

Classification of Fibres (Wool)



Wool is obtained from the fleece (hair) of sheep, yak and some other animals.

The wool- yielding animals bear a thick coat of hair on their body. The hair which gives us wool and keeps them warm during the cold winter season.

The hair (wool) on the body of wool-yielding animals traps a lot of air. Air spaces between the wool fibres trap air. Since the air is a poor conductor of heat. So, the air trapped in hair shields the body from cold and keeps them warm in winter.



There are two types of fibres in sheep's hair

(a) The Rough beard hair

(b) The soft under hair which is present just near to the skin of the sheep.

Wool is made from the soft hair the sheep because of its fine quality.

Selective Breeding: Sometimes sheep are selected to gain a breed that has only fine soft hair on the skin and less or no hard hair. This process is called Selective Breeding.

Sources of Wool: Wool is obtained from sheep, Yak(Tibet & Ladakh), Angora goat(gives angora wool) these are found in hilly areas(Jammu & Kashmir), fur of camels(wool) , Llama and Alpaca(South America).



Processing Fibres into Wool

1. Shearing: fleece of the sheep along with a thin layer of skin is removed from its body.

2. Scouring: sheared hair is cleaned and washed in tanks to remove grease, dust and dirt.

3. Sorting: Cleaned hair is sent to a factory where hairs of different textures are separated.

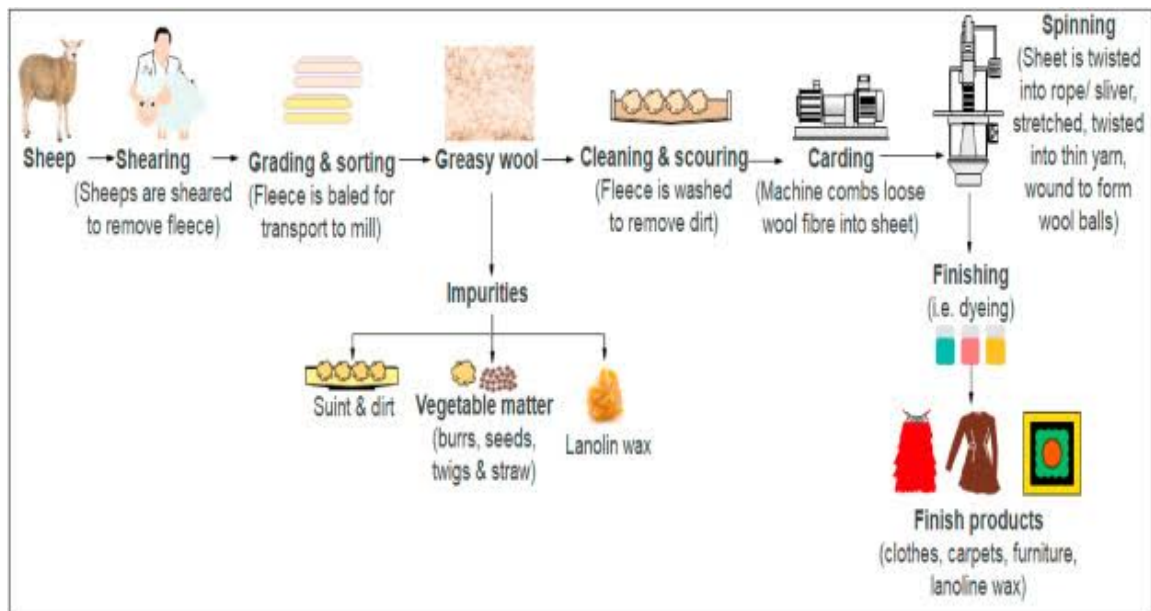
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4. Removing of burrs: The small fluffy fibres called burrs are picked out from the hair. They are scoured again and dried.

5. Coloring of wool fibres: The natural fleece of sheep and goats is black, white or brown. So, the fibres are dyed in various colors.

6. Rolling of wool: Fibres are straightened, combed and rolled into yarn. The longer fibres are made into wool for sweaters and woollen cloths.



Occupational Hazard

Risks faced by workers while working in the industry due to nature of their work are called occupational hazards.

Sorter's disease is an occupational hazard associated with the production of wool. The people who sort the wool can get infected by bacteria called **Anthrax**. This bacterium infects the blood of the person which can lead to fatal death.