

**THANK YOU** for participating in the **NATURAL FIBER ALLIANCE** survey!

**SURVEY RESULTS** (58 of 75 respondents completed the questionnaire)

**I. Acres:**

- a. 40% less than 10
- b. 31% more than 50
- c. 29% less than 50, more than 10

**2 . Raise the fiber animal for:**

- a. 89% fiber
- b. 55% meat
- c. 33% other
- d. 13% dairy

**3. Type of fiber animals:**

- a. 72% sheep
- b. 24% alpaca
- c. 18% rabbit
- d. 16% goat
- e. 16% llama
- f. 6 % yak
- g. 6 % other

**4. Number of others outside of family who engage in the fiber production:**

- a. 72% 1-2
- b. 24% 3-5
- c. 3% 6-10

**5. Feel potential markets for fiber are:**

- a. 85% local
- b. 33% co-op
- c. 30% wool pool, National
- d. 15% shearer

**6. Intend the fiber farm to eventually provide full time income:**

- a. 63% no
- b. 37% yes

**7. What is done with the fiber:**

- a. 79% sell to niche markets
- b. 72% personal use
- c. 23% store it
- d. 23% other
- e. 9% sell to shearer
- f. 6% sell to wool markets
- g. 2% sell to manufacturers

**8. Would you keep the fiber if more value added markets were available:**

- a. 83% yes
- b. 17% no

**9. Top reason for being uncertain about their fiber outlook:**

- a. 46% other (production costs, processing, health, markets, time and skill, marketing, shearing)
- b. 41% uncertain cost
- c. 8% quality
- d. 3% weather and disease

**10. Current markets & marketing methods used:**

- a. 74% word of mouth
- b. 50% wool festivals
- c. 47% website
- d. 45% social media
- e. 32% stores / other festivals
- f. 26% own farm store
- g. 13% other

**11. Barriers to growth:**

- a. local markets
- b. time
- c. limited acres
- d. cash on hand
- e. identifying and reaching markets
- f. age
- g. lack of help
- h. cost of land and animals
- i. having a mentor
- j. zoning ordinances
- k. barn size
- l. production costs
- m. marketing
- n. knowledge and experience
- o. cost vs. profit
- p. a market
- q. available organic feed
- r. competition and limited growth
- s. transition from outside job to farming and support family

**12. Three top users of fiber:**

- a. 60% fiber artists
- b. 20% niche markets
- c. 13% other (self, knitters / spinners, yarn stores)
- d. 8% wool mills

**13. Type of support needed (other than \$):**

- a. 33% start up or value added grant
- b. 30% professional help
- c. 21% other (all of above, visibility / education regarding value of what we do, cooperative, finding markets, more buyers, market)
- d. 15% training

**14. Particular training:**

- a. marketing
- b. budgeting and mentorship
- c. pasture improvement / management
- d. carder to work better
- e. breeding and husbandry
- f. how to sell
- g. improve herd for sales and quality
- h. to register
- i. fiber production, processing and selling
- j. where to invest the fiber
- k. shearing
- l. business and marketing
- m. coating the sheep / when to jacket
- n. felting
- o. processing
- p. evaluate fleeces
- q. website, blog, financial sheet, track sales, etsy
- r. improve wool quality
- s. fodder production, handling wool after shearing
- t. lambing, vet care on farm, making value added fleece products

**15. Annual production / lbs:**

- a. wool 5,410 lbs
- b. alpaca 455 lbs
- c. yak 40 lbs
- d. rabbit 10 lbs

**16. Expand if more markets available:**

- a. 58% yes
- b. 29% depends (not wanting to be big, need to be profitable, if there was a return and sheep remained fiber sheep, acreage, time, feed prices, type of market and type of return)
- c. 9% no

**17. Who processes the fiber:**

- a. 76% mills
- b. 53% self

**18. Reasons for being optimistic:**

- a. more individuals interested in local fibers
- b. excited about local fiber production
- c. lots of acreage
- d. love it
- e. lots of people interested in locally produced / unique products and combine farm visits with studios and with acquisition of a product
- f. positive feedback from others
- g. rare wool and sought after
- h. wool is great and fiber products the best

- i. fiber and fiber art has been very well received
- j. can sell all the down produced
- k. genetic improvement of fleece
- l. working with natural fibers
- m. sales increase each year
- n. very profitable if markets
- o. great learning experience for kids
- p. valued growth of textile industry
- q. future of alpaca fiber
- r. sell most of the yarn made
- s. always looking for new ideas
- t. wool spinners
- u. a product not available anywhere else
- v. people beginning to appreciate local
- w. local support and fiber networking
- x. raw fleece sells easy online
- y. sheep easy to manage

**19. Willing to receive updates from organization:**

- a. 91% yes
- b. 9% no

**20. Comments:**

There were great comments. Too many to list individually. We hope to share with you at a network meeting!

**Thank you!**

**NATURAL FIBER ALLIANCE**