

## KOOLAI DYEING FOR NATURAL FIBERS

### Materials:

Enamel, glass or stainless steel pot or glass jars if doing solar dyeing [see above]

Koolaid [ don't use sweetened, cost more!] 4-6 pkgs to 4 oz. wool

Boiling Water

Measuring Cup

Fiber/yarn/roving to be dyed

White Vinegar

Old clothes, rubber gloves, face mask, safety glasses etc.

**NOTES:** Most colors will require 6 packages of Koolaid to 4 oz. of fiber. Dark colors may only take 4 or 5. This is not an exact formula! You may resist areas to the fiber by wrapping the area tightly in plastic or with rubber bands.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Pre-soak fiber in very warm/ almost hot water for at least 20 minutes before dyeing. You can add a small squirt of dish soap also. This will act as a dispersant for the dye and help it adhere to the fiber better.
2. Fill your dye pot with very warm water.
3. Dilute the koolaid in a measuring cup with **boiling hot water**. Add to the dye bath.
4. Add 1 cup of white vinegar to the dye bath. Stir well.
5. Add your yarn/fiber/ roving to the pot.
6. Now, raise the dye bath temperature to 165-180°F degrees. Check temperature with a glass candy thermometer. You can tie a string to the end and tie the other end to the pot handle. Now, just leave the thermometer on top of the yarn or fiber. **Be sure you don't boil the wool!**
7. When the temperature reaches 160-180°F, continue to simmer for 30 minutes. Check temperature. Stir occasionally to get a more even color. If you want an uneven color [lighter at the top/darker at the bottom], then **don't stir the pot. Do not agitate the wool too much or it will felt.**
8. When heating cycle is finished, turn off the pot. Let sit until cool, or at least cool enough to take yarn out.
9. Now, fiber needs to be rinsed in water that is the same temperature as the fiber to prevent felting. I use my washing machine. You may want to use a utility sink, tub or another pot. I fill the washer with water, **SHUT OFF THE MACHINE**, then add the fiber and let soak 10 minutes. Now, advance machine to the final spin cycle, and spin out water. This will get rid of excess dye. Hang to dry.