

# FIBER SORTING & GRADING 101 – WHAT, WHY, HOW

## Presented By Wini Labrecque 2019

### What Is Grading & Sorting?

#### Grading

- Hands on evaluation using sight and touch
- Utilize a 3 micron spread of fineness within each grade
- Evaluate by length

#### Sorting

- Separation of batches of fiber into like Grades
- Sort by Grade
- Sort by Length
- Sort by Color

### Why Sort & Grade?

- Gain better fiber evaluation skills both on and off the animal
- Get fiber into better quality production
- Benefit from more economical processing options
- Understand what you have in your fiber production and how you may want to improve farm management and breeding choices

### Why Sorted Fiber?

- Decreased pilling, migration & prickle factor
- Better hand
- Less waste during processing
- Superior products, premium price
- Quality control
- Predictable and repeatable results
- Increased fiber value

### How - Fiber & Fleece Attributes that effect Processing

- Cleanliness
- Soundness
- Uniformity
- Fineness (Grade)
- Length
- Color
- Luster/Brightness
- Crimp/Lock Style

## FIBER GRADES:

- GRADE 1            less than 20 micron                                (Ultra Fine)
- GRADE 2            20.1 – 22.9 micron                                                (Super Fine)
- GRADE 3            23.0 – 25.9 micron                                                (Fine)
- GRADE 4            26.0 – 28.9 micron                                                (Medium)
- GRADE 5            29.0 – 32.0 micron                                                (Strong)
- GRADE 6            32.1 – 35.0 micron                                                (Robust)
- Other grade           Over 35 micron fiber

NOTE: Wool has 3 different Grading Systems, Blood Grade, Numerical Count and Micron System. Most Wools can be graded utilizing the simplified system noted above. Mohair too can be graded using this system, keeping fibers to a low 3 micron spread.

## FIBER PROCESSING LENGTH:

- WOOLEN LENGTH
  - 1.5 – 3 inches long
- WORSTED LENGTH
  - 3 – 5 inches long
- LONG FIBERS  
Greater than 5 inches

Fiber should be measured without stretching.

Different lengths may be required by some buyers of raw fiber. Sorting should be done based upon the intended end use whether it is for on the farm product or raw fiber sale to a known buyer.

## BASIC COLORS:

- White - no other colored fibers
- Beige
- Fawn – light, medium & dark
- Brown – light, medium & dark and also Bay Black
- True Black
- Grey – Silver & Rose - light, medium & dark

## OFF COLOR SORTING:

- White fleece with black fibers = silver grey
- Black fleece with white fibers = silver grey
- White fleece with brown fibers = rose grey
- Black fleece with brown fibers = rose grey or bay black
- Fawn with black fibers = rose grey
- Brown fleece with white fiber = rose grey

