

## From farm to yarn – Finnish wool producer applies fully circular model

Organic sheep farm in Finland produces high-quality wool with a low carbon footprint – carrying out the entire process on the farm

**“From raising and shearing the sheep to sorting, scouring, dyeing, drying, spinning and selling the finished yarn, we do everything ourselves on the farm,” says Satu Kumpulainen, owner of Isokumpu Farm in western Finland. The production of her high-quality yarn, which is sold in skeins for use in knitting and other textile crafts, relies on a fully integrated, farm-level circular model that minimises waste and is almost carbon-neutral.**

Satu has been a sheep farmer for the past 20 years. She founded her current wool business in 2018, “I am passionate about knitting, and even though **Finnish yarn is known for its softness, warmth and quality, I struggled to find any which was both produced and processed locally.**”

On 30 hectares in the Ostrobothnia region, Satu keeps 400 Finnsheep and Kainuu Grey ewes, both **native Finnish breeds**. Once Satu and her sons have shorn the sheep, the fleeces go to the farm’s on-site spinning mill run by Satu’s brother, where the **wool is sorted, washed and dried, and then combed, spun, dyed and wound into skeins**. The yarn, and even some clothes made from their yarn (knitted by Satu), are **sold in their own farm shop, at a small number of local retailers, and online**. Although they mainly sell locally, 20% of their overall sales are international. Customers appreciate the product for its properties as an attractive, durable Finnish wool, as well as for the ecological and ethical process applied to make it.

**The whole process has been carefully designed to generate very little waste.** For example, the techniques they use for shearing mean that they can use most of the wool for yarn. Second-class wool is used for felting material or as biodegradable ground cover for the organic strawberries and blackcurrants that the farm also cultivates and sells.

### Background information

Satu Kumpulainen is one of the 20 experts in the EU CAP Network Focus Group: [‘Innovative and sustainable ways to strengthen the role of farmers in revitalising the European wool value chain’](#). Following a [1<sup>st</sup> meeting](#) in November 2025, the experts will meet again in Aranjuez, Spain, for their [2<sup>nd</sup> meeting](#) on 6-7 May 2026.

To further enhance sustainability and autonomy, as well as to reduce energy costs, the farm powers its spinning mill with solar energy and reuses wastewater from the scouring process for irrigating and fertilising the fields.

The farm also has its own small-scale slaughterhouse and sells organic meat directly to consumers via local food groups (REKO) on Facebook. However, Satu explains that wool is still their primary product, “Our breeds are endangered mainly because they are better suited to the production of wool than meat, and for many farmers the focus is on meat production.” She says that there are only about 1 000 Kainuu Grey ewes in Finland, 100 of which are on her farm. Alongside selling high-quality yarn, one of the aims of her business is to promote the revival of traditional breeds and encourage knowledge-sharing and shearing techniques related to these breeds to show their value chain potential.

There are more than 600 native sheep breeds in the EU, but despite this diversity and the historical significance of wool production in Europe, the sector faces major challenges. “Most wool in Finland goes to waste, even though today domestic wool is actually in high demand”, says Satu. Through her actions as part of the European Wool Association and the Finnish Shearers Association, she is working to promote wool production across Finland and Europe, demonstrating the advantages of a circular bioeconomy and the strength of native sheep breeds whose wool can become a product of high value for farmers, rather than a burden.



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### Project information

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> [Website of the farm](#)

### Project photos:

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Satu Kumpulainen with her sheep and wool © Isokumpu



Satu's sheep grazing © Isokumpu



At the spinning mill © Isokumpu



Skeins of yarn and pullover in the farm shop © Isokumpu

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### EU CAP Network 'Innovation & knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI' activities related to wool value chains

#### Focus Groups

- > [Focus Group 'Innovative and sustainable ways to strengthen the role of farmers in revitalising the European wool value chain'](#)
- > [Focus Group 'Alternative solutions for livestock product differentiation'](#)

#### Videos

- > [Operational Group: SHEEP-UP - Ovine bio-diversity in Veneto](#)
- > [EIP-AGRI Innovation Awards - Meet the winners: SHEEP-UP](#)

