



## Advice on washing raw fleeces

We normally wash wool at the mill, but if you have to wash fleece in advance, either to preserve it or to remove yolk stains or pesticides, we hope you find the following hints useful.

Remember washed fleece will keep much longer than raw fleece. After washing store the fleece in sealed bags, plastic to avoid moths.

1. Choose open fleece with no staple breaks.
2. Remove second cuts, obvious dirt and tangles. Do this by pulling NOT CUTTING.
3. Check the tips for soundness - our machinery could break weak fibre. Fibre quality is very important: shearing too late means the carding will test the weak point. Second cuts will be distributed all through the web.
4. Soak in warm suds with no movement (too hot and too much movement causes felting). This should remove the dirt and most of the grease. This is not scouring. You can fill a bath or bowl with hot water, add liquid soap (eg wool washing fluid or washing-up liquid), then dunk the fleece into the bath/bowl and ensure it is submerged. Leave till cold.
5. Drain, and rinse using a cold/tepid hand shower until the water runs clean. Drain again.
6. When all the excess water is drained, put the fleece in a sack or pillowcase, tying it closed, and spin on wool spin. DO NOT use the rinse/spin cycle as the water dropping on the wool will cause felting.
7. If for your own use, **tease while damp**: seeds do not stick so easily when wet and hay and straw are removed more easily. This step can be omitted if you are sending fleece to us as we re-scour and tease the fibre.
8. Leave clouds to dry in a warm, airy space or in sunlight if not too windy. When dry, bag and repeat until all is complete.

**If you have any doubts, send a small sample of raw and prepared fibre and ask for advice.**