

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL
Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

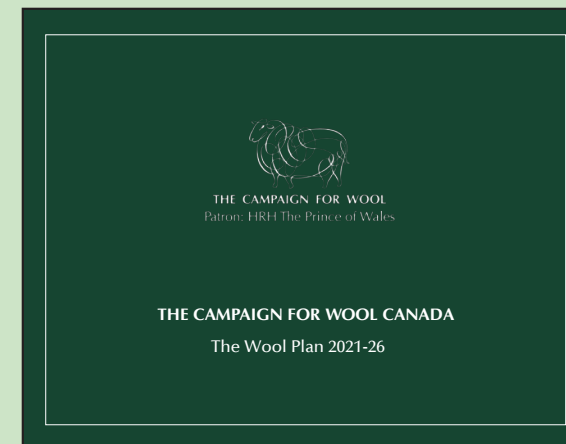
THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL CANADA Wool Report 2021



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STRATEGIC PLAN



One of the most important activities of 2021 was the creation of the Canadian Wool Plan, the very first 5-year strategic plan which was developed after extensive consultation from across Canada’s entire value chain as well as industry and subject matter experts from around the world. The plan identifies three major goals:

1. To rebrand and revalue Canadian wool
2. To advocate for the entire Canadian wool value chain
3. Giving Canadian wool a voice on the international stage

This plan will shape the work of The Campaign for Wool in Canada for the next five-years.

To learn more about the plan visit www.campaignforwool.ca

NEW CANADIAN WOOL COUNCIL LOGO



The Canadian Wool Council is proud to debut its new logo. Inspired by knitting yarn, the thirteen strands that make up the logo represent Canada’s thirteen provinces and territories. As an organization dedicated to amplifying the voice of Canadian wool on the world stage, we hope this new logo will serve as a symbolic starting point for a bigger and better future for our industry.

CANADIAN WOOL MONTH

Every October, the Canadian Wool industry under the leadership of The Campaign for Wool gets an opportunity to educate consumers about both the wonders of wool in general and in particular the incredible value-added potential of Canadian wool in value-added products. As an eminently sustainable, biodegradable, and uniquely elastic material with innate temperature, moisture regulating, and anti-microbial properties, Canadian wool offers a literal homegrown solution with applications in fashion, interior design, art, construction and more.

Campaign for Wool CAPSULE COLLECTION

ALL ABOUT WOOL



WATCH THIS SPACE!

We're thrilled to share that we've collaborated with three amazing Canadian brands on a limited-edition collection in support of the Campaign for Wool.

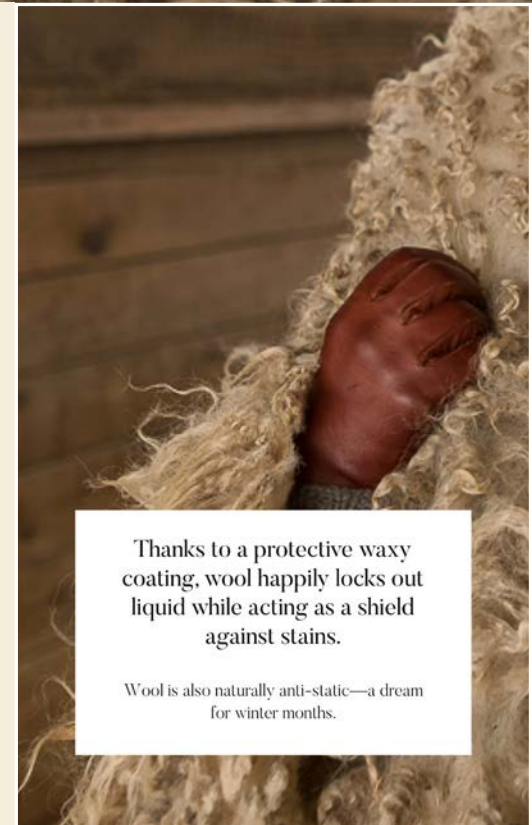
Can't wait to show you more!

Campaign for Wool x *ça va de soi*



A Montreal-based knitwear house, *ça va de soi* is known for its devotion to knitwear and all-natural fabrics.

This stylish selection of throws is made from yarns that meet the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) and is helping to raise awareness about the sustainable, renewable, and biodegradable qualities of this natural material.



Thanks to a protective waxy coating, wool happily locks out liquid while acting as a shield against stains.

Wool is also naturally anti-static—a dream for winter months.



MATERIAL

Sustainable Facts

#HoltsSustainability

For the Campaign for Wool, LINE and *ça va de soi* use wool that meets the **Responsible Wool Standard (RWS)**, meaning the farms have a progressive approach to managing their land and practice holistic respect for animal welfare.

Meanwhile, SMYTHE uses wool from **small, family-run farms**.



MATERIAL

Sustainable Facts

#HoltsSustainability

To toast the launch of The Campaign for Wool capsule collection with SMYTHE, LINE, and *ça va de soi*, we're celebrating all the reasons why we love, love, love wool!

