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

• GRADE 3 23.0 – 25.9 micron

- GRADE 4 26.0 28.9 micron
- GRADE 5 29.0 32.0 micron
 GRADE 6 32.1 35.0 micron
- GRADE 6 32.1 35.0 micron
- 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.

(Super Fine)

(Medium)

(Strong)

(Robust)

(Fine)

FIBER PROCESSING LENGTH:

• WOOLEN LENGTH

 \circ 1.5 – 3 inches long

- WORSTED LENGTH \circ 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

COMPARASON OF CASHMERE, MOHAIR AND SHEEP WOOL GRADES AND A STANDARD GRADING SYSTEM								
			RANGE OF		NUMERICAL	RANGE OF	STANDARD	RANGE OF
	MICRON		AFD		COUNT	AFD	NUMERICAL	AFD
CASHMERE	RANGE	MOHAIR TYPE	(MICRONS)	WOOL TYPE	GRADE	(MICRONS)	GRADE	(MICRONS)
SUPERFINE	<16			FINE: A	<80S	<17.7	GRADE 1	<20
FINE	16-18.5			A1	80S	17.7-19.14		
				A2	70S	19.15-20.59		
STRONG	19-22			A3	64S	20.60-22.04	GRADE 2	20.0-22.9
		SUPERFINE KID	24-26	MEDIUM: 1	62S/60S	22.05-24.94	GRADE 3	23.0-25.9
		FINE KID	27-28	2	58S/56S	24.95-27.84	GRADE 4	26.0-28.9
		GOOD KID	29-30	3	54S/50S	27.85-30.99	GRADE 5	29.0-32.0
		SUPERFINE YEARLING	31-32					
		GOOD YEARLING	33-34	COARSE: 1	48S/46S	31.00-34.39	GRADE 6	32.1-35.0
		SUPERFINE ADULT	35-36	2	44S	34.40-36.19		
		GOOD ADULT	37-39	VERY COARSE: 1	40S	36.20-38.09		
				2	36S	38.10-40.20		
				3	>365	>40.20		