

Black Sheep Rising

Newsletter of the Black and Coloured Sheep Breeders Association of Australia (NSW) Inc.



2001 Year Book Edition

**A collection of articles, tips, and hints
for breeders of coloured sheep
and users of naturally coloured wool**



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Membership of the Association is open to any person interested in black and coloured sheep, its breeding, use, or promotion of its products.
 Subscription of \$30 per annum for full membership, \$15 for second family member, \$20.00 for associates, or \$10 for juniors (under 16) is payable to the Treasurer at the above address.

Black Sheep Rising is the Newsletter of the Association and views expressed by advertisers and authors of articles are not necessarily those of its Officers or Members.

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talk, feed and touch our animals.
Selected stock available for sale
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Alpaca and Sheep Fleeces available



Jacki and Peter Waugh

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MINIATURE IRISH DONKEYS, MINIATURE PONIES
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TOURIST FARM OPENING SOON

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Regina Byron Mudgee
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 Brunhilde Gates Gulgong
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 Betty Rae Gulgong
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 Mr Noel Symonds High Range
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Mrs Jacki Waugh Boxers Creek
 Mr Fred Wood Burrawang

Proudly produced by a co-operative of black and coloured sheep breeders from the Central Tablelands of NSW, these garments are Australian made from 100% pure natural colour wool, representing the colours of a selected blend of fleeces.

The Central Tablelands of NSW is world renown for its high quality of wool production. The name **Gulgee** was derived from a combination of the town names of Gulgong and Mudgee, which is the origin of the wool used in the production of these garments.



Natural coloured wools



Gulgee pure wool jumpers

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Contact: Marianne Farkas

Phone: (02) 6373-3589

E-mail: mariannefar@hotmail.com

Central Tablelands Baling Day

There was quite some activity in Bennison Rodd's modern, spacious shearing shed on the weekend of March 10 this year. Around twenty or so members of the Central Tablelands branch gathered there to lend a hand with sorting and baling up a good collection of naturally coloured fleeces to be sent away for processing into tops and yarn.

The weather was very kind to the workers, none of them used to this type of labour, providing an occasional breeze through the shed to dry up some of the perspiration. The backdrop of Bennison's paintings hung around the walls, she is a recognised artist in the district, and the lunch assembled by the ladies turned the day into a most enjoyable event.

After agreeing on the lines, weighing everyone's contribution and sorting the fleeces into their allocated bins the actual baling was a sight to behold. There were about six to eight men (in the flurry of activities you could not count them accurately) operating two manual (the real old fashioned type) baling machines, all pretending to know what they were doing while getting into each others way. However, by the end of the day over seven hundred kilos of wool in bales was loaded onto the truck, the shed was cleaned up ready to become an art gallery once again.

Members even had time to hold a quick meeting to discuss some local issues.

The general consensus of all participants was that this is the type of

Guidelines for breeders

Introduction

These guidelines are designed to assist breeders of coloured sheep reach a standard of excellence in their flocks, and to appreciate what qualities a judge will be looking for when sheep are presented in a show ring.

To achieve this, it is important to set ourselves a high standard when we begin breeding, and to have a clear vision of what we are aiming for.

What are we aiming for?

1. To show sheep (and fleeces) which are of a high standard, and possess winning potential.
2. To show sheep and fleeces which, when sold, will benefit the buyer and not reflect badly on us, the producers.
3. To enhance the reputation of the coloured sheep industry by presenting such good quality sheep that when white sheep breeders see them on exhibition at shows, etc., they will recognise, (even if somewhat reluctantly), that they are worthy to be there. It is only when we pay attention to good breeding that we will make any real progress.
4. Financial profit.

How to achieve this

1. Perhaps an important point to remember is to be one's own hardest critic, and to

keep sentimentality to a minimum when assessing our sheep.

2. Unless breeding for the skin trade, avoid the short wool meat sheep breeds such as the Dorset, Southdown or Suffolk... they are **not** wool growers.
3. Use the very best ram possible for sires, preferably pure bred rams. It is more important to have a good ram and maybe a mediocre ewe than vice versa, although it is important that ewes are structurally sound. Too many crosses of breed in the one sheep and in-breeding will ultimately produce inferior stock, with the high likelihood of conformation and wool faults.
4. Keep it firmly in mind that to grow a top quality fleece, it is necessary to have a top quality sheep on which to grow it, and that the main market outlet is the handcraft trade.

Benefits of showing

To evaluate one's sheep by competing with other breeders.

To learn.

To advertise.

To win... hopefully.

Sheep classes

These need to reflect as far as possible, the breeds and cross breeds represented on the day. A line up which has a degree of uniformity looks more professional and is easier for judging.

For example:...

Fine 64's and finer ... merino sheep only

Medium fine 58's to 60's ... comeback, Polwarth, fine Corriedale

Medium 50's to 56's ... strong Corriedale, cross breeds, etc.

Strong Border Leicester, Romney, etc.

Health

No evidence of internal/external parasites, injuries, or illnesses, past or present.

It is important that the sheep are in good condition, but not over fat; underfed sheep never present well at a show.

Note: Equal emphasis on conformation and wool.

Conformation - 50%

Back line: straight, with no evidence of goose-rump, devil's grip, or faulty shoulders etc., good body length.

Head: soft texture of face, ears and nose, ideally, no wool on nose. Alert, clear, bright eyes, sound mouth/teeth for age; no jaw defects, eg. Under-shot/overshot, no evidence of a chewing problem.

Legs/feet: stands up well on all four, no limp, correct on pasterns. No abnormalities such as cow-hock, bow legs, or knock knees.

Underneath: a ram must have two sound testicles and a ewe must have two good teats.

Wool - 50%

Sheep present best when carrying close to twelve months growth, but no more.

Sheep present better when not fully crutched

and wigged, as this spoils the overall appearance and line of the sheep. Just a light trim around tail/pizzle to alleviate stain, and around the eyes to avoid wool blindness.

with the exception of strong wool sheep, eg. Border Leicester, a sheep that can grow wool to its feet will produce a better yielding fleece of greater financial value than a sheep of similar type that can not. It is important for the sheep to have a good belly-wool covering.