100 MILE BLAZER & CAPSULE COLLECTION

The Campaign for Wool's third annual Holt Renfrew capsule collection brought together leading Canadian designers LINE, SMYTHE and ça va de soi, including for the first-time items made of Canadian wool in addition to fully traceable British and Italian yarns. The centrepiece of the collection is the 100 Mile Blazer by SMYTHE. This limited-edition piece was produced from Canadian wool grown, shorn, scoured, combed, spun, dyed, woven, cut and sewn within 100 miles of the City of Toronto. The beautiful silhouette, soft handle and the resulting media attention and consumer interest, resulted in the piece selling out in record time at Holt Renfrew and Holt Renfrew Ogilvy locations in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. A proud example of the potential of Canadian wool and the capabilities of the Canadians who work with it. In fact, this project was the largest order that most of our artisan partners had ever received.

Finally, the success of this collection will give back to Canada's wool industry with Holt Renfrew donating a portion of collection sales to reinvest into Canadian wool innovation.



SMYTHE
T Wool Three-
Button Blazer In
Herringbone Print

LINE
Recycled Wool
Cable Knit
Turtleneck
Sweater

SMYTHE
Wool And Alpaca
Bellows Pocket
Army Jacket In
Herringbone Print

LINE
Recycled Wool
Ribbed Knit
Mockneck Sweater

ÇA VA DE SOI
Merino Wool
Knitted Throw



HOLT RENFREW

LINE

SMYTHE

OGILVY
depuis 1866

ça va de soi



“WOOL ON WOOL” – FINE ART PROJECT



The Campaign for Wool Canada commissioned renowned Canadian artist T.M. Glass to produce a very special piece of art featuring Canadian sheep at the focal point. The work is printed with archival pigments on a rare wool paper made by Italian mill Gruppo Cordenons. The story of the piece begins with the visit of a group of Shetland sheep to the artist's garden.

The sheep came from North America's original Shetland flock who were imported to Canada by the current Shepherdess' father-in-law. The artist photographed the visiting sheep and then went to work transforming the image in her Toronto studio.

“In approaching this piece, my intent was to communicate the beauty of the sheep and its wool both visually and tactilely” said Glass, when asked about her work.

“The choice to print on wool paper was not made out of novelty; rather, I think it establishes the physical presence of the subject of the photograph, creating a sense that the sheep is within arm's reach of the viewer.” The final pieces are available for sale at sykesainley.ca with 100% of the proceeds going to support the work of The Canadian Wool Council.



WOOL HOUSE PROJECT

As part of a total renovation of their home, the Marcinkowski family of Toronto chose 100% wool insulation from a Global Campaign for Wool partner, as a sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative to the many toxic and hazardous insulation products on the market. Working with the Campaign in Canada, interior designer Dimitri Chris and partners at Creative Matters, they also sought to create an “inside-out” wool story commissioning 100% Canadian wool wallcoverings made from undyed local fibre, to

decorate their interiors, providing the natural beauty, air cleaning and sound absorption properties that wool is known for. The Wool House project provided a great opportunity to share a story about both the decorative and health advantages of filling a home with wool while creating a new high value added application for Canadian wool. Canadian wool wallcoverings are available through Creative Matters (creativemattersinc.com) with a portion of sales benefiting future Canadian wool innovations.



SYKES & AINLEY POP-UP

Towards the end of October, we had the fantastic opportunity to collaborate with our trading partners, Sykes & Ainley Fine Woollens, to hold a pop-up shop in historic Glen Williams, Ontario. The Sykes & Ainley brand is a revival of a heritage Ontario wool mill established in Glen Williams in 1889 and a key player in the village's history including the construction of many local buildings that survive to this day. The modern Sykes & Ainley is a purveyor of luxury woollen goods,

particularly scarves, blankets and accessories from Canada, England, Scotland, South Africa, and the United States. Held over two days, the historic Town Hall on Prince Street was transformed with a wool rug from Vancouver-based Nature's Carpet, Sarah Richardson's Harris Tweed Armchair from Wool Month 2020 and most strikingly, one-of-a-kind woven wool banners created by A.W. Hainsworth and Sons, the makers of the Hudson's Bay Blanket. www.sykes-ainley.ca



UK TRADE MISSION

In late September, CEO Matthew J. Rowe led a delegation of Canadian wool industry members to the UK on a trade and research tour, visiting with industry representatives and touring mills in England and Scotland. Stops including all levels of wool processing and goods manufacturing, from the British Wool depots where raw fleeces are collected, graded and auctioned, to a Bradford scouring plant that could process Canada's annual clip in a week. Mill visits saw HBC blankets in production at AW Hainsworth and Chanel boucle cloth at Abraham Moon. In addition to meetings and mills, the group was welcomed to the UK with activities in London which included the

opportunity to join the Worshipful Company of Woolmen and the Lord Mayor of the City of London to walk sheep across the Thames as part of their annual Sheep Walk. Finally, those travelling to Scotland went to one of the world's premier mills at Johnstons of Elgin (who we learned made their first export sale to Canada during the War of 1812). The last UK stop was the Outer Hebrides and the home of Harris Tweed, a cloth made using coarse wool similar to Canada's and a production environment that allows for private mills, independent weavers, a collective trademark, and an Authority established by Act of Parliament.



