

Customer Case History Number 22



Ambition takes Huxtable to high fashion

Jackie Payne has been dealing with wool for most of her life, learning to knit as a child, moving on to hand spinning and then producing her own wool, making woollen products and supplying fibre to a classic women's clothing company.

She is working with her husband Antony from Huxtable Farm, a 16th Century long-house in a secluded position near Barnstaple in the foothills of Exmoor which also offers bed and breakfast accommodation.

The farm is set within 80 acres of rolling countryside and woodland. It offers panoramic views, a Devon Wildlife farm trail and is home to a flock of Jacob and Texel sheep which was purchased from the National Trust property Arlington Court.

Jacobs were chosen because Jackie wanted to produce articles coming from the backs of the livestock.

'We chose Jacobs because their wool is soft and with its brown and white patched fleece offers a variety of natural shades from light cream, grey to dark brown' she says.

'Not only do they produce excellent wool, they usually lamb twins trouble-free and provide superb, lean meat for the visitors' evening meals'.

Originally the home-produced Jacob products were offered to bed and breakfast guests as gifts from the farm. They included rugs, wool,

cushions, hats, scarves, bags and lavender bags. But Jackie found it difficult to keep up with demand for handspun wool, so for the first time last year they sent their first Jacob fleeces to The Natural Fibre Company.

The dark and light ewe's fleece was separated and each spun individually to produce light cream and dark brown hanks. The lamb's fleece was not separated and produced grey hanks.

In November 2008 Jackie asked both her mother and mother-in-law to help with producing enough hand-knitted articles for the season. Just as well as through the summer the knitted articles sold better than the knitting wool.

For 2010, Jackie has commissioned The Natural Fibre Company to use some of Huxtable Farm's 2009 fleeces to make throws, shawls and cushions.

The remaining Jacob fleeces were sold to The Natural Fibre Company to be mixed with Mohair to produce cloth for a well-known British clothing company.

For more information contact:

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