



Typical Handspinners Fleece Show Criteria

There are several wool and fleece competitions at festivals, fairs, and breed shows. One type of competition is a handspinner's show where fleeces are judged based on a set of criteria important to handspinners.

These shows may take into account breed characteristics or they may divide the fleeces into classes for fine, medium, and coarse wool. At any rate, all fleeces are judged based on the suitability for handspinning.

Typical criteria used to judge a fleece competition:

Soundness – Fleece should withstand tugging and pulling with breaks or weak points. Weathered tips may be penalized based on severity.

Evenness – Fleece should be consistent throughout. Hair or kemp fibers may be penalized.

Weight/Length – Should be appropriate to the breed. Small fleeces or ones with a staple length less than two (2) inches may be penalized.

Brightness/Luster/Handle – Wool should be soft and lustrous for its fleece to be desirable to handspinners. Fleece should be free from damage and coting (felting) and should easily open.

Staple Formation – Staple should be typical of the breed, clearly defined, with even fiber length within the staple.

Crimp – Even and well defined crimp, curl, or wave (characteristic of the breed) throughout the staple, and the entire fleece.

Color – Canary stains, yellowing, and paint (or marking) stains may be penalized.

Cleanliness – Fleeces should be free from vegetable matter, burrs, dirt, paint, manure, and second cuts. Excessive contamination may be penalized.

