:

- a. Acceptable fleece colors
- b. Average fleece weight
- c. Average lanolin (yolk) content (possibly)
- d. Fiber type (fine, medium, course, dual coated)
- e. Staple length range
- f. Crimp per inch range

Read the [Fiber Profiles](#) written by rare wool expert Deborah Robson, on RareWool.org for information about each breeds' fiber qualities and best uses.

Remember that while there is an accepted “Standard” or “Matrix” for each breed, fiber quality can vary from flock to flock and between animals within the same flock. Genetics, nutrition, health and stress all contribute to fiber quality. Storage length, location and methods, also factor into fiber quality.

Questions to ask your Fiber Provider when considering making a wool purchase:

1. Are you officially enrolled in **Shave 'Em to Save 'Em** as a **Fiber Provider** and will you send me a Passport sticker with my purchase?
2. If you are a **Reseller**, not the shepherd who raised these sheep, what can you tell me about the farm of origin?
3. Is the sheep that produced this fleece registered by the appropriate breed association?
4. When was this shearing done? This year or a previous year?
5. Has the fleece been scoured?
6. Does this fleece have any stains (canary, peach, grass, tattoo ink, paint brands)?



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7. How/Where has the fleece been stored?
8. Was this sheep coated? What is the VM content (high, moderate, low)
9. Does the fleece contain bugs or scurf (dandruff)?
10. Has the fleece been skirted to **YOUR liking**?
 - a. Were manure tags removed?
 - b. Was Britch, belly and leg wool removed? Or do you want everything?
 - c. Were second cuts removed?
11. What further preparation has been done, if any?
12. What is the fleece weight?
13. What is the expected percentage loss for your planned prep?
14. Has the fleece been checked for Soundness? Are there any breaks in the fleece?
15. If buying a partial fleece, what area is the fiber from? Neck? blanket?
16. Fiber type?
17. Overall handle?
18. What are the lock characteristics of this fleece?
 - a. Staple length
 - b. Crimp per inch
 - c. Tippiness or Cotting
 - d. Breaks or tenderness
 - e. Felting
19. What is the price per pound/yard? Shipping fees?
20. What is your return/refund policy?