



THE JOYS OF ANGORA RABBITS

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I conceptualized this article while carrying feed back to the barn. It's about three hundred feet from the front drive and it is early evening. The sun is already set even though it is only seven o'clock. I do resent that. I love the light. It is beginning to sleet and I have forgotten my hat. I could go into the house and get it but I keep thinking that I will be done in a minute. My ears get colder and I know that I am losing heat from that bald spot on the top of my head and my sinuses are beginning to clog. As I wade through the two foot pile of leaves at the back gate I realize that I am not getting any younger and the feed sacks weigh more. Why in the world do we do this?

The Joy of Angora. Next to Nancy's cheek when she was a newborn, Angora is the softest thing I have ever touched. I tell people that it is a lifetime experience. Their lives will be enriched by just holding one. Cashmere comes close. I love my goats but...it's not the same. Silk is wonderful. It is so smooth and lustrous. The spinning is technically satisfying and there is joy in trying to make that thread as thin as possible. But Angora is marvelous. Everywhere we go people marvel at the animal. They marvel at the face of the English and the feel of the French. They marvel at the size of the Giant "at least 20 pounds" and at the sheen of a Satin.

They don't even begin to know the joys of Angoras. Those little English faces when they just start to bloom. We want to keep every one. That old doe who just keeps on growing that wool. No muss, no fuss. Three months and you can cut her down without even running a slicker through. The buck who hangs out of his cage for a pat, and noses your hand out of the food bowl when you try to feed him because he demands attention. And that young doe whom genetics has demanded that she have babies. She will not be happy until she is bred. Her behavior on the show table is none less than wanton and her attitude clearly states that she cares nothing for your embarrassment.

The Joys of Angoras. The people. We have found so many dear friends. Some have now passed on and we still grieve. Many we don't see as often as we like but they all have touched our souls and share their time on earth with us. We are truly thankful. As the holiday season ends and we pass through the beginning of a new year, we wish all of you blessings and a release from pain and hope that you all relish your own Joy of Angoras.

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