Qualities of the wool

Length... for breed type

Evenness... of character throughout the fleece, and no hairy breech.

Softness... for breed type

Clean... minimum of dirt/vegetable matter, free of cross fibres.

Lustre...

Colour... is strictly a personal thing with craft people and can reflect the fashion demands of the day. Variation of colour should not be deemed a fault. Black pointed, and sheep with only odd patches of colour are not desirable, otherwise all colours are acceptable and useful within the craft trade. To be classified 'coloured' a sheep must have at least 50% colour in its fleece.

Soundness... it is most difficult to determine if a fleece is

sound while still on the sheep's back, hence judges will not look for this.

Summary

A sheep that will catch the eye of a judge is one that is in good health and condition, free of obvious defects, displays good conformation, has trueness of type and breed, and carries an attractive, lustrous, clean, and bulky fleece.



The Judges' Score card

Entries

Any colour except all white is acceptable, but fleeces must be at least 50% coloured.

weight - 10 points

As per weight system used.

Handle - 10 points

Soft to handle, according to breed type. As clean and free of foreign matter as possible with no hard, greasy, or brittle tips.

Length - 10 points

Twelve month's growth, but no more. Trueness to type of breed, good staple length throughout. With the end product in mind, it is important to consider that short stapled wool when carded, will pill more easily.

Character - 10 points

Stylish, attractive appearance with lustre and plenty of well defined crimp. Evenness of crimp throughout the fleece.

Soundness - 15 points

Tenderness (fibre weakness) will be deemed a fault. If there is no evidence of tenderness, a fleece should score full mark for soundness.

Evenness - 10 points

This refers to evenness of character (crimp) and not colour. A fleece should be as even as possible throughout, with no hairy breech and no cross fibres.

Density - 5 points

This refers to the number of wool fibres to a defined area. A very dense fleece may have shorter than desired staple length, but density without excess grease enhances yield.

Cleanliness - 15 points

well skirted with no stains or sweat dags, no second cuts, pieces of skin, dermatitis, etc. As clean as possible with a minimum of dirt or vegetable matter. Excess yolk (or condition) spoils the overall attractiveness of the fleece, but will wash out.

Usefulness to the handcraft trade - 15 points

The handcraft trade includes hand spinners, weavers, felters, and rug makers. Craft people use natural coloured wool to create a

unique range of fashion clothing as well as wall hangings, lamp shades, curtains, lounge covers, bed covers, wool pictures and toys, including doll's wigs. This section needs to be judged in conjunction with cleanliness, as a dirty fleece or badly skirted, or very greasy on the tip, necessitates more preparation by the user, and results in more waste. Hand spinners prefer thick staples, long and free for quick, easy spinning and minimum waste. (ie. A fleece that seems to say "spin me!").

Colour preference is very much a personal thing, and can vary with the fashion demands of the day. Variation of colour throughout a fleece need not be considered a fault. Very dark, almost jet black fleeces are fairly rare, and in popular demand.

Banding across staples, caused by change of feed or a mineral deficiency is not desirable, but with the exception of very dark wool does not effect the colour pattern when spun.

When exhibiting fleeces remove any foreign material (grass, burrs, etc), and make sure your fleece is well skirted. This is a balancing act, because if you over



skirt you will lose

Mudgee

Small Farm Field Days

20-th and 21-st July 2001

Fleece Competition

Total prize money \$300
Plus trophies



FLEECE JUDGING CARD		
Fleece Weight	10	
Handle	10	
Length	10	
Character	10	
Soundness	15	
Evenness	10	
Density	5	
Cleanliness	15	
Usefulness to Craft	15	
TOTAL	100	

Exhibitor's Name:.....

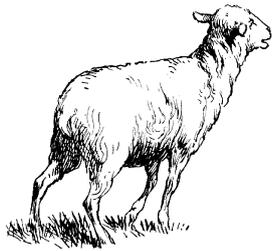
Exhibitor's Address:.....

.....

.....

Description & Class:.....

Number:..... Class Position:.....



Central Tablelands Contacts

Marianne Farkas

236 Beragoo Rd Mudgee
3589

"The Pines"
(02) 6373-

Bond sheep, tops, yarns, and knitted garments
for sale

Mary Kennedy

"Upsondowns" Dubbo St. Warren
4102

(02) 6847-

Bond, Corriedale, XB sheep, fleeces, tops,
yarns for sale

Mudgee Small Farm Field Days

The Central Tablelands Region invites all members of the Black & Coloured Sheep Breeders Association to enter into the 2001 "Flock Sheep Fleece Competition" to be judged at the Mudgee Small Farm Field Days held on the 20-th and 21-st of July.

As the title implies, entries will be accepted for ewe and wether fleeces in four classes:

1. **Extra Fine wool** 19 micron and below (68's & over)
2. **Fine wool** 20 - 25 micron (58's - 64's)
3. **Medium wool** 26 - 30 microns (50's - 56's)
4. **Strong wool** 31 micron & over (48's and under)

The aim of this competition is to make an assessment of the range and quality of fleeces produced by members. It is restricted to 'Flock Sheep' because the group also wants to assess what types of wool may be available in quantity.

To make entry into the competition more attractive, prize moneys of \$25, \$10, and \$5 will be awarded for First, Second, and Third in each class respectively, and a prize of \$100 will be awarded to the Grand Champion Fleece and \$40 to the Reserve Champion. In addition, the usual ribbons plus some attractive trophies will also be awarded to the winners.

The entry fee will be \$2 per person, enter as many fleeces as you like. Please indicate if the fleece is for sale.

The Region will have its new 9m x 9m marquee set up with plenty of display space and selling area. Members are also invited to send in their creations made from naturally coloured wool to be displayed or for sale. So start spinning, knitting, felting, weaving those masterpieces of naturally coloured wool now. There is only a bit over three months to go!

