

A cut above the rest in quest for show success

NSW Country Hour By Laurissa Smith

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PHOTO: Geoff Sutton uses blade shears to trim any unruly locks on Bonnie the Border Leicester before she's entered in the Sydney Royal Show. (Laurissa Smith)

New haircut, face and legs washed, now you're ready to make an appearance at the Sydney Royal Show.

That's if you're a sheep vying for the top prize.

Geoff Sutton hopes that one of his 20 Border Leicester rams and ewes can take a few home this year.

For the seventh year, the owner of Wattle Farm stud near Temora in south western New South Wales, is making the 400 kilometre trek to the show.

Before he loads up his prized specimens, they need a full body makeover in the shearing shed.

Bonnie, a veteran of the show circuit, is the first to get the blade shear treatment.

"We have to use the blade shears, it takes the rough and harder tips on the fleece.

"We're trying to present to the judge, a quality, good-feeling fleece.

"Bonnie has been a good sheep to us.

"She was in the Australian Supreme Long Wool Group at the Australian Sheep Show in 2012.

"She was the Reserve Champion at Royal Melbourne last year, so she knows what it's all about."

After a trim, the sheep are returned to the paddock for a few days of grazing before their final inspection.

Sheep shows are a big part of the Sutton's season and run from February to October.

Mr Sutton says they're time consuming, but it helps having the family holding the fort at home.

"As you can see mum is in the shearing shed with me and my wife is very supportive and my dad is tremendous.

"Just the day to day stuff, I have someone here on site as well.

"I couldn't do it otherwise."

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AUDIO: Shearing shed makeover (ABC Rural)

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