

Preface

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Angora is a keratinous textile fiber, produced by the long-haired Angora rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) which is one of the oldest types of domestic rabbit, originating in Ankara (historically known as Angora), Turkey. It spread all over the world from Ankara province and nowadays its main producer is China which carry outs 90% of world annual production. Angora rabbit wool production is approximately 10000 tons and this represents 3% of world clean total wool production. Although overall production amount of Angora rabbit fibers seems not to be important among the world's wool production, when the comparison is done in terms of value (price of angora wool is approx. 20-30 \$/kg) importance of these fibers could be understood better.

The Angora rabbit is bred mainly for its fine and soft hair, unlike other breeds which are produced for their meat and fur. There are five main Angora rabbit varieties: French, German, English, Giant, and Satin, all possessing their own unique breed characteristics. Angora rabbit fibers are exceptionally fine and soft fibers and they are produced in small quantities. For these reasons, the finished products made of angora wool are very expensive and these fibers are accepted to be one of the "Luxury Fibers". As these fibers are very susceptible to effects of heat and chemicals, during their finishing processes, special precautions should be taken. Because of being a protein based fiber, in general their finishing processes are very similar to that of wool, but it should be noted that

during dyeing and other finishing processes milder conditions (lower temperature and/or shorter times) should be used. Since it has smoother scales and crimps in comparison to sheep's wool, its spinnability is very poor and for this reason in practice it is preferred to be used in blends with other fibers. Angora wool is generally used in knitted textile products, but woven garments are also produced from these fibers. End-uses of angora wool can be listed as; outwears, hosiery, gloves, felt hats and also medical textiles such as support belt, knee warmers etc..

Although there are many articles related to the wool fibers, researches and articles on Angora rabbit fiber are very limited. This special issue aims to put together the review articles on Angora rabbit fiber from fiber to fabric. The topics of this special issue include;

- Angora rabbit fiber production in the world;
- Physical characteristics of Angora rabbit fiber;
- Pre-treatment of Angora rabbit fiber;
- Dyeing of Angora rabbit fiber;
- Finishing of Angora rabbit fiber;
- Yarn production from Angora rabbit fibers;
- Fabric production from Angora rabbit yarns;
- End-uses of Angora rabbit fiber.

By taking into consideration that publications related to the Angora rabbit fibers are very limited, I hope this special issue will be useful for readers.