To register your interest in participating, please call the Secretary of the Central Tablelands Region, Gina Byron on (02) 6374-2005

Handy Hints

From Juliette de Bairacchi Levy's book "The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable"

"Scab Treatment: Except in very cold weather immediate clipping of the wool. Dip in a solution of soapy water, dry, then rub the body with the following preparation: into one gallon of cold water pour one pound of tobacco powder, four handfuls of cut garlic leaves or two shredded, two handfuls of cut geranium leaves, bring to the boil and simmer for two minutes. Allow to brew for at least six hours, do not strain.

Ring worm is a fungus type skin parasite. In addition to cleansing with herbal lotion as described for scab, all air must be excluded from the fungus ring and then it will wither. Make an air-excluding glaze by covering over and beyond the fungus ring with raw fresh lemon juice, or a glaze made by nail lacquer.

Lice and ticks. Dip in a strong solution of deris, preferably powdered. A little eucalyptus oil can be added to the dip with great benefit. Camphorated oil is also effective. Into the sores caused by the parasites there should be applied a strong solution of garlic leaves or roots.

The Call of the West

Mike Byron

17th Nov 1999

Goodness the clutch feels heavy, as the legs begin to ache from the constant stop and start in the city traffic. Its been two hours since we left North Sydney and the start of the Bell's Line Road is still kilometres away. Bloody idiot just cut in front of me !! I gave him the statutory salute with two fingers as I saw his eyes in his rear vision mirror.

This used to be a daily feature of our lives while we lived in Sydney. The two hours each way, to and from work, in slow moving peak hour traffic. watching other motorists inside their motorised cocoons, watching the women apply their make-up in the mornings, watching others laugh at drive time disc jockeys, sing to songs and even read newspapers as they drove at snails pace. And the noise ! Even with the windows up, its no wonder that everyone has their radios and stereos at a loud volume. Not to mention the exhaust fumes.

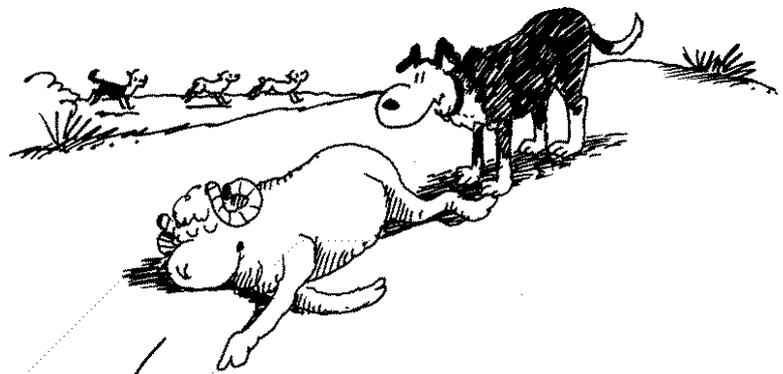
Home now, second scotch. I sit and listen to the birds, the poultry, the sheep in the distance. why did I pack up and drag my family to a rural life in the central tablelands, to a farm that experts told us wouldn't support two lizards and a magpie per acre. But casting an eye over the paddocks tells me why. The view goes for miles, the mountains in the background, the pastures in the foreground. Its spring time and the grass is green and lush, the lambs are gamboling. The Galahs and Sulphur Crested are wheeling above screeching their hellos. Its idyllic at that moment, another scotch please, as the afternoon sun sinks towards the west

and the daylight begins to fade.

Moving to the country was easy for us. I had begun consultancy work and Gina, my wife, had accepted a redundancy package which when combined with the years of superannuation paid for the property outright. As a bonus, we kept our house in Sydney as a rental proposition. However, after the move, we found we had a very steep learning curve. We wanted to do things straight away, we went out and bought ten coloured sheep. We were primary producers at last.

But nobody had told us that the sheep we bought were mostly unsuitable for the hand spinners wool demands, nobody told us that the fences we had were not suitable for sheep - the real estate salesman certainly didn't. Nobody told us that we didn't have enough water on the property for a flock of sheep. so accordingly, we spent lots of money we didn't have improving our farm so we could run a flock of coloured sheep.

we learnt what fly strike was, we learnt that sheep on dry summer grasses need supplementary feeding and we learnt how to move and handle sheep. we learnt that one the hard way too after a five kilometre chase of a scared sheep that had bolted through an open gate and off down the road. we also



I'm not moving until I see
your dog licence.

Cartoon by John Howcroft
From the book, "Sam's Back"
Published by Five Mile Press

learnt the hard way about sheep dogs. Realising that humans had only "two on the floor" while sheep had "four on the floor" we bought our first Kelpie sheep dog. The man told us that all Kelpies know how to work sheep and that this one was nearly twelve months old and ready to work.

What the dog salesman didn't tell us was that this dog had never seen sheep and while he "sat, stopped and stayed" he had no concept of working sheep. His instinct was to forget the presence of humans, chase the sheep to the furthest paddock where he could keep them bunched up in a tight little group for hours on end. This is also the same dog that managed, after being chained up to stop him chasing sheep, to escape and have his chain wrap around an outlet valve on the water tank and gleefully watch 10,000 gallons of precious water gush past him onto the ground. Needless to say we were out at the time and arrived home not even able to add water to the scotch. We drank it neat.

Things have changed, two years have gone past and we have learnt many of the lessons. We sold the house in Sydney and bought another bigger and better block of land in addition to "our farm". We now have over four hundred sheep for prime lamb production as well as our hobby of forty coloured sheep. We are breeding to a plan and value adding by joining a co-operative to have our coloured wool commercially spun and knitted into jumpers and these are being accepted for sale by recognised retail outlets. The fences, all six kilometres of them, have been improved and now hold sheep.

We are improving our pastures by the re-introduction of native grass species and grazing under cell grazing concepts. Our ovine obstetric skills have reached superb levels. Our dogs are now under control, making the sheep do what we want the sheep to do and not what either the sheep or the dogs want them to do. I did say dogs not dog - the number of dogs has increased and we are in the

process of becoming a registered Kelpie Stud. Although, as I type this, I can look out the window and see a seven week old puppy chewing through a garden hose - bloody dogs !!!!!!!