#### Inspirational ideas

- > [Improving economic sustainability of alpine sheep farming in Italy](#) (Italy)
- > [Bridging local solutions and market potential in the forestry bioeconomy](#) (Latvia)
- > [Sheep grazing making a comeback for the restoration of mountain areas in Poland](#) (Poland)
- > [From fleece to dress, a workshop using by-product of livestock](#) (Spain)

### Operational Groups working on wool

[23 Operational Groups working on wool](#) are available in the [EIP-AGRI project database](#) (update March 2026)

- > Austria (1)
- > Croatia (1)
- > France (2)
- > Germany (2)
- > Hungary (1)
- > Italy (2)
- > Latvia (1)
- > Lithuania (1)
- > Netherlands (2)
- > Other (2)
- > Portugal (1)
- > Spain (7)



### Multi-actor projects

**Thematic networks** are collaborative platforms supported by Horizon Europe, where individuals, organisations and Operational Groups share existing knowledge and best practices on a specific theme, presenting them in easily accessible formats for end-users such as farmers, foresters and advisors. Some examples below:

- > [EuroSheep: European Thematic Network for interactive and innovative knowledge exchange on animal health and nutrition between the Sheep industry actors and stakeholders](#)
- > [ENABLING: Enhance New Approaches in BioBased Local Innovation Networks for Growth](#)

### EU CAP Network events focusing on innovation, knowledge exchange and EIP-AGRI (July 2025 - June 2026)

Find out more details on the events below on the [EU CAP Network website](#).

#### > EU CAP Network Focus Groups:

- > **Focus Group: 'Innovative on-farm energy production systems'**
  - > [1<sup>st</sup> meeting](#): 12-13 November 2025, Dublin, Ireland
  - > [2<sup>nd</sup> meeting](#): 21-22 April 2026, Lelystad, the Netherlands
- > **Focus Group: 'Forestry and forest health: new and emerging pests and diseases'**
  - > [1<sup>st</sup> meeting](#): 19-20 November 2025, Leuven, Belgium
  - > [2<sup>nd</sup> meeting](#): 5-6 March 2026, Hainburg an der Donau, Austria
- > **Focus Group: 'Innovative and sustainable ways to strengthen the role of farmers in revitalising the European wool value chain'**
  - > [1<sup>st</sup> meeting](#): 27-28 November 2025, Stockholm, Sweden
  - > [2<sup>nd</sup> meeting](#): 6-7 May 2026, Aranjuez, Spain

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- > SolKE meetings:
  - > **SolKE: Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (SolKE) - 10<sup>th</sup> meeting**, 19 November 2025, online
  - > **SolKE: Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (SolKE) - 11<sup>th</sup> meeting**, 3 March 2026, Brussels, Belgium
  - > **SolKE: Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (SolKE) - 12<sup>th</sup> meeting**, June 2026, Brussels, Belgium
- > [EU CAP Network workshop 'Sensing the future: practical applications of proximal and remote sensing for farmers and advisors'](#), Valencia, Spain - 27-28 January 2026
- > [3<sup>rd</sup> EU CAP Network workshop 'Networking for innovation and knowledge exchange'](#), Jūrmala, Latvia - 11-12 February 2026
- > [EU CAP Network Brokerage event](#), Warsaw, Poland - 25-26 February 2026
- > [EU CAP Network seminar 'Innovative tools for advisors'](#), Dublin, Ireland - 19-20 March 2026
- > [EU CAP Network workshop 'Growing alternative crops for new market opportunities in a changing climate'](#), Vienna, Austria - 22-23 April 2026
- > [EU CAP Network conference 'Water resilience linked to sustainable soil management practices'](#), Hamburg, Germany - 19-21 May 2026
- > [3 cross-visits between EIP-AGRI Operational Groups](#) - June 2026
  - > [EU CAP Network cross-visit 'Production of protein crops under climate change'](#)
  - > [EU CAP Network cross-visit 'Robotics and artificial intelligence'](#)
  - > [EU CAP Network cross-visit 'Plant genetic resources'](#)