

## From Farm to Knitting Needles, Crochet Hook, Rug Hook or Loom

Love cooking with local foods? Most people appreciate the benefits of sourcing food close to home, but do we think enough about place-based fiber and the ecology of our yarn? Much like farm to table dining, Vermont offers many opportunities to craft with yarn that has its roots in the land, with farmers raising sheep, goats, camelids, and even rabbits for fiber in every part of the Green Mountain State. On these small farms, the animals are given priority, and the resulting fiber is typically clean and of exceptional quality. Each skein or hank tells the story of the animal, farmer and farm. Buying local yarn supports Vermont artisans, mills, markets and yarn stores. If the yarn is hand-spun or hand-dyed, it bears the additional imprint of the spinner or dyer. If it's mill-spun, then it has the expertise of the mill operator in every twist and ply.

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**Vermont's textile system can be accessed at many points, from origin to end-use. Visit a farm, mill, market, yarn store or artisan gallery.**

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**Green Mountain Knitting Guild**  
[greenmountainknittingguild.org](http://greenmountainknittingguild.org)

**Vermont Sheep & Goat Association**  
[vtsheepandgoat.org](http://vtsheepandgoat.org)

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Many Vermont yarns are next-to-skin soft, but working with more rustic yarns can be rewarding. Here are some tips:

Choose projects like mittens, fingerless mittens, gloves, leg warmers, socks, sweaters with positive ease that can be worn over a shirt, and hats with liners.

Avoid making projects that touch sensitive skin, like the neck and face.

Felt your project! Felted bags, toys, rugs and pillow covers are useful, durable and wonderful.

To help soften fibers, soak yarn or a finished knitted object in room temperature water with a squirt of hair conditioner or white vinegar in it.

Remember that most wool will soften over time as it is worn and washed, and that often a slightly scratchier yarn will make a more durable garment.



Photo credit: Joy Thompson

**Green Mountain Knitting Guild (GMKG)** is a growing association of knitters, designers and instructors located in the heart of Vermont. They are building an inclusive community, with membership open to anyone interested in knitting who lives in, near, or feels a connection to Vermont.

In 2023, they will explore local yarn production and locally produced yarns through experience and education. Please join the journey!