



Quick Guide to the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS)

The [Responsible Wool Standard \(RWS\)](#) is an industry tool designed to recognize the best practices of farmers, ensuring that wool comes from farms with a progressive approach to managing their land, and from sheep that have been treated responsibly.

As an independent, voluntary standard, companies can choose to become certified to the RWS. On farms, the certification ensures that sheep are treated with respect to their Five Freedoms¹ and also ensures best practices in the management and protection of the land. The standard is globally applicable to all breeds of sheep, and mulesing is strictly prohibited.

Goals

The goals of the Responsible Wool Standard are to provide the industry with a tool to recognize the best practices of farmers; ensuring that wool comes from farms with a progressive approach to managing their land, and from sheep that have been treated responsibly.

Objectives

- Ensure that wool does not come from animals that have been subjected to any unnecessary harm.
- Reward and influence the wool industry for strong animal welfare and land management practices.
- Provide robust chain of custody from farm to final product.
- Create an industry benchmark to drive improvements in animal care and land management where needed.

Key Points in the RWS

Protecting Animal Welfare

The Five Freedoms of sheep are protected at all times, referencing standards and best practices around the world.

Preserving Land Health

Progressive methods of land management are practiced on RWS farms, protecting soil health, biodiversity and native species.

Chain of Custody

Certification ensures that the identity of the RWS wool is maintained at all times: from the farm to the final product.

Credible Certification

A professional, third-party certification body audits each stage in the supply chain.

Confident Communication

Only products with 100% certified wool may carry the RWS logo.

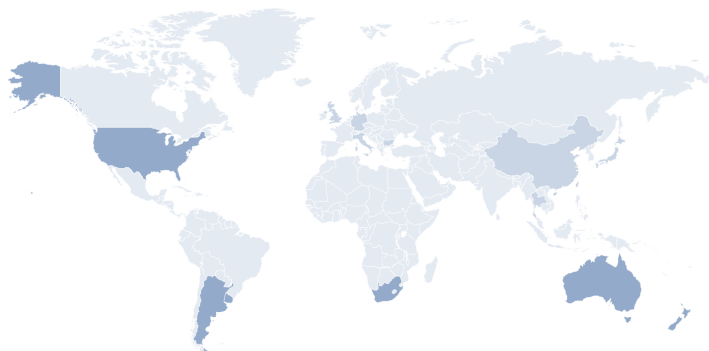
Stakeholder Engagement

The RWS was developed with the input of farmers, animal welfare experts, land conservation experts, brands and retailers from all parts of the globe.

Adoption of the RWS

There are certified farms in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, Uruguay, and the United States, while supply chain certification exists in several other countries. Visit <http://responsiblewool.org/find-rws-certified-organizations/> to see all certified organizations.

Brands from across a number of sectors and geographies have made commitments and targets to source RWS-certified wool.



¹ The Five Freedoms are internationally recognized standards for the protection of animal welfare, consisting of: 1. Freedom from hunger or thirst; 2. Freedom from discomfort; 3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease; 4. Freedom to express (most) normal behavior; 5. Freedom from fear and distress. (Source: Farm Animal Welfare Council)



Getting Started

The RWS requires all sites to be certified, beginning with the wool farmers and through to the seller in the final business-to-business transaction. Usually, the last stage to be certified is the garment manufacturer or the brand; retailers (business-to-consumers) are not required to be certified.

Farm Scope

Farms are certified to the Animal Welfare and Land Management Modules of the RWS.

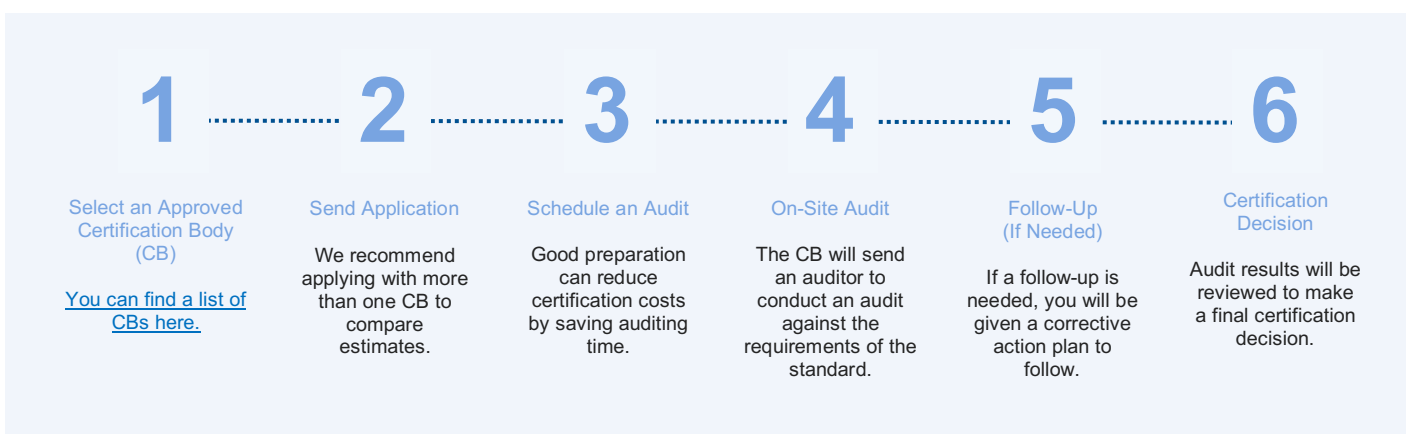
Processing Scope

Subsequent stages of the supply chain are certified to the [Content Claim Standard \(CCS\)](#) requirements up to the seller in the last business-to-business transaction. Facilities are certified to the standard, and only shipments of goods accompanied by a transaction certificate (TC) are considered certified.

Communicating Claims

- Before labeling products, make sure to follow all requirements in the [RWS Logo Use and Claims Guide](#).
- All claims must be approved by an authorized certification body.

How to Get Certified



Background of the RWS

The Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) was developed through an open and transparent process led by [Textile Exchange](#) and a multi-stakeholder group which included representatives from across the industry and different sectors, including animal welfare groups, industry organizations, supply chain members, brands, and area experts. All policies and procedures are based on the [ISEAL Best Practices](#), which can be found on our website TextileExchange.org/Integrity.

Textile Exchange has been in existence since 2002, and plays a powerful role within the textile industry to support the understanding and use of sustainable materials and proper verification strategies. While Textile Exchange, has extensive experience in standards development and ownership, we do not engage in any certification activities: all of our focus is on supporting the quality and adoption of its standards.

The staff at Textile Exchange are very accessible, and always ready to provide support to brands or companies interested in the RWS.

Learn More or Get Involved

Contact ResponsibleWool@TextileExchange.org | Visit ResponsibleWool.org