CREATIVE MATTERS DESIGN WORKSHOPS

At the Campaign for Wool, we've made it a priority to reach design professionals with our messages. As part of Wool Month 2021 we partnered with our friends at Creative Matters Inc. and the Interior Design Show of Toronto to host a week of workshops teaching beginner needle felting. During the workshop, participants (drawn from across the design community) had the opportunity to hear from professional needle felters, learn about the history of the art as well as The Campaign's recent wallcovering project, before needle felting their own custom creation in 100% Canadian wool. A great opportunity to educate the design community on the wonders of wool while teaching new artistic skills. We plan to repeat and expand the offering in 2022.

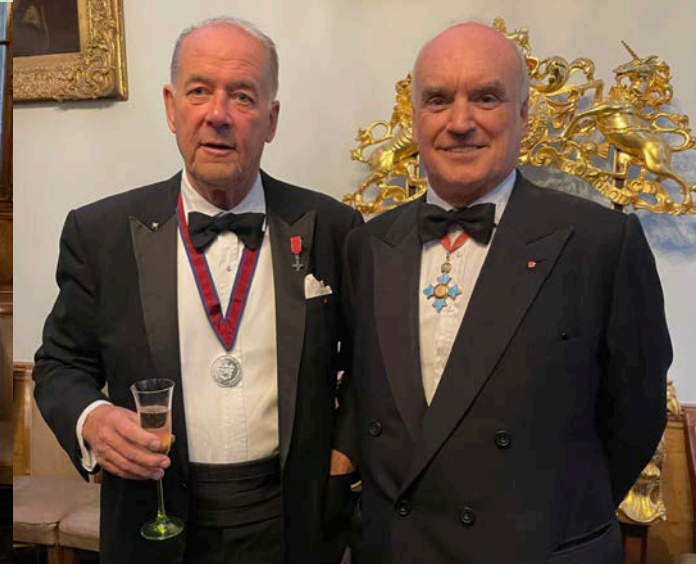






THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF WOOLMEN

The Worshipful Company of Woolmen, founded circa 1180, is one of the oldest and most prestigious of the City of London's Livery Companies, new partners with the Campaign for Wool and the Canadian Wool Council and the hosts for the Canadian delegation in London. Advocating for the wool industry for eight centuries, The Worshipful Company brings together individuals from across the wool industry and beyond, and acts as an important conduit for discussion as well as directly supporting employment and innovation in the wool sector. One of the highlights of the visit (other than getting to walk sheep across the Thames!), was CEO Matthew J. Rowe being sworn in as a Woolman and full Liveryman of the Company at a special dinner hosted by the Master, Sir David Wootton at Waterman's Hall in The City of London.



IWTO VISIT & CANADIAN APPOINTMENTS

As part of our advocacy for Canadian wool, The Campaign is proud to have secured Canada's first ever seat at the International Wool Textile Organization (IWTO), the body representing the interests of the global wool industry across 26 member nations. In celebration of this honour, we led a small group to Brussels in October, home of the IWTO, to formally "take up our seat". The visit provided the opportunity to learn more about the IWTO's work including the most pressing issues facing the global wool trade and how Canada can contribute its voice, while identifying opportunities and partnerships to add value to the Canadian clip. This includes providing Canadian representatives on the organization's working groups including sustainable practices, product wellness, animal welfare, biosecurity and market intelligence.

In an early win for the Canadian delegation, our great friend and partner, Carole Sebert, co-founder of Creative Matters Inc. has been nominated the inaugural chair of the IWTO's new working group for Interior Design, a key stream for Canadian wool. Carole is a passionate textile designer with more than 30 years in the industry and we are particularly excited to see how she lends her expertise to this new endeavour.



SHEARING DAY AT CHASSAGNE FARM

In May 2021, we had the pleasure to join our friends at Chassagne Farm in Puslinch, Ontario, home of North America's first flock of Shetland sheep, for their annual shearing day celebration. Joined by our creative partners at Holt Renfrew, LINE, and Creative Matters Inc., this was not only a great opportunity to learn about animal welfare while watching the famed Don Metheral work, but also a chance to get to know the sheep and the fleeces that would go on to play a starring role in both our Wool House Interiors and "Wool on Wool" fine art projects.



NATIONAL KNIT-ALONG



Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty

The Campaign For Wool - Canada, in conjunction with our new friends at the Canadian Guild Of Knitters created the first Wool Month National Knit-Along for October 2021, engaging knitters from across Canada. For the inaugural Knit-Along, we challenged the guild's membership to create toques (a classic Canadian pattern) made from 100% Canadian wool, with the resulting hats to be donated to those in need of some warm wool for this winter.

The Office of The Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, selected two local Saskatchewan charities for the toques, The North Central Family Centre (NCFC) of Regina and EGADZ of Saskatoon as beneficiaries, with His Honour distributing the hats personally to families ahead of the Christmas holidays. As a show of thanks to our kind knitters, each hat donated, awarded its creator a ticket in our prize raffle, featuring wonderful prizes from our partners at Sykes & Ainley Fine Woollens and Briggs and Little Woolen Mills.