Looking back, the call of the west has been a success for us, nothing is ever easy and its only after you are in the country that you realise just how dependant you are on nature. That is, the seasons, the rainfall, the grasses, the lambing and like all farmers, the daylight hours. In the city you are insulated from all that, summers just mean more BBQ's and rain is just another bloody rainy day. Our bridges have been burnt behind us and we are in the country for life now. Funny thing is that when we lived in the city driving to the Central Tablelands was a pleasurable experience. Now we live in the country, driving to the city is just simply hard work. What does that tell you ?????

SHEEP AND FLEECE SHOW SCHEDULE

Sheep

Extra fine, finer than 64s (Finer than 20)

- 1 Ram, 1 or 2 adult teeth
- 2 Ram, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Extra Fine Ram

- 3 Ewe, 1 or 2 adult teeth
- 4 Ewe, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Extra Fine Ewe

- 5 Group of 1 ram & 2 ewes

Fine wool 58s - 64s (20 - 25)

- 6 Ram, 1 or 2 adult teeth
- 7 Ram, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Fine Ram

- 8 Ewe, 1 or 2 adult teeth
- 9 Ewe, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Fine Ewe

- 10 Group of 1 ram & 2 ewes

Medium wool 50s - 56s (26 - 30)

- 11 Ram, 1 or 2 adult teeth
- 12 Ram, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Medium Ram

13 Ewe, 1 or 2 adult teeth

14 Ewe, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Medium Ewe

15 Group of 1 ram & 2 ewes

Strong wool 38s – 48s (31 – 37)

16 Ram, 1 or 2 adult teeth

17 Ram, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Strong Ram

18 Ewe, 1 or 2 adult teeth

19 Ewe, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Strong Ewe

20 Group of 1 ram & 2 ewes

Rug wool, stronger than 38s (38 & stronger)

21 Ram, 1 or 2 adult teeth

22 Ram, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Rug Ram

23 Ewe, 1 or 2 adult teeth

24 Ewe, 3 or more teeth

Champion & Reserve Rug Ewe

25 Group of 1 ram & 2 ewes

Lambs

26 Ram lamb 58s and finer

27 Ram lamb 50s – 56s

28 Ram lamb 48s and stronger

29 Ewe lamb 58s and finer

30 Ewe lamb 50s – 56s

31 Ewe lamb 48s and stronger

Champion & Reserve Lamb

Champion Ram

Champion Ewe

Supreme Champion (Champion ram, ewe and lamb)

Most Successful Exhibitor

Aggregate Points

Classes 1 through to 31 and Champion and Reserve sheep are eligible for aggregate points towards the 'TROPHY'. Convenors may delete classes but not add new classes to be eligible for the 'trophy'. Wether classes are able to be added however are only eligible for Champion wether and no points towards the 'trophy'

Point System

In all classes, regardless of the number of entries the following points are awarded:

1st – 5 points, 2nd – 3 points, 3rd – 1 point.

Champion 5 pts, and Reserve 3 pts.

FLEECES**Classes****Extra fine, finer than 64s (Finer than 20)**

1. Ram fleece

2. Ewe or wether fleece

Fine Wool 58s – 64s (20 – 25)

3. Ram fleece

4. Ewe or wether fleece

Medium wool 50s – 56s (26 – 30)

5. Ram fleece

6. Ewe or wether fleece

Strong wool 38s – 48s (31 – 37)

7. Ram fleece

8. Ewe or wether fleece

Rug wool, stronger than 38s (38 & stronger)

9. Ram fleece

10. Ewe or wether fleece

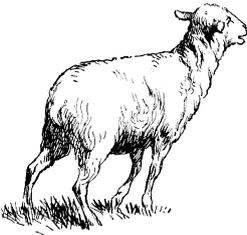
CHAMPION FLEECE**RESERVE CHAMPION FLEECE****BEST FLEECE FOR HANDCRAFT USE (highest scoring fleece in the Usefulness for Handcraft section)****Aggregate Points**

Classes 1 through to 10 and Champion and Reserve fleeces are eligible for aggregate points towards the TROPHY. Convenors may delete classes but not add new classes to be eligible for the trophy.

Point System

In all classes, regardless of the number of entries the following points are awarded: 1st – 5 points, 2nd – 3 points, 3rd – 1 point. Champion 5 points, and Reserve 3 points.

Hawkesbury Region Contacts

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<i>Pamela Fitzsimons</i> basaba@wr.com.au	251 Sandy Creek Rd Mt. Vincent 2323 H: 4938-0082 Fx: 4938-0085 Fleeces for sale Sheep: Corriedale, B/Leicester and Cross. Corriedale and Border Leicester Rams for sale	
<i>Betty Nash</i>	56 Longleat Road Kurmond 2757 H: 4573-2524 Fleeces for sale. Sheep: Corriedale, Corriedale/Merino X <i>See advertisement</i>	
<i>Wendy van Raalte</i>	249 Grono Farm Rd Wilberforce 2756 H: 4579-9661 Sheep: Corriedale - none for sale at this time	
<i>Judith Schonkala</i>	36 Longleat Lane Kurmond 2757H: 4573-1368 Fleeces for sale Sheep: Merino Cross, Romney Cross, Oasis	
<i>Anne White</i>	P. O. Box 71 Richmond 2754 H: 4571-2107 Fleeces for sale	

Lambcare Hints

The lambing season is upon us again and sometimes Mother Nature may need a hand. The following article from a newspaper "Rural Roundup" column was sent in by Judy Cachel and provides a suggested plan of action in case you end up with an orphan lamb.

Before feeding starts: Check that lambs are strong and have no abnormalities eg. cleft palate, undershot jaw.

