



Galway Wool

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY



Blátnaid Gallagher, an Organic Wool, Lamb Producer, and Ambassador for Farming for Nature, runs several enterprises at 'Murray Meadows', a farm she inherited in 2016. At

the centre of her enterprise is the burning desire to tell the true story of Native Irish Galway Wool and its benefits to sustainable lifestyle. Blátnaid runs a flock of Pure Bred Registered Native Irish Galway Sheep. The Galway Sheep is an endangered species farm animal with less than 1500 breeding females left in the world. In 2019, after achieving an MSc in Agricultural Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Blátnaid became increasingly aware of the lack of appreciation for Native Irish Wool and set up www.galwaywool.ie as a (first of its kind) virtual wool producers Co-op.

The primary objectives of this Co-op are to: counteract the declining population of the Galway purebred sheep; re-establish the cultural integrity of Irish Wool; and restore consistent routes to market for native Irish Galway wool. This is achieved by exchanging knowledge and best practices of what can be created with wool (rugs, clothes etc.) and providing educational and peer support for wool growers who are new or existing owners of Galway Sheep.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Operated through its LEADER-funded website, this pioneering cooperative has evolved into a collective of 70 pedigree-registered Galway Sheep flocks across Ireland, encompassing a range of sizes from five to 80 sheep. The cooperative's strategic focus is on establishing unique market opportunities for Galway Wool both domestically and internationally, with a commitment to promoting Galway Wool as a sustainable and locally grown bio-fibre.



Working with fleece from Pure Bred registered Galway ensures that partners are creating products with a fibre grown on Irish Soil and traceability right back to Irish family farms. This strong white bio-fibre is a suitable base material for an array of home interiors and lifestyle products. The Galway has recently been included in both EU Agri Environmental Schemes issued in the last decade (GLAS and ACRES) which has encouraged farmers once again to value this Native Breed and her valuable dual-purpose contribution to the Irish Agriculture Landscape.

USEFUL LINKS

<https://galwaywool.ie/blatnaid-gallagher/>