



The Islay Tweed

A Natural Fibre Company case study



Jessie and her Zwartble Flock

Jessie MacFarlane was born and bred on the small island of Islay on the west coast of Scotland, the daughter of a farm worker. She moved to Perthshire to marry her ex dairy farmer, husband Rod and raise a family. When an opportunity arose to buy a 250-acre farm on the rugged west coast of Islay, the lure of home made it an easy but somewhat impulsive move.

At Tormisdale Farm, Jessie now breeds sheep for lamb and wool and grows barley for the Bruichladdich Distillery. Her passion lies with her small but growing flock of Zwartble Sheep, known for their calm nature and lovely manners. Jessie was determined to use their beautifully soft and warm fleece to its full potential.

Jessie says: *'I wanted to make sure I partnered with the right companies that would treat my yarn professionally and make the highest quality product. Researching took time and I discovered The Natural Fibre Company, which was the right choice for me. They were happy to share their knowledge and experience and answer all my naive questions before I committed to my first batch of yarn. I worked closely with them and their patience and*

knowledge meant that the end product was beyond my expectation'.

Jessie now works regularly with us at NFC to produce her yarn which is made into stunning blankets and tweed. The high standard of the yarn produced impressed Julie and Marcus at The Islay Woollen Mill, who produce tweed for Savile Row and supply designs featured in major Hollywood films.

'I now have a product that I am very proud of and whilst sales have been hampered by COVID-19, I have had a huge amount of interest and some exciting leads going forward'.

To find out more about Jessie's work visit:

www.theislaltweed.co.uk



Pictured: Jessie modelling an Islay Tweed blanket