Colostrum: If the lamb has received no colostrum from the ewe, an artificial colostrum must be fed for the first 48 hours. It may be prepared as follows:

*One beaten egg,
5ml cod liver oil or castor oil or medicinal paraffin oil
10ml lactose or glucose
750ml cows milk or milk replacer,
Mix together, warm to body temperature and feed 170 - 200ml four times a day.*

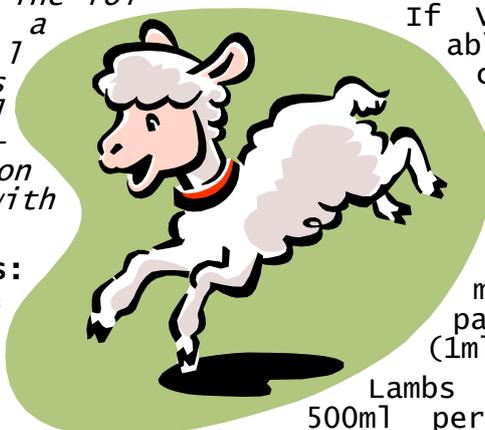
Subsequent feeding: Cows milk is

not a satisfactory substitute for ewe milk because of its relatively low fat and protein content. A ewe milk substitute, Veनावite, should be used if possible, mixed as directed on the label.

If Veनावite is unavailable, use either full cream milk powder, or two parts calf milk powder with one part full cream milk powder mixed with water.

The correct concentration is one part of milk powder to 4-5 parts water by weight. (1ml water weighs 1g)

Lambs should drink about 500ml per day for the first seven days and about 1 to 1.5 litres per day after that. Feed four times daily for the first two weeks, and 2-3 times a day thereafter. Do not overfeed - if anything, keep them a bit hungry. At 3-4 weeks of age, sometimes earlier, lambs will begin to pick grass and should be turned into a handy paddock of top quality pasture, preferably with high legume content. If this is not available, provide hay or calf pellets for lambs to pick at. Clean water should also be available at all





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Inquiries: Betty Nash on (02) 4573-2524

times.

Weaning: Lambs should be weaned from about six weeks of age. If they are eating well and have access to high quality feed, they should be weaned abruptly rather than gradually.

This produces less digestive upsets and bloat than does gradual weaning. If lambs are not weaned abruptly, milk should be reduced over a period of two weeks.

General: Good hygiene and regular feeding helps to prevent scouring.

In case of scouring, halve the milk concentration by mixing one part of milk powder with nine parts of water, or replace milk with a glucose and electrolyte solution.

Antibiotics given by mouth may also be required. Seek veterinary advice.

"The Complete Book of Raising Livestock and Poultry" (Published by Pan, 1988) adds the following comments:

Hand rearing is, however, messy and time-consuming and you should

only undertake it if you are sure you will be able to go through with it. If you have not enough time to spare or too many lambs to make it practicable, there are several more labour saving methods of artificial rearing which have proven successful. In all cases the following essential principles are to be observed:

- 1 The lamb must have colostrum before being reared.
- 2 A high standard of hygiene must be maintained in the rearing pens.
- 3 The daily routine should be consistent.
- 4 The lambs should be reared in small groups.
- 5 They should not be weaned until they are eating solid food as a regular and significant part of their diet.

The problems that occur with arti-



Monaro Region Contacts

Jason Byron "Sunnyslope" P.O. Box 231 Hall 2618 H:6230-2344
 Jason.Byron@pi.csiro.au Sheep: (155) Merino, Corriedale, Lincoln, English
 Leicester.

Glenda Chatterton Lot 6 Buckenderra Rd Buckenderra 2630
 H: 6453-7231 Fax: 6453-7231
 Sheep: (24) Merino, Corriedale, Merino/
 Cor X
 Fleeces for sale (Lambs soon - call)

Christine Parkes "Elanora" Dry Plains via Cooma 2630
 Phone: (H) 6453-7218 Fleeces for sale
 Sheep: (93) Merino, Polwarth, Cor-
 riedale, Polwarth/Corriedale X, Border
 Leicester/Corriedale

Helena Windberg "Tralee" Eugowra Rd. Gooloogong 2805 Phone: (H)

**Breeding Brown (Moorit) Sheep**

By Ian Lockrey

Sheep described as "Brown" (used to be Moorit) are identified by not only by brown or fawn coloration of the fleece, but also of the skin and the hair of the face, ears, and legs (like that of an Australian Red kelpie dog), and the skin of the palate, vulva and anus.

If the brown sheep in your flock have all the characteristics you desire, then the best method of building up numbers is to breed 'brown' with 'brown', taking care not to inbreed too much—introduce a ram with similar characteristics from time to time. Select desirable progeny (lamb) to breed-on from.

If the brown sheep in your flock do not have all the characteristics you desire, (e.g. fibre diameter too small), then the easiest method to improve this characteristic is to purchase a 'brown' ram of the desired characteristics and 'line' breed to him and/or similar introductions to your flock. Select desirable progeny to breed-on from.

However, if you are unable to find a 'brown' ram with the desirable characteristics, you will need to use one of another colour (black/grey or white) with the desirable characteristics. This breeding program can be frustrating and disappointing because of the recessive nature of the gene (factor of inheritance) producing brown/fawn

colour in sheep. Your progress to the desired goal will be **much faster** if you use a black/grey ram in preference to a white one as shown in the diagram later.

Inheritance of colour in sheep.

Genes are units (or factors) of inheritance found in pairs in the cells of an animal. These genes determine the characteristic of that animal. With each pair of genes, one has come from the male parent and one from the female parent.

Two pairs of genes are involved in determining the fleece colour of sheep. (There are others involved in colour patterns).

The first pair of genes determine if the sheep is white or non-white.

'w' represents the gene for white fleece

'w' represents the gene for non-white (coloured) fleece

The 'w' gene is dominant—this means that whenever a 'w' is contained in a pair, then the animal will be white even when the other gene in the pair is 'w' - the potential for colour is *masked* so it is not seen. (Ww)

The second pair of gene decides which of the colours (black/grey) or (brown/fawn) the sheep is to be. The colour the determine will only show if both the genes in the first pair are 'w' so that there is no masking effect.

'B' represents the gene for black (black/grey) fleece

'b' represents the gene for brown (brown/fawn) fleece
 'B' is dominant—this means that whenever a 'B' is contained in a pair then the animal will be black/grey even if the other gene in the pair is 'b' - the potential brown is masked so it is not seen.

In summary:

- 'w' (white) is dominant over 'w' non-white
- 'B' (black) is dominant over 'b' brown
- 'w' present in the first set of genes masks the colour predicted in the second set.