SUSTAINABLE MARKETS INITIATIVE



As a signatory member for our Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales's Sustainable Markets Initiative, The Canadian Wool Council and the Campaign for Wool in Canada are glad to commit our voice to the movement to start a "sustainability revolution" across global markets. Cooperation with the private sector is essential to achieve emissions targets and as advocates for nature's most sustainable fibre we see an important role for wool and other natural fibres in meeting the Initiative's goals.



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



NOBLE PURSUIT Montreal-based knitwear label Ça Va de Soi is the newest addition to the all-Canadian designer lineup in the third collaboration between Holt Renfrew and The Canadian Wool Council. Prince Charles (yes, you read that correctly) brought the initiative to the Great North seven years ago to raise global awareness about the environmental benefits of the natural textile. Canadian favourites Line and Smythe are back with all-wool pieces including a sweater and a blazer, and there's a throw from the aforementioned Quebec brand. Ten per cent of all full-price sales will go toward building a sustainable wool industry in Canada, so consider this your royal summons to shop.



ARTS & PURSUITS
FROM SHEEP TO CHIC
THE JOURNEY OF THE 100 MILE BLAZER
P4



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2021 | GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

TRAVEL
Fully vaccinated and ready to travel? Here's what you need to consider ■ P5

DESIGN
Why florists are scrambling to find blooms (and you're paying the price) ■ P7

FILM
At VIFF, Indigenous filmmakers are turning to the power of language ■ P9

From farm to closet

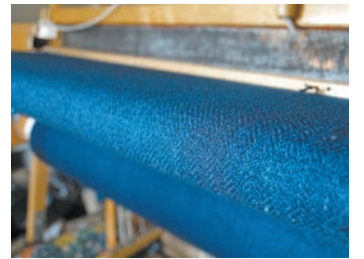
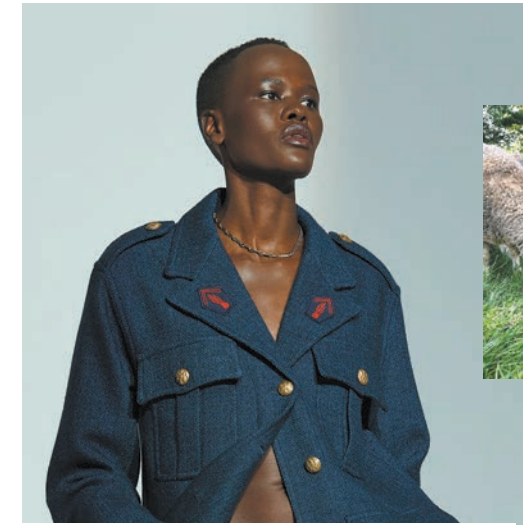
This fall, fashion label Smythe will be selling a 100-mile jacket. **Nathalie Atkinson** traces its creative journey ■ P4

MEDIA RESULTS

Total Earned Impressions

187,000,000

THE GLOBE AND MAIL



Smythe's 100-mile jacket, left, originated on the property of fibre farmer and breeder Allison Brown, with her unique purebred-cross flock, top. The jacket's rich blue hue, above, was dyed in Toronto and is inspired by traditional Japanese indigo.

SHEEP TO SHOP

The creative process for Smythe's 100-mile jacket reveals the community and dedication needed to keep fashion local, **Nathalie Atkinson** writes

Food isn't the only 100-mile commodity. Toronto designer Smythe is applying the concept to its 100 Mile Blazer, part of Holt Renfrew's exclusive Canadian designer capsule collection with the Campaign for Wool. The global endeavour, initiated by its patron, the Prince of Wales, aims to raise awareness about wool's renewable and biodegradable benefits. (Also featured in the collection are knits from Line and ça va de soi.) As the name suggests, the \$750 jacket is made from wool—raised, milled, dyed and woven within 100 miles of the brand's Toronto studio.

Smythe has also crafted jackets for the campaign using textiles from the heritage U.K. woollen mill Abraham Moon, but the 100-mile jacket marks the first time the cloth is intentionally hyper-local. It's a garment as showcase, both educating consumers on the immediate benefits of choosing wool (an ideal fabric as temperatures cool), and in the long term, helping to revitalize the country's domestic wool industry by creating opportunities for Canadian artisans—in this case, the Upper Canada Fibreshed.

The Campaign for Wool's annual collaborations are designed to get people talking about wool and raise awareness of how many more possibilities there are for the country's natural resource, chief executive Matthew Rowe says. "That's why in recent years we started creating these much more detailed projects that are transforming Canadian wool," he says.

The 100 Mile Blazer's farm-to-closet journey isn't exactly linear; this small-batch production is more of a zigzag, among a community of artisans who consult one another and share their expertise every step of the way.

INDIGO INSPIRATION

For Smythe's co-designers Andrea Lenczner and Christie Smythe, inspiration began with a swatch of indigo in fabric samples from Toronto-based weaver Deborah Livingston-Lowe, who also managed the 100-mile project along with members of the Upper Canada Fibreshed network. "We loved the richness of that blue," Smythe says of the different dye lots in the

warp and weft yarn that give it dimension. "It reminded us of the vintage shopping we do in Paris and all the different hues of blues in old surplus-y garments. The density of the wool also had a military feel."

