

# Top Fleeces Result From Novice's Research

DILLSBURG (Dauphin Co.)— Some might suggest that Jo-Anne Trygg of Dillsburg had beginner's luck when the fleece she entered at the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival placed first of 401 fleeces judged.

Although it is unusual to win top honors the first time entering prestigious shows — especially since she owns only three sheep — Trygg's win was not haphazard luck.

The Dillsburg woman thoroughly researched criteria for raising sheep with top quality wool before she purchased her first sheep.

Trygg said that became interested in sheep after deciding that some animals would make a good addition to the 15 acres that she and her husband Jim own.

"Sheep are about as large an animal as I could comfortably handle. And I thought I could find a market for the fleeces with spinners," she said.

After several years of reading everything that she could find on sheep, attending sheep shows at the Farm Show and York Fair, and repeatedly talking with sheep exhibitors, Trygg took the plunge and purchased the sheep.

Her first three sheep were purchased from Carol Peyser, a spinner with the Wool Wizards of Farm Show Sheep to Shawl fame.

Peyser, a spinner, encouraged Trygg to try spinner. Trygg did and loved it.

The exposure to spinning opened up a whole new way of looking at wool for Trygg. She looks at each fleece with an eye to how it will spin.

So far, Trygg hasn't sold any of her fleeces because each fleece is special to her and she looks forward to making something from it.

The fleece from her first Border Leicester ram won the York Fair Reserve Grand Champion fleece award last year. This year, she proved that it wasn't just beginner's luck when the fleece from her lamb won the grand championship at the York Fair.

Having a small flock allows Trygg to give each animal individual attention.

When an undiagnosed illness caused her ram to die, Trygg was devastated.

"I spend time with them each day. They're like pets," Trygg said.

She examined several breeds before deciding to purchase another Border Leicester. This time, it was a lamb.

"I like their wool, and I like the way they look — they're beautiful animals," Trygg said of the Border Leicester breed.

Dusty, purchased from Ramsden Farms in Birdsboro joined Trygg's flock in June 1993.

Trygg also credits her friend and neighbor Deb Flanagan with helping her with problems she encounters in her flock.

Flanagan showed Trygg how to worm, trim the feet, and shear the sheep.

Research and hard work have paid off, Trygg said. She plans to enter the Pennsylvania Farm Show to continue to prove that her first win was not beginner's luck.



Joanne Trygg shows off the prize-winning fleece — ten pounds of solid black wool — is from a Border Leicester.



Trygg's sheep are like pets. She spends hours with them each day. Here, she pets Pepper, a Border Leicester ewe.



Since Joanne has learned to spin wool, she entered a scarf in York Fair competition that took first place this year. Joanne won 17 ribbons at the York Fair for wool and flower entries.

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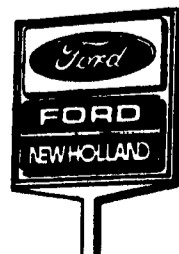
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