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[Gore Place's website](#)

THE SHEEPSHEARING FESTIVAL AT GORE PLACE FACT SHEET

About the Sheepshearing Festival at Gore Place

The annual Sheepshearing Festival at Gore Place has been a New England spring tradition since 1987. Each April, 5000 adults and as many children spend a day at Gore Place to view traditional sheep shearing of our heritage Leicester Longwool sheep and Angora goats and herding dog demonstrations, partake in heritage artisan crafts, enjoy music, food trucks, wagon rides, and family activities, and shop with 100-plus handmade crafters and fiber artists.

What is shearing?

Shearing is the yearly process of cutting off a sheep's wool fleece. In New England, adult sheep are typically shorn in the spring, when they no longer need their warm wool fleeces to protect them from winter conditions. Shearing is necessary to protect the health of the animal. Shearing does not hurt the animal; it's just like getting a haircut. We feature blade shearing at the Festival, which is shearing done using a traditional, non-electric hand tool. Shearing is a difficult and physically demanding job and something of a lost art, with a dwindling number of experienced shearers traveling to farms across New England each spring to shear their flocks.

Meet Gore Place's Leicester Longwool Sheep

Gore Place's working farm is home to a flock of Leicester Longwool sheep (Leicester is pronounced 'lester'), a rare and historic breed developed in the 1700s in England. Their coarse, curly, and lustrous long-staple wool is favored by many hand spinners for its durability and strength. Leicester Longwools are designated as "threatened" on the Livestock Conservancy's Conservation Priority List. Gore Place raises this breed as part of its mission.

to bring history to life for visitors and is one of just a few farms in the United States protecting this rare breed of sheep.

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A National Historic Landmark
Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums



1987

Year of the first Sheepshearing Festival

100+

Number of craft and fiber artists appearing at the Festival

50

Acres of estate and farmland at Gore Place

10

Pounds of wool produced by one sheep each year