



Shearing Guidelines and Tips

What the shearer needs to know:

Breed/s, number of sheep, number of adults and lambs, who will be on-site to assist, good phone number to reach you, directions, whether electricity is available

Preparation:

Pen sheep up before the shearers arrive. If rain is forecast, pen them up the day before. Shearer cannot shear wet sheep.

Do not feed until after shearing. This is important for the sheep's health and comfort.

Plan to assist with the process: bring the sheep to the shearer, sweep the floor between sheep, sort and bag your wool, etc.

Shearers need electricity and a clean, smooth area for shearing.

If you have hair sheep or cross breeds mixed with hair sheep, separate them days before the shearer arrives. Hair cannot be dyed or processed like wool. Hair contamination can cause an entire wool bag (including other peoples' wool to be thrown out.

Tips:

Take care of the shearers! Good lighting, water and an accurate count of sheep are the minimum requirements. Shearing is hard work and is often scheduled back-to-back. Consider offering a meal, snacks and bathroom access. If you want additional paid services (ex: hoof trimming) let the shearer know when you call to schedule. Tips are welcome.

Wool Handling:

Package your wool in clear, perforated plastic wool bags. The shearers and the Georgia Sheep Association have these bags available for \$5.00 per bag. You can also use burlap and paper bags. Do NOT use plastic feed sacks. They contaminate wool with polypropylene and ruin the quality of the wool bale.

Skirt and separate your wool based on length, color and quality:

Length:

- Less than 2 inches (belly wool, lamb's wool)
- Greater than 2 inches

Color:

- White-faced sheep; white wool
- Black-faced and other colored-faced sheep; white / cream wool
- Black, brown, gray or multicolored wool

Quality:

- High quality fleeces
 - Suitable for showing / selling / processing (shearer can help identify best fleeces)
- Good
 - Fleeces suitable for Wool Pool (or retained for personal use in pet beds, other projects that don't require the highest quality)
- Poor
 - Fleeces suitable for compost / mulch due to wool break, high amounts of vegetative matter / animal waste, and poor animal health

Wool Pool:

The Georgia Sheep Association traditionally participates in a Wool Pool with other southern states. The wool is collected, weighed and transported to Tennessee. Producers receive a check after the pool is sold. The price has been around 50 cents per pound. Wool Pool collection dates are announced in the spring. The Wool Pool has been cancelled for 2 years.