NB. All white sheep have genes for colour in their second pair of genes but the 'w' in the first pair masks the potential colour.

From this it becomes evident that brown fleece shows up rarely, because it is governed by a gene that is *doubly recessive*—non-dominant. However if a brown sheep is mated to a brown sheep, the resulting lambs will always be brown.

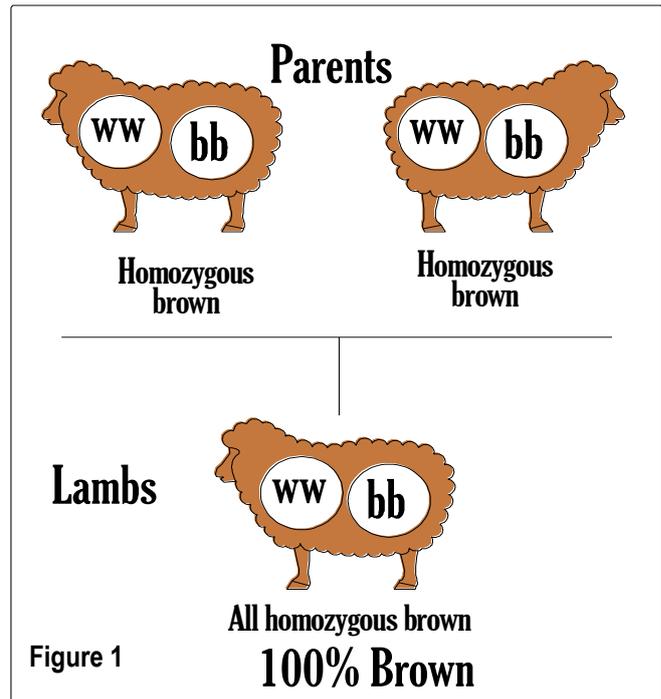
When a sheep has two similar genes in the gene pair e.g. (ww) or (bb) that sheep is described as **Homozygous** for that characteristic e.g. homozygous black: (BB)

When a sheep has dissimilar genes in a gene pair e.g. (Ww) or (Bb) that sheep is described as **Heterozygous** for that characteristic. E.g. heterozygous white: (Bb)

The following simplified diagrams indicate the likely recombination of fleece colour genes when passed from parents to offspring; and the proportion of lambs likely to result from the different combination of parents.

NB. These recombinations always occur at random, so the greater the number of lambs resulting from a particular combination of parents, the closer the result obtained in practice will be to the theoretical diagrammatic results. (Except, of course, in figures 1, 2, & 4 where the lambs are uniform.)

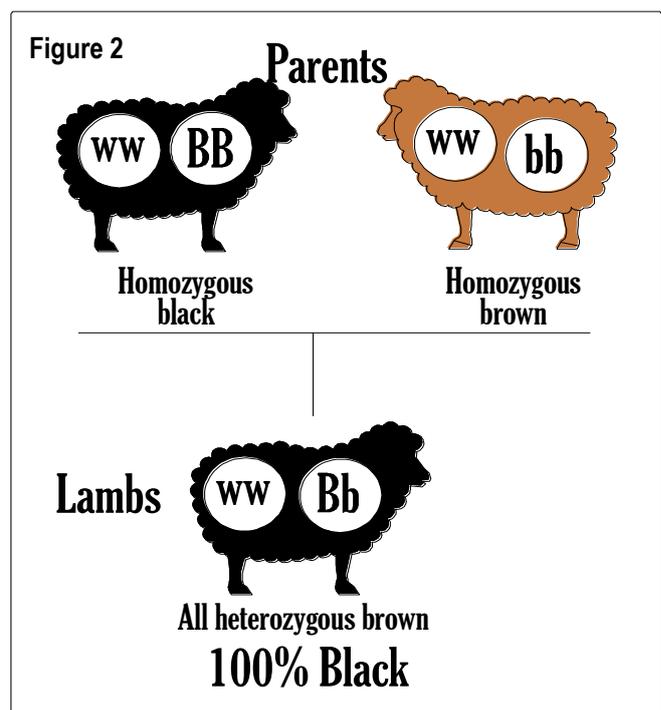
When both parents are brown, the



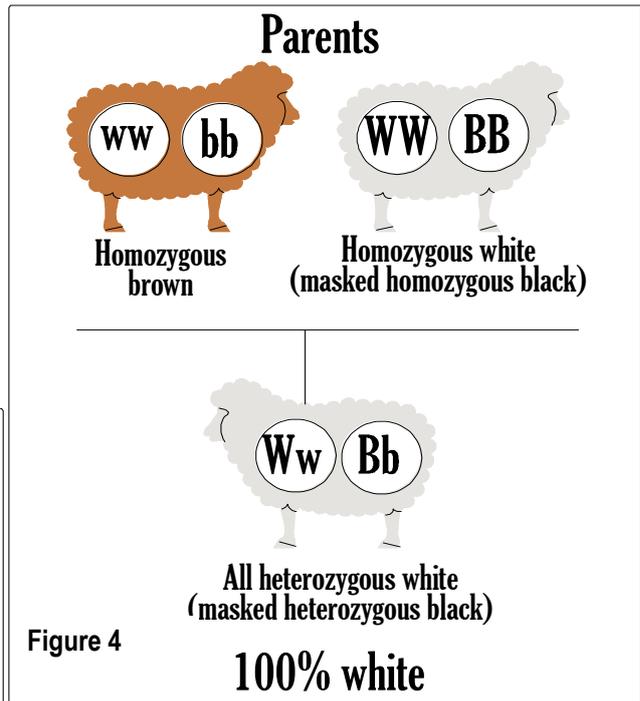
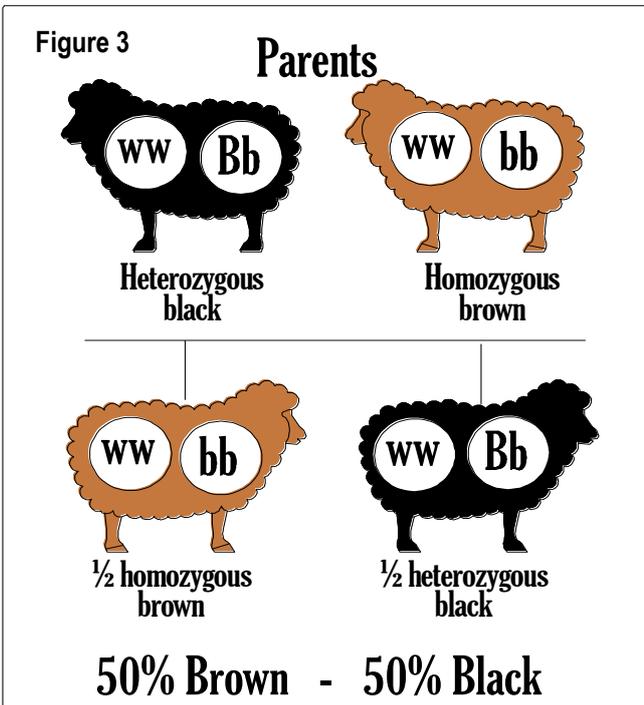
resulting lambs will always be brown.