"It didn't speak to a structured blazer," Lenczner says of the resulting style's slouchy silhouette, "and we try to do what a fabric wants to do." The jacket has elements of Smythe's distinctive DNA, including bellows pockets, stamped brass buttons and a men's wear feel, plus the military nod with red chevron insignia on the lapel by Toronto embroidery specialist Stitchy Lizard.

A SPIRITED FLOCK

Fibre farmer and breeder Allison Brown has raised sheep and angora goats at Pine Hollow Farm near Norwood, Ont., since 1988. The fleece from her unique purebred-cross flock is called Norbouillet, a portmanteau of the farm's location and their breed makeup of Rambouillet sheep, a cousin of the Merino, crossed with Romney, a breed originating in England, and a third that remains secret. "They're rangy sheep; they like to go on pasture and graze," Brown says. "What they really like are Manitoba maple and grape vine leaves! They'll eat alfalfa, white clover and grasses. And we have some wild apple trees that I have to keep them away from." The flock was shorn in April, before lambing, but their wool and its innate characteristics reflect their experience and care year-round. "It's a nice strong fibre, the lustre is lovely, the sheep are happy."

PICK AND CHOOSE

Once shorn, but before leaving the farm for the mill, any fleece that's coarser, soiled or contains too much vegetable debris matter, usually from the sheep's belly and rump, gets "skirted," or separated out and used for a different purpose. "I'm not just picking whole fleeces, I might take half a fleece," Brown says of her sorting and selection of the 90 pounds of raw Norbouillet wool she supplied to Donna Hancock at Wellington Fibres. (Annually, an adult ewe in her flock of 40 produces between nine and 12 pounds of fleece, yearlings about

half that.) Brown is a hand-spinner herself and that informs the fineness, uniformity and density she aims for when breeding her modified closed herd; she also keeps meticulous records to track fleece characteristics and yield. Each member of the flock is also named and numbered, which means Brown can trace the 100-mile jacket back to its specific animal. For this season's must-have sustainable jacket, you can thank Elma, Zitera, Zera, XPansy, Deidre, Devon, CaDanielle, Flole-Eden, Cassie, Zeetha and Cassandra.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

Early in the project Livingston-Lowe and spinner Hancock discussed optimal yarn combinations, given how the finished cloth needed to perform for Smythe's design. The fine hand and drape of premium cloth is why Livingston-Lowe chose to use Brown's Norbouillet fleece—for its strength and density as well as its "beautiful gloss" aesthetic. They settled on 70-per-cent Norbouillet, with the remaining composition being alpaca from the herd at Old Mill Alpaca farm in Colborne, Ont. "Blending in another fibre is going to create a bit of a network and tie down everything after it's all finished," the weaver says. "Wool is the workhorse in that it retains its structure, and the alpaca is an underlying support." The finished yarn is two-ply in the weft, single in the warp, but spun so they're essentially the same weight.

SPINNING A TALE

The fleece eventually woven into

the 100-mile jacket was mill spun at Hancock's Wellington Fibres in Elora, Ont. Upon arrival, the fleece is washed to remove its natural grease, aka lanolin, and any grime. A washable lubricant similar to a conditioner is applied that allows the wool to pass over rollers without damage, and it's given a rest overnight. Next, it's picked, carded (worked through a system of wire rollers that straightens and aligns the fibres and removes any remaining vegetable matter), and fed into a pin drafter to further align the fibres. Then it's spun and plied into yarn. "When we're spinning it we have to decide how much twist to put in, knowing what the person is going to do with it," Hancock says of the spiral rotation that binds yarns together in a continuous strand. "It's more of an art than a science." Hancock points out that spinning was the first thing industrialized in the Industrial Revolution: "The whole process and the equipment is basically the same as it was early on—it's just modernized a little bit. From the day we start washing to the day that we take that skein off, it's five days. Anything that's worthwhile takes time," she says.

COLOUR ME BEAUTIFUL

The jacket's rich blue recalls traditional Japanese indigo, the hue that captured Smythe's imagination. To achieve this effect, Toronto artist Liam Blackburn of Iron Cauldron Colour Works worked closely on sampling wool with Livingston-Lowe and had the freedom to experiment. Tests involved dyeing just a few grams at a time, to get a sense of colour tones on natural cream-coloured Norbouillet yarn. "It has a certain degree of natural lustre, which is uncommon for wool," he says. "I knew going in if I ended up using just one single dye at a certain percentage, it would look really flat," Blackburn explains of the decision that the finished cloth would be a two-tone weave, with one shade of blue in the weft and another darker shade in the warp.

TO DYE FOR

When spun yarn arrives from the mill, Blackburn's first step is to remove the spinning oils, "which involves cooking it for about an

hour in a soap solution. Then it gets rinsed. Then I mix up my dye recipe and put that all together in one of the vats and that cooks for about two hours," he says, of the time each batch spends in 60-litre brewing pots heated to 80 C. This is the largest single project Blackburn has done to date—22 lots in total.

