The Ontario Wool Study

Growing the Wool Industry in Ontario

Dr. Nicole Klenk

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Wool: Sustainability, Niche markets, Farm Diversification, Consumer Education
WHO launches health review after microplastics found in 90% of ...
The Guardian - Mar. 15, 2018
A previous study also found high levels of microplastics in tap water. In the new study, analysis of 259 bottles from 19 locations in nine countries ...

Microplastics found in 93% of bottled water tested in global study
In-Depth - CBC.ca - Mar. 14, 2018

Fighting ocean plastics at the source
Chemical & Engineering News - Apr. 15, 2018
Scientists have been sounding the alarm about ocean plastics for more ... 95% of all seabirds will be ingesting plastic if the pollution isn't mitigated. ... In the U.S., most of the waste was microfiber, possibly from laundry water.

Fashion's crippling impact on the environment is only getting worse
VICE News - Mar. 11, 2018
The fashion week tents have been packed up and the models sent home until ... deeply entrenched industry trend shows no sign of stopping: Fast fashion, which has become one of the biggest sources of pollution in the world.
Furniture designers embrace sustainability at Milan Design Week, wit…
South China Morning Post - May 1, 2018
The focus was on sustainability at the world’s most influential design event ... from mohair and wool to organic cotton, linen and metallic fibres.

IWTO makes sustainability wool sector’s top priority
Ecotextile News - Mar. 28, 2018
Sustainability has long been a contentious issue in the wool sector as the disparity of opinion regarding LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) criteria ...

Marks & Spencer Fights to Improve Most Resource Intensive Industry ...
Environmental Leader - Oct. 20, 2017
Meanwhile, clothing brand Theory is aiming for sustainable wool with a different tactic. The company launched Good Wool, calling it the brand's ...
Context: Niche Markets

Woodstock Fleece Festival - Woolstock, Woolstock, Festival, Wool
https://fleecefestival.com/
This festival incorporates over 90 vendors, workshops and demonstrations. We showcase dyeing, felting, knitting, rug hooking, spinning and weaving. woolstock.
Vendors 2018 · Contact · Accommodations · Workshops 2018

Philosopher's Wool Company Home Page
https://www.philosopherswool.com/
The Story Of Philosopher's Wool. Mission statement. Our mission is to support sustainable agriculture, with about 25% of web sales devoted to that purpose.
Kits · Fair Isle Sweaters Simplified · Buttons · Two-handed Fair Isle Technique

Canadian Wool Products From Topsy Farms - Canadian Made Wool ...
https://topsyfarms.com/
Wool Products From Topsy Farms - buy Canadian Made Wool Products in Amherst Island, Ontario.

Boutique — Peggy Sue Collection
www.peggysuecollection.com/shop/
Peggy Sue Collection is local, ethical clothing made in Canada. ... The Collectibles: Ontario Woven Heritage Wool Scarf. 195.00. Long Thin Scarf ...
Wool: Characteristics

- Diameter (microns)
- Staple length
- Uniformity
- Elasticity
- Strength/Durability
- Luster
- Felt-ability
Wool: Promoted Qualities

Clothing: durable, moisture wicking, breathable, thermal comfort, protection, odor resistant, biodegradable

Source: IWTO 2018
Insulation: wool improves indoor air quality by absorbing and retaining pollutants such as VOCs and formaldehyde.
Waste: wool recycling lowers a brand’s environmental impact; expanding the lifespan of a garment by 9 months of active use can reduce its environmental impact by up to 30%

Source: IWTO 2018
Most of Ontario’s sheep farmers market less than 100 lambs per year; over 450 farms are home to more than 100 ewes; 20 Ontario farms have more than 1,000 ewes; approx. 3000 sheep farmers in Ontario

CCWG collected and marketed 850,000 to 950,000 pounds of Ontario wool annually over the last few years, but they are not the only buyers.
Ontario Wool Study: Context

8 wool mills, most are mini-mills with capacity to process 20-30 pounds of wool/day with 2 individuals to run the operation

Mini-Mills owner Linda Nobles said she's had a variety of strange requests, including human hair to be processed into yarn. (Nicole Williams/CBC)

Ontario Wool Study: Context

Ontario wool industry struggling because of lack of infrastructure, knowledge, skills, wool quantity and accessibility

Niche markets are developing but need support

Source: Upper Canada Fibreshed
Ontario Wool Study: Objectives

- A needs assessment of the Ontario wool industry to develop communication streams within the supply chain and connect urban end users with rural wool producers;
- Determine the challenges and opportunities for connecting farmers with consumers in urban areas;
- Stimulate the diversification of sheep product income and preserve the cultural landscape and the vitality of Ontario’s rural areas.
Ontario Wool Study: Phase 1

Needs Assessment

• Raising the profile and addressing the particular needs of small flock producers
• The need for directing quality fleeces to locally manufactured value added products in a scalable way to achieve maximum return on investments by individual farmers and the industry as a whole;
• A coordinated wool marketing campaign beyond the individual farm;
• Educational outreach on the properties and qualities of ‘sustainable’ wool for producers, consumers and the general public;
• Agricultural and rural development policies and legal structures for different business models that support the development of infrastructure and mill capacity;
• The need for a wool producer network to share know-how to improve the wool clip.

Report available:
Ontario Wool Study: Phase two

Web-based searchable directory and education

Welcome to the RD Fibre Trail Interactive map which will help you plan your RD Fibre vacation!

The RD Fibre Trail is a wonderful opportunity to experience the variety and luxury of natural, hand spun Canadian yarns. Please join us this summer!

The fibre trail is a seasonal initiative. This means July and August are the only two months that every business on the trail is open; however, most are open from mid-June to the end of September. Click the individual links for more details on each individual attraction and call hours, and you may also phone us here at Fleece & Harmony for assistance in planning your RD Fibre Trail vacation, at (902) 698-1550 or email us at fleeceandharmony.com.

Our journey begins long before yours starts. Hand-selected, natural materials woven through a process, proven and perfected. Wool welcomes innovation, allowing mastery of both fashion and climate. Striking the balance between expedition tested and red carpet contemporary, wool is not fast fashion.
Ontario Wool Study: Phase 3

Capacity building workshops and tools:

- Best practices for organizing wool events
- Animal husbandry to optimize wool clip
- Wool qualities (grading)
- Ontario wool book

Maryland Sheep and Wool 2018
Related Research Projects

- Models of social enterprises in the wool industry and wool industry history in Ontario (Helen Knibb, PhD candidate at Trent)
- Fibreshed movement: leveraging social networks in the digital age to diversify farming outputs and increase returns on investments
- Mill capacity and wool inventory (using website as a means to collect data)
Sheep farmers unite professors across two continents

Together at last: sheep farmers and artisans

By Lynn Macnab

Weaving together wool-working artisans and sheep producers is something

Laurie Maus, District 10 chair for the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA), feels will benefit both industries.

The district’s first ever Wool Day held May 27 at the Glengarry Pioneer Museum (GPM) in Dunvegan was very successful, according to Maus, who along with partner Bob Garner raises a variety of heritage animals including Tunis sheep.

Sheep Convention 2018:
Diverse Business Models in the Wool Industry
Partners:
• Wellington Fibres
• Shepherd’s Hill Farm
• Upper Canada Fibershed
• HRH the Prince of Wales Charities Canada, Campaign for Wool

Funders:
• Ontario Sheep Farmers
• Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council