MARYLAND
SHEEP & WOOL
FESTIVAL

January 3, 2020

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your application to the 2020 Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival. Our jury spent an entire day reviewing all applications, photos, written comments and samples. We applaud your creativity and skill. Each year we receive many applications for a limited number of booth spaces. Within the context of such stiff competition, the members of the committee have decided that your application, unfortunately, does not meet our needs at this time.

As we are a program of the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association, we are interested in balancing the interests of promoting and providing a marketplace for sheep and wool related products, tools and equipment and artwork, educating the public and one another as well as providing fiber artists, shepherds and Festival visitors with the best there is to offer in sheep and wool and related products. To fill the few spaces we have available each year, we seek vendors who highlight the many traditional as well as new and modern ways in which sheep and wool can shine. As a general rule, the more directly vendors are connected to products they bring to the table the happier we are.

We look for new and interesting ways in which people highlight the versatility of sheep and wool from different breeds and regions of the world. We are especially delighted to come across vendors who are sourcing wool locally – growing their own, or from a specific breed, farm or shepherd. This is what makes a Festival like ours a place where one can find unique and new ways to celebrate sheep and wool. As a membership organization, we are also eager to provide a forum for promoting and inspiring the sheep and wool industry in our geographic home base.

We have some vendors who source their wool from small farms and process, spin and dye it. Some of our vendors work with local materials to create their products. Some have tools or products, supplies or services that support wool and sheep business. Some offer a product that represents traditional work done to support farmers that are being lost (blacksmithing, barrel making, broom making, etc.), and still others provide artwork that reflects an appreciation of the appealing visual aesthetics, humor, and occasional obsession we have regarding sheep, wool and the myriad activities they inspire. We recognize that a mixture of booths will best attract the discerning and enthusiastic following the Festival draws each year, and we want to maintain the unique identity of MSWF which connects us all to the hands-on agricultural roots of the wonderful products and tools that people can find at the Festival. We also make selections based upon the "total mix" of vendor offerings across all categories - we try to achieve a balance of goods - a certain percentage of fiber, artwork, jewelry, etc.

Since we jury based upon what we have received from you, it is important that you provide us with photos, samples, and descriptions that show us what makes you unique. The more clearly we can see what you produce, the better our decisions can be. It is also important that you address our focus.

As the jurying process for filling openings is repeated each year, you are welcome to reapply. We encourage you to visit the Festival, if you have not already done so. Seeing the displays of the various vendors will undoubtedly provide you with valuable information for any future application.

Thank you for considering our Festival.

Sincerely,

Jan White
Vendor Committee