Although he and Livingston-Lowe staggered their work to compress the timeline, the more than 80 pounds of yarn still represents a solid month of his labour. "I would dye enough warp for Deborah to put onto her loom and then I'd dye weft and give that to her, and while she was weaving I'd be doing the next," he says of the regular delivery—usually made in person, since they work just blocks away from one another. All while co-ordinating with the mill to receive yarn as it was ready for the dye stage. "There's a lot of back and forth in this sort of supply chain, because it is small it has the opportunity to have more of a reciprocal movement," Blackburn says.

DREAM WEAVER

On a good day, Livingston-Lowe can produce six yards of the herringbone tweed cloth on the Canadian-made Leclerc loom in her attic studio. Based on how many times she stepped on the loom treads, by her calculations she put in the equivalent of walking 66 kilometres making Smythe's textile. She had to weave close to 95 metres to make the required 80, because the cloth retracts and shrinks after it comes off the loom. "It's also very stiff," she says. "You wash it a couple times to soften it up, and press it." The final yardage was delivered to Smythe's studio in early July.

The herringbone tweed is a classic textile that Livingston-Lowe, who's been a fibre artist for more than 30 years, has developed over time through her research into men's historic suiting fabrics. "I'm doing something here that's rooted in tradition," she says, "but I want it to be fresh and new, something that had softness to it. So, it's going to look tweedy but when you come in close and touch it it's going to feel like cashmere."

Special to The Globe and Mail

An age-old fabric faces a reckoning

The pandemic and fast fashion have slashed wool demand, caused prices to plummet

PAUL WALDIE
EUROPE CORRESPONDENT
LONDON

The small flock of sheep scampered quickly across London's Southwark Bridge, driven forward by a group of cheerful men and women in long robes and floppy hats. Every now and then, the shepherds stopped to round up an errant ewe or to wave at curious onlookers who lined the bridge to watch.

Sunday's unusual procession — known as the Sheep Drive — was a celebration of London's 800-year history in the wool trade and an annual homage to the historic right of shepherds to herd their flocks through the city to market. It was also an occasion to showcase the industry, both in Britain and abroad, and rekindle interest in this age-old fabric.

The wool business needs all the help it can get. The pandemic and the growing popularity of inexpensive fast fashion have slashed wool demand and driven prices so low that sheep farmers in many countries, including Canada, have opted to throw their wool away or burn it.

"The wool market, to be blunt, has been a bit of a wreck globally," said Eric Bjergso, general manager of the Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Ltd., which markets nearly all of the wool produced by Canada's 9,400 sheep farmers. Mr. Bjergso said the price for wool has fallen by 50 per cent in the past three years and the CCWG has been forced to accept wool largely on consignment. "I've never seen anything like this before and I've been doing this now for 45 years."

Canada is a marginal player in the global wool market and most of our fleece is exported to places such as China, the United States and the Czech Republic. But Canada once had a thriving wool and textile sector.

Back in the 1800s, Canadian wool mills helped clothe soldiers during the American Civil War and, in the early 1900s, there were roughly 300 mills across the



People watch the Sheep Drive on Southwark Bridge in London on Sunday. The procession is a celebration of London's 800-year history in the wool trade and an homage to the right of shepherds to herd their flocks to market. BELINDA JIAO/SOPA IMAGES/LIGHTROCKET VIA GETTY IMAGES

country employing as many as 12,000 people. The advent of synthetic fabrics after the Second World War slowly decimated much of the industry and today there are just three large mills left.

Nowadays, virtually all Canadian sheep farmers concentrate on producing meat, and wool is often considered a nuisance. Most farmers rarely earn enough from wool to cover the cost of shearing, which they have to do at least once a year to maintain the animals' health.

There are few incentives to clean and care for wool, which lowers the quality. Canadian wool typically contains about three times as much vegetative matter, essentially sticks and other debris, compared with wool from Australia or New Zealand. That makes our fleece harder to process and less attractive for mill operators.

Canadian wool is also coarse and ill suited for high-end prod-

ucts such as expensive sweaters and cardigans. Wool fibre is measured in microns — one-thousandth of a millimetre — and fine wools such as merino are between 11 and 25 microns. Canadian wool is around 30 microns, which is more suitable for rugs and overcoats.

Helen Knibb, a sheep farmer outside Peterborough, Ont., who also studies the industry, said it was tragic that Canadian farmers had been forced to throw away wool. "I actually can't think of another agricultural commodity that is so underrated," said Ms. Knibb, who is completing a doctorate on the socio-economic history of wool in Canada.

She's convinced that a revival is possible and that the tide will slowly turn in favour of wool. She points to the increasing consumer demand for ecofriendly products, the resurgence in knitting and the rise of craft yarn makers, wool festivals and fashion houses seeking more natural

materials. "I think most people have no idea how extraordinary wool is as a fibre," Ms. Knibb said.

Researchers have also started finding new uses for wool.

There are wool-based products for home insulation, oil-spill cleanups, fire proofing, face masks, fertilizer pellets and beehive covers. British retailer John Lewis recently announced a line of wool-stuffed mattresses and several pharmaceutical companies have started using wool liners to insulate drug packaging.

