

NEWS RELEASE

January 8, 2024

Note to Journalists: For immediate release**Sheep Association hosting ‘wool pelleting’ introduction webinar**

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. —The [Indiana Sheep Association](#) (ISA) is hosting a webinar February 8 about the practice of turning low-quality or excess sheep’s wool into growth-aiding pellets as a soil amendment for organic crops and gardens. The wool pelleting webinar is sponsored in part by the [Sheep and Wool Market Development Program](#) (IN S&W) and will introduce basics about the practice, science, marketing and process of wool pelleting.

Sheep producers are keenly aware of low prices and lack of purpose for wool that is in great excess or of low quality. Wool from high-quality wool-producing sheep breeds can often be moved in local or online craft markets or made into apparel. However, wool from meat breeds is often not suited for such projects and not worth making into a sellable product. The wool market has been further hindered by the shutdown of fiber-processing infrastructure in the country such as Mid-States Wool Growers Cooperative in Ohio, which shut down in 2023. Thus, the new and emerging market for wool pellets is now in order.

"Waste and wasted wool is a renewable, restorative and regenerative land resource," said Whitney Schlegel, co-organizer of the webinar and wool producer. "Rather than sitting in a barn or sinkhole, this waste wool can be pelleted and utilized to add nutrients such as nitrogen to the soil, increase soil aeration and water holding capacity, repel pests and reduce weed pressure."

The program will begin at 7 p.m. and feature Anna Hunter, a first-generation sheep farmer and wool mill owner of [Long Way Homestead](#) in Eastern Manitoba, Treaty One Territory in Canada. Hunter and her family started a small sheep farm with wool breed sheep in 2015. Three years later, she started a small-scale wool processing mill. Hunter is passionate about building community and connecting rural fiber farmers with urban consumers and crafters. A strong advocate for Canadian wool, Hunter strives to build a more resilient industry and works to facilitate connections among the wool value chain by pushing for effective infrastructure.

Hunter believes that regenerative agriculture and climate beneficial food and clothing is integral to moving forward for farmers, which is why she has pushed to establish the wool pellets market in Canada. Using a pelleting machine, Long Way Homestead uses their own waste wool and

... more ...

buys waste wool from surrounding farms to produce wool pellets which can act as mulch or an amendment for organic soil. Hunter has recently published her first book about wool sheep production in Canada titled “Sheep, Shepherd and Land”. The webinar will include a question-and-answer session and is expected to wrap up at 8:30 p.m. RSVP for the free program online at indianasheep.com. Questions about registration should be directed to executive@indianasheep.com. Registrants will have access to the recorded webinar post-event to watch at their leisure in case of schedule conflict.

IN S&W Background: The Indiana Sheep and Wool Market Development Program was created to support educational, promotional and research efforts involving sheep in Indiana. Funds for the council are collected from the sale of all sheep in Indiana - 0.5% of the net market price of each sheep sold. All funds collected by stockyards, sale managers, producers and others should be sent to the council’s business office at Purdue. More information is on the program’s website is <https://indianasheep.com/checkoff.php>.

Writer: Emma O’Brien, executive@indianasheep.com