This is the recommended breeding regime if the characteristics of the fleece meet requirements.

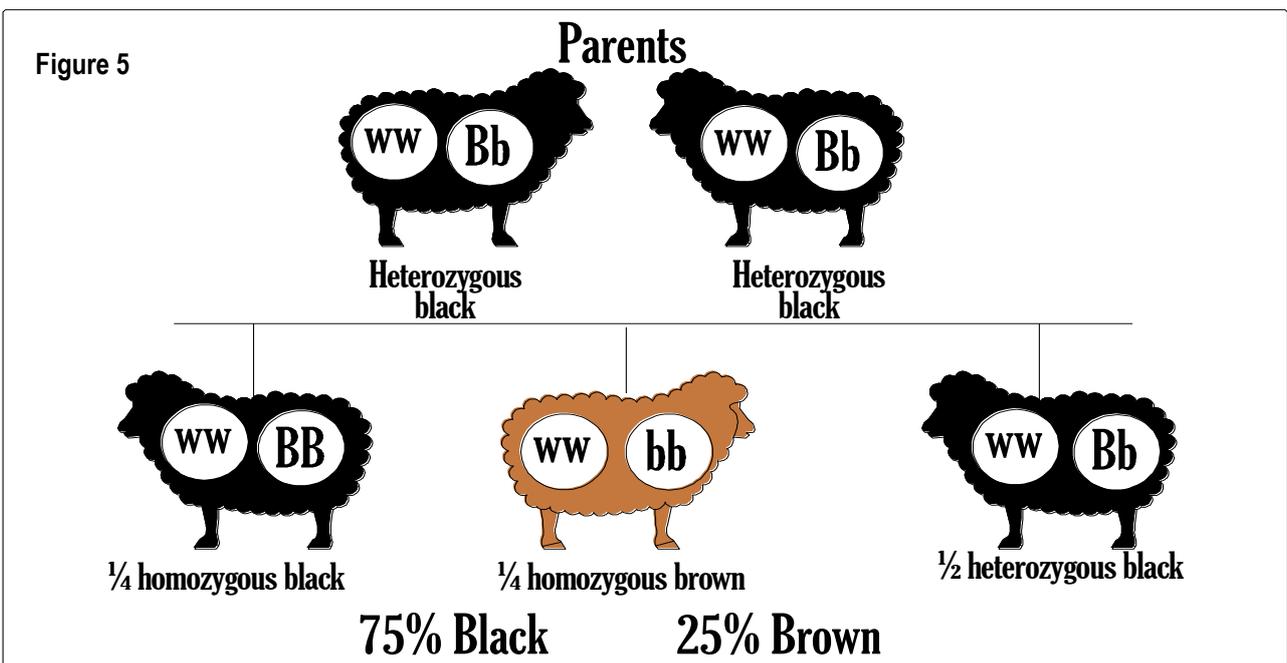
The breeding shown in **Figure 5** is a natural progression from that shown in **Figure 2** and the improvement in the desired characteristics should be about 50% greater in the brown lambs resulting from **Figure 5** than