There's even talk of creating a Canadian wool trademark. "The sector in Canada has languished for a few decades and so we need to rebrand and revalue Canadian wool," said Matthew Rowe, who heads the Campaign for Wool Canada, which is working on a national brand. Mr. Rowe was part of a Canadian delegation at the Sheep Drive, the first time Canada has been represented at the event. He's also brought Canada into the International Wool

Textile Organisation, a global body that sets standards for the trade.

One of the biggest challenges in Canada is a lack of scouring and carding plants, which clean and straighten fleece. Mr. Rowe said new investment will come slowly but in the meantime the Campaign for Wool is trying to sign up British mills to process Canadian fleece.

Romy Schill is among the sheep farmers who have embraced the possibilities of wool. Ms. Schill and her husband, Ryan, manage around 800 ewes on their farm in Southern Ontario. The couple recently started a yarn-making business called Revolution Wool and they also make wool blankets and pillows. Whatever they can't use ends up as bedding for farm animals.

"It has become a serious part of the farm business now, which is exciting," Ms. Schill said. "I would have never expected that a few years ago."

TORONTO STAR

HOMEFINDER.CA

BUY, SELL, IMPROVE, RENT — WITH CONFIDENCE

> HOW WE LIVE

Family knits wool into home redesign

Sheep fibre from an Ontario flock will be used in wall coverings and wool insulation will provide warmth and mould-resistance to a Midtown Toronto residence

CAROLA VYHNAK
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Call it the sheep of things to come: Wool from a flock in Puslinch Twp., in south-central Ont., will soon adorn the interior of a Toronto home in custom-designed wall coverings described as "shockingly beautiful."

Other sheep are providing fibre for mattresses, furnishings and filling the walls in Jacob and Paulina Marcinkowski's 2-1/2-storey house that's now in the throes of a major renovation.

The couple — parents to Henry, three, and Philip, six months — were already fleece fans from winters spent in cosy pyjamas, sweaters and socks.

"It's a perfect match," says Jacob, noting they're using other natural materials like stone, brick and wood floors in their Midtown home. "We appreciate its versatility, longevity and natural moisture-wicking ability."

The soft fibre, which is gaining ground in the construction industry in Europe and Australia, is attracting more interest here, too, according to Matthew Rowe, CEO of Canada's Campaign for Wool, a global initiative involving 13 countries.

October has been designated Canadian Wool Month in celebration of its versatility in fashion, art and interior design.

With its natural moisture and nitrogen content, mould resistance, fire-retardant properties and ability to regulate indoor temperatures, the semi-permeable material is ideal for insulating, Rowe says. (Using wool for home insulation, however, is still in the early stages in Canada and requires approval to conform to building code.)

The all-natural, renewable and sustainable fibre has many other uses, including rugs, wall coverings, drapery, bedding, mattresses, pillows and upholstery.

Sheep are shorn once a year in spring, with a



GIOVANNI CAPIRIOTTI FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Jacob and Paulina Marcinkowski, with sons Henry, left, and Philip, in their Toronto home that's being rebuilt to include wool insulation plus woollen wall coverings, furnishings and bedding.



ANDY SILLETT

Matthew Rowe (blue suit), CEO of Canada's Campaign for Wool, at last Sunday's sheep drive on London's Southwark Bridge.



ANDREW REIMER

Part of the flock at Chassange Farm in Puslinch, Ont., this Shetland sheep belongs to a breed that grows 16 shades of fleece.

single critter providing about 6-1/2 pounds of wool — enough to cover a large sofa.

Researchers have found it provides "faster, deeper, better sleep" when used in bedding, according to Rowe, making counting sheep a

thing of the past.

And forget that "itchy sweater from Aunt Mavis," he urges.

WOOL continued on H4

Home's insulation and wall coverings will be toxin-free

WOOL from HI

A throw made from superfine wool, such as merino, is cuddly and "buttery soft."

Ecosystems like it, as well. Butterflies, bees and flowers abound in a properly managed, self-regenerating sheep pastures, says the dyed-in-the-wool champion of the fuzzy ruminants. And he notes that indoor environment benefit, with no chemicals to off-gas and no microplastics to shed.

Jacob Marcinkowski appreciates the fact that there's "nothing toxic" in wool. Their 2,500-square-foot house, bought 15 years ago, required a bottom-to-top rebuild because of its "very mouldy basement" and rotting roof. They'll be moving back in when it's completed in a few months.

The homeowners are using natural wool as additional insulation over mineral wool because of the health benefits, as well as its sound and comfort qualities.

One of the main-floor high-lights will be the decorative and



ANA CUNNINGHAM CREATIVE MATTERS

Shetland sheep's wool in light and dark hues was used to create a "dreamy northern landscape," says Carol Sebert, of Creative Matters, which is making soft wall coverings for the Marcinkowski family's home.

sound-absorbent soft wall coverings, made of Shetland wool from Chassagne Farm in Puslinch, south of Guelph. The Shetland sheep breed comes in 16 colours, including copper, brown and black.

Rowe notes that Chassagne Farm's sheep are descendants of the original Shetland flock in Canada, imported from Scotland in the 1960s.

