

COMMUNITY PARTNER DESCRIPTION:

"Local Fibre Love" (LFL) is a group of small-scale Nova Scotian farmers passionate about fibre, specifically wool, and passionate about local. This group is under the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia (SPANS) which "promotes and assists in the sustainable development of Nova Scotia's sheep industry". Whereas the majority of SPANS members raise sheep for meat, Local Fibre Love encompasses a dedicated group of wool growers and processors who aim to increase the profile and availability of Nova Scotian fibres and textile products.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Local Fibre Love group identifies the need to increase the value of wool in Nova Scotia. In the province, sheep can be raised for wool, meat and dairy, and the wool used for varying purposes from insulation to yarn. However, due to the the high cost of shearing (shearer, handling of the sheep and wool, delivery to the wool depot) and lack of education about how to produce high quality fibre, wool is typically an afterthought of these other two processes and a wasted resource. Local Fibre Love is committed to addressing this. Through working with NSCAD and our engaged group of rural Nova Scotia farmers, we wish to spotlight the beauty and usefulness of Nova Scotian wool and our commitment to carrying out farming practices in humane and sustainable ways. This will not only educate our members, but other sheep farmers and consumers about how we create a sustainable and transparent industry going forward.

PROJECTED BENEFITS:

This project will see NSCAD students interviewing sheep producers to understand their fibre development process including: breed, number of sheep, wool type, management practices, sustainability and environmental beliefs. Photos and videos will be taken to showcase how the sheep are being farmed, in order to educate consumers about the beauty of Nova Scotian wool and the many ways Nova Scotian farmers care for their sheep and the environment. Examples of this include rotational grazing, regenerative agriculture, riparian areas in place (so sheep don't impact waterways), and how shearing is beneficial to the sheep and done in a non-harmful and long developed methods. These on-farm outcomes can be used to personalize and promote the farmers and Nova Scotian wool in all its varieties. Project deliverables will be shared with Local Fibre Love and SPANS members, and featured on their respective websites and social media pages. With these good news stories, the value for Nova Scotian wool may be enhanced. in turn helping local farmers maintain their flocks and farms and continue their community outreach.

NB: These are excerpts from the Community Partner's original proposal from 2021.