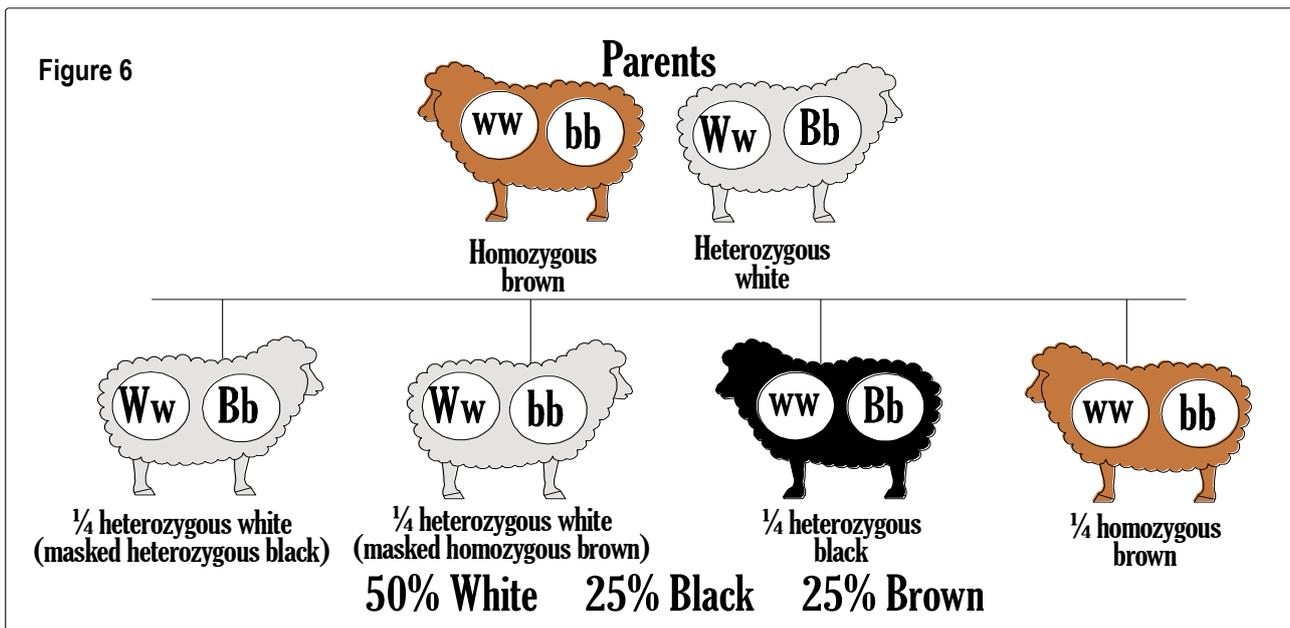


their brown grandparents in Figure 2. If however, the breeding shown in Figure 3 followed from that shown in Figure 2, there would be twice as many brown lambs resulting, but with only about 25% improvement in the desired characteristics over their brown grandparents in Figure 2. This is called back crossing. If, however, the breeding shown in Figure 6 followed that shown in Figure



If the Figure 2 to Figure 5 sequence is repeated using a brown lamb from Figure 5 (first time around) as a parent in Figure 2 (second time around), then the brown lambs resulting from Figure 5 (second time around) will be about 75% improved on their brown great, great grandparent in Figure 2 (first time around) for the desired characteristic. The same holds for the Figure 4 to Figure 7 line.





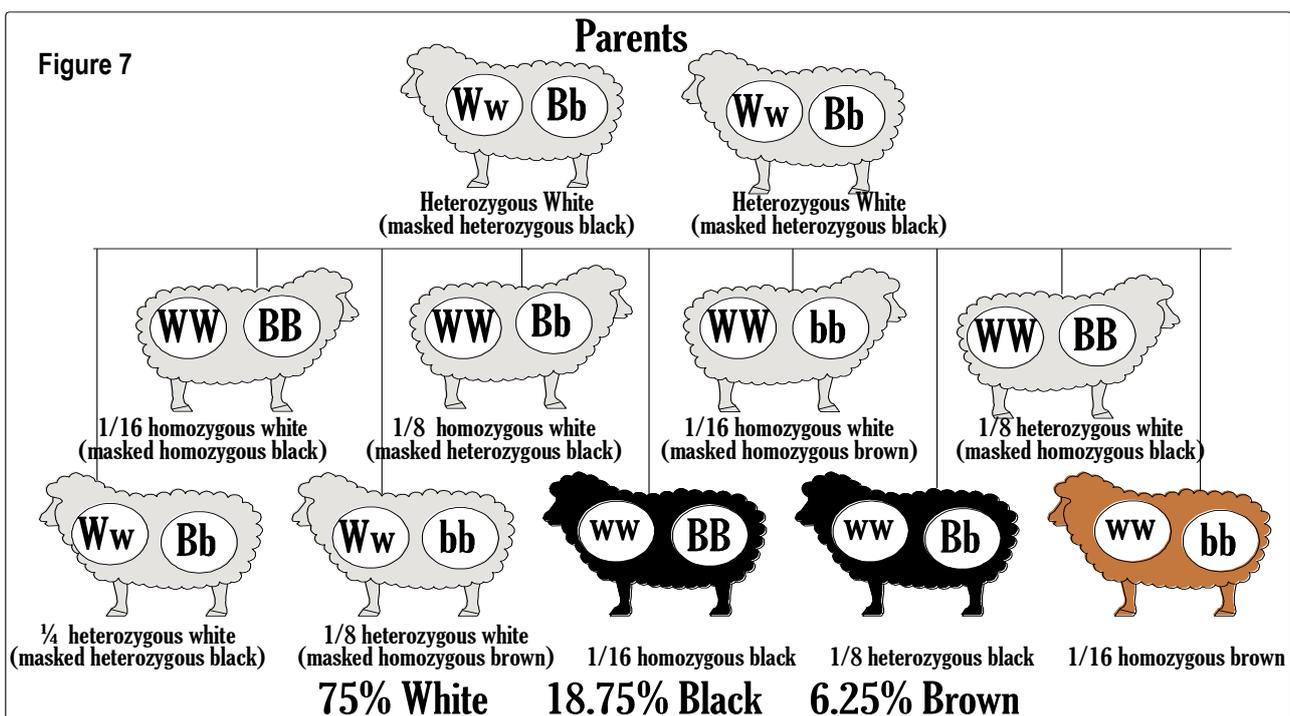
The degree of improvement in that characteristic will also depend on its heritability. However, using wise selection (for the character) of lambs from each generation for breeding the next, will greatly enhance the rate of progress to your goal. The larger the number of lambs from which to select, the better.

Not many breeders of coloured sheep have large flocks. Therefore, if there are a few breeders, each working along similar lines, it would be advantageous for them to get to know each other and

their breeding programs; and possibly to exchange an animal now and then.

For all the breeding patterns described above (except maybe Figure 1) it is essential to tag all lambs with numbered ear tags (or some other means of individual identification) as soon after birth as possible. Parents should also be tagged. Only one ram should be joined to each group of ewes and accurate records kept of matings and lambings.

Acknowledgements: 'The Moorit Gene in Australian



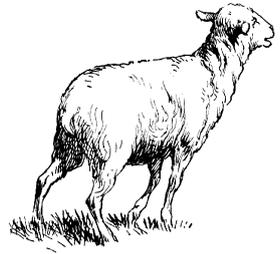
South Coast & Southern Tablelands Contacts

Anne Anderson "Temagog" Golden Vale Rd Sutton Forest 2577 Ph: (H) 4877-1210
 Fleeces for sale. Sheep: (25) Come-back, Crossbreds

Sue O'Grady P. O. Box 139 Menangle park 2563
 sogrady@ispdr.net.au Ph: (H) 4621-4321 Fleeces for sale.
 Sheep: (120) Merino, Merino X, Corriedale, Corriedale X, Crossbreds.

Bob & Denise Munday P. O. Box 1002 Goulburn 2580
 munrolafibres@bigpond.com Ph: (H) 4829-2