Cream and grey hues were combined in a "dreamy northern landscape" design by Dimitri Chris, interior designer for the house, explains Carol Sebert, co-owner of Toronto firm Creative Matters, where the panels of soft needle felting are being made.

Glued on like wallpaper, "it feels really nice on your hand," she says. "It has a really special look and it's shockingly beautiful."

Sebert, whose company specializes in custom-made carpets, rugs and wall coverings, calls resilient, flexible wool "the best fibre in the world" to work

Wool shows versatile side around the house

CAROLA VYHNAK
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Sheep's wool is used in a variety of residential products, big and small. Here are a few:

► **Blankets:** Sykes & Ainley Woollens in Glen Williams, Ont. has brought the African Basso blanket — featured in the movie "Black Panther" — to Canada. The tribal blanket worn by the people of Lesotho is beloved for its versatility and history. Sykes & Ainley sell the reversible, cosy wraps and throws for \$295.

Topsy Farms on Amherst Island, near Kingston, Ont. uses unbleached Canadian wool to make blankets in a variety of sizes and patterns, starting at \$140.

► **Bedding:** Comforters, pillows, mattress protectors and top-pers are all available in wool, a hypoallergenic material that's been proven to improve sleep, according to global retailer Woolroom. Comforters start at \$247, pillows at \$136, and protectors at \$250.

► **Dryer balls:** These fuzzy orbs are a natural, non-scented alternative to dryer sheets. Billed as the original dryer ball,



ULAT starts at \$30 for a set of three.

► **Dust mop:** Natural lanolin in wool picks up dust without needing chemicals or water. Lehman's sells a swivel dust mop with a removable head for washing for \$45.95 (U.S.).

► **Insulation:** Made from 75 per cent sheep's wool and 25 per cent recycled polyester, Thermafleece CosyWool slabs are an alternative product for insulating walls and roofs. Available in different R-factors and sizes, they're sold by Eco Building Resource, starting at \$75 for a two-inch-thick, 48-square-foot roll. Note: the Canadian Building Code requires an engineer's or architect's approval to use wool insulation.

Hand-knotted wool rugs are seen as long-term investments. This bespoke piece is sold by Sykes & Ainley Woollens for \$6,000.



VALERIE WILCOX

with. For the Marcinkowskis, who work in development, design and construction through their company ENG group inc., it's also a superior material to live with.

They sleep on wool mattresses and bedding, and are considering wool drapes, rugs and up-

holstered furniture for their new home.

Natural wool products tend to cost more than their non-sustainable, artificial counterparts, with area rugs running into the thousands. But as a long-term investment, all's wool that ends wool.



In Wake of Climate Summit, Consumers Ask What They Can Do? Answer: Go For Wool

TORONTO, Nov. 10, 2021 /CNW/ - While the COP26 climate summit is coming to a close, the issues of cutting carbon emissions, addressing climate change, and embracing greener, more sustainable materials will continue to be of critical importance and interest. Now more than ever, sustainability will be top of mind for consumers as they evaluate the products they bring into their homes and assess their carbon footprint. Luckily for the environmentally conscious, there's an easy, comfortable way to contribute to a greener planet: choosing more wool.



"Wool is the most sustainable of all of the natural fibres. By choosing wool you are not only choosing a wonderful multi-property garment or piece of furnishing but something that is good for the planet," said Matthew J. Rowe, CEO of Canada's Campaign for Wool.

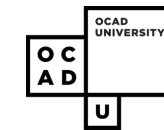
Many people don't appreciate that wool has a number of qualities that make it perfect for a sustainable economy. Wool is a unique fibre that is environmentally friendly on a number of levels:

- **Renewable and sustainable:** wool is an all-natural fibre that is harvested annually during the shearing season at no harm or inconvenience to the sheep.
- **Wool is easy to recycle:** a virtue highlighted by Holt Renfrew's recent capsule collection showcasing the best in sustainable wool fashion by notable Canadian designers such as LINE, often patronized by young royals and Hollywood celebrities.
- **Wool is a remarkable insulating fibre and is now being used as insulation in eco-friendly homes.** As a semi-permeable material, wool can absorb and transfer humidity from hotter environments and release it in colder ones, creating a comfortable medium whenever your home's temperature fluctuates.
- **Wool is a Sound Suppressant -** Wool's unique molecular shape reduces airborne sound, surface noise and sound transmission.
- **Mold Resistant and Fire Retardant -** As wool maintains a natural moisture and nitrogen content, it is actually self-extinguishing below temperatures of 560 degrees Celsius. Bonus: as a keratin, it's also inherently resistant to mold!
- **A Natural Temperature Regulator -** A repellent exterior and absorbent interior work together to insulate during periods of high humidity. This is a primary reason for its use in winter clothing but it is also a miracle summer fibre as well.

With climate change being a growing issue, the environmental properties of wool make it the ideal fibre for the future.

The Campaign for Wool is an international program launched and guided by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to educate the world on the myriad uses of wool. The Campaign invites collaboration across different sectors such as fashion, retailers, construction and much more to showcase the fantastic properties wool offers to consumers. The Canadian campaign was first introduced in 2014 to raise awareness and revitalize Canada's wool industry.

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