



MENTOR – / – WOOL OUTREACH EVENT

(Please Specify Whether it is Mentor or Wool Outreach)

The Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers Association conducted the following events:

- 1) Conduct the Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival, including a fleece judging and sale
- 2) Conduct the Annual Kentucky Fiber Trail Bluegrass Yarn & Fiber Crawl
- 3) Provide wool fact cards to attendees of the Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival
- 4) Conduct a one day class on wool grading and processing at a local fiber mill
- 5) Provide a wool grading demonstration and wool fact cards at the Kentucky State Fair
- 6) Provide wool dyeing kits for over 700 Kentucky classrooms as part of the KY Ag Week program in September 2026

Event: Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival and Fleece judging & sale

(Please use separate form for each event and specify which event took place)

Date: May 16-17, 2026 KY Sheep and Fiber Festival Fleece Show & Sale

Total money spent for event: \$33,864.05 KY Sheep and Fiber Festival

(Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach money spent for event: \$33,864.05

Approximately how many producers, consumers or registrants were involved? 5000

What happened at this event?

The 2026 Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival, held May 16–17 at Masterson Station Park in Lexington, Kentucky, welcomed more than 4,500 visitors from across Kentucky and surrounding states. As the Commonwealth's premier celebration of sheep, wool, and fiber arts, the festival continues to connect consumers with Kentucky agriculture while showcasing the many products and opportunities created by our state's sheep industry. This number was just shy of our record breaking year last year- but attendance has doubled in the last 5 years and we are very excited by the growth and community engagement.

A highlight of the festival is the Kentucky Fleece Show and Sale, where visitors can view and purchase high-quality fleeces. Every fleece sold provides direct income to local producers while educating consumers about the value of Kentucky-grown wool and encouraging the use of locally sourced fiber, with 2026 generating over \$3000 in sales. The expanded display and sales

area continues to increase visibility for participating farms and creates meaningful connections between producers, fiber artists, and consumers. Purchasers of fleeces were provided wool cards from ASI.



The Shearing Demonstration remains one of the festival's most popular educational attractions. Throughout the weekend, attendees watch animals being shorn and learn about fiber production, animal husbandry, and the journey from raw fleece to finished textile products. These live demonstrations provide an engaging, hands-on educational experience for visitors of all ages. Participants were given wool fact cards from ASI.

The festival also serves as a marketplace for Kentucky farms, fiber artists, and agricultural small businesses, bringing together producers, artisans, educators, and consumers in one location. This year we had 74 vendors from across the country.

What was accomplished at this event to further (Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach? Although we do not ask vendors to provide specific financial reports, all vendors interviewed (approx 50) stated they had record sales this year. Workshop participants interviewed (approx 20) all stated the workshops were helpful and they intend to utilize their gained knowledge for future projects.

What perception did a participant walk away with? We had lots of people this year state they had not heard of the festival before so, advertising in local newspapers and creating a new facebook page seems to have hit a newer audience. With the record number of fleeces and good sales reported by vendors, the perception was a successful year despite having rain on Saturday which is our busiest day.

Attached to this form are copies of checks, receipts, and invoices to cover the financial output for this event.

MENTOR – / – WOOL OUTREACH EVENT

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The Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers Association conducted the following events:

Event: 5th Annual Kentucky Fiber Trail Bluegrass Yarn & Fiber Crawl

(Please use separate form for each event and specify which event took place)

Date: July 24–August 2, 2026

Total money spent for event: \$0

(Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach money spent for event: \$0

Approximately how many producers, consumers or registrants were involved?

What happened at this event?

Increased attendance continues to generate strong sales for vendors while introducing thousands of visitors to Kentucky-grown wool, yarn, meat, sheepskins, and handcrafted products. For many visitors, the Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival serves as the gateway to exploring Kentucky's growing fiber community. The excitement generated during the festival carries into the 5th Annual Kentucky Fiber Trail Bluegrass Yarn & Fiber Crawl, taking place July 24–August 2, 2026. The Crawl encourages fiber enthusiasts to travel throughout the Commonwealth, visiting participating yarn shops, fiber farms, mills, alpaca farms, and fiber-related businesses.

What was accomplished at this event to further (Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach?

From July 24 through August 2, fiber enthusiasts from near and far set out across the Bluegrass region to explore the people and places that make Kentucky's fiber community so special. What began as an invitation to visit local fiber businesses has grown into a much larger celebration—one that highlights Kentucky agriculture, small businesses, independent makers, and the creative people who keep the fiber arts thriving. We had our furthest venture west this year with Outnumbered Acres joining the crawl- we just love adding new stops along the way!



Punkin's Patch at Equinox Farm- Sara Dunham

The Crawl offered participants a chance to experience the fiber community in a way that simply shopping online or visiting a single store cannot. Each stop had its own personality and its own story to tell. Visitors encountered hand-dyed yarns, locally grown and processed fibers, handmade tools and accessories, fiber animals, demonstrations, special events, and makers eager to share their knowledge and enthusiasm. We saw crawlers from as far away as North Carolina and Missouri as well as a lot of locals finding shops and producers right in their back yards!

For many participants, the passport became a map for the adventure. Each stamp represented another destination explored and another connection made, while encouraging Crawlers to venture beyond their usual stops and discover something new. Participants traveled impressive distances to take part, with some making the Crawl an all-day excursion and others turning it into a multi-day road trip through the region.

The prizes added a little friendly competition to the experience. The grand prize drawing included yarns and notions, while additional prizes recognized those who shared their Crawl adventures, traveled the farthest, and collected the most stamps. We are especially grateful to the participating locations whose generous donations made these prizes possible. We celebrated the most passport entries that we've ever received this year!



Sarabee Designs and Fiber Farm

But the most rewarding part of the Crawl cannot be measured in stamps or miles.

It is found in the conversations between makers. It is the knitter discovering a new yarn she cannot wait to use, the spinner getting to see where local wool comes from, the beginning crocheter finding encouragement from an experienced fiber artist, and the farmer sharing the story behind the fleece. It is the unexpected stop that becomes a favorite destination and the new friendship that continues long after the passport has been turned in.

That sense of connection is what makes the Bluegrass Yarn and Fiber Crawl unique.



Creative Twist- Mt. Sterling, KY

The 5th Annual Crawl also provided an opportunity to shine a light on the incredible diversity within Kentucky's fiber industry. From farms raising the animals that produce our natural fibers to artisans transforming those fibers into beautiful, useful, and creative products, the Crawl offered participants a glimpse into the many hands and talents behind the fiber arts.

Five years in, the Crawl has become more than an annual event. It is a way to bring our community together, introduce new people to the world of fiber arts, and encourage all of us to slow down, explore our region, support small businesses, and appreciate the work that goes into every skein, fleece, project, and handmade creation. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who participated in this year's Crawl and to every business, farm, artisan, and volunteer who helped make it possible. Your enthusiasm is what continues to make this event grow.

Attached to this form are copies of checks, receipts, and invoices to cover the financial output for this event.

MENTOR – / – WOOL OUTREACH EVENT

(Please Specify Whether it is Mentor or Wool Outreach)

Event: Wool Grading and Processing at a local fiber mill

(Please use separate form for each event and specify which event took place)

Date: June 24, 2026

Total money spent for event: \$750

(Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach money spent for event: \$750

Approximately how many producers, consumers or registrants were involved? 20

What happened at this event? Program was designed for beginning fiber producers to help them identify the type of fiber they wanted to raise/had, best uses for the wool, how to improve their wool, and how to process it either themselves or through a mill.

What was accomplished at this event to further (Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach? All 20 producers stated they gained a better understanding of the scope of a fiber business, their own personal limitations in processing a quantity of fiber, and discovered a variety of added value products they could add to their businesses.

What perception did a participant walk away with? Like any other aspect of sheep production, fiber is not a quick and easy marketing avenue and it requires more thought and effort than expected.

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Event: Kentucky State Fair

(Please use separate form for each event and specify which event took place)

Date: August 20-30, 2026

Total money spent for event: \$0

(Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach money spent for event: \$0

Approximately how many producers, consumers or registrants were involved?

Visitors to the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office booth are range of producers and consumers, as well as a range of ages from elementary school groups to retired consumers looking to spin wool. We estimate that 5000 people engage with our booth per year.

What happened at this event?

A volunteer brings different kinds of fleeces and wool products to show the versatility of wool. People who engage with the booth receive wool fact cards from ASI.



What was accomplished at this event to further (Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach?

Visitors to the booth are directed to the Kentucky Sheep and Fiber website where they can learn more about local wool production and be connected to the American Sheep Industry website to get fact sheets about wool. While the fair is going on, we look to see if the amount of traffic on our website increases. Since the fair is still happening, we don't have that report yet.

What perception did a participant walk away with? Volunteers in the booth state the most common response is an amazement of what a raw fleece feels like compared to end products. Most show an interest in wanting to purchase a wool product.

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MENTOR – / – WOOL OUTREACH EVENT

(Please Specify Whether it is Mentor or Wool Outreach)

Event: Provide wool dying kits for over 700 Kentucky classrooms as part of the KY Ag Week program in September 2026

(Please use separate form for each event and specify which event took place)

Date: August 20-31st make kits; give to schools in September

Total money spent for event: \$573.50

(Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach money spent for event: \$573.50

Approximately how many producers, consumers or registrants were involved? Approximately 10,000 elementary school students across Kentucky



What happened at this event? KY Ag Week is an agriculture education program conducted by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Each year packets are provided to all district contacts within the state participating in Ag Week (over 200 this year) and “lab kits” are being provided to over 200 elementary school teachers to engage with an agriculture industry. This year the kits are wool dying experiments. Therefore, at least 10,000 elementary school students are going to dye wool in their classrooms. Kits are being completed this month for a September dispersal. Kits also include links to the ASI website so that the wool fact sheets can be utilized with the project.

In addition to the wool kits, a book contest for middle and high school students will allow them to write a book about sheep and goats. KSWPA will have the opportunity to judge the book contest and choose one to be published. In the spring, schools in all 120 counties in Kentucky will receive a copy of the book for their classrooms.

What was accomplished at this event to further (Mentor) or (Wool) Outreach? Since the program won't be completed until the end of September, we don't have the exact number of teachers the kits were distributed, but we will know the number, location and approx number of students who receive them. We do know that the project is going to be a huge hit because the district contacts have already shared the kits to some school and several teachers have contacted our office about getting wool to do the project on a larger scale.

What perception did a participant walk away with? We hope that teachers and students will walk away from the experiment with a deeper understanding of how wool is produced and the benefits it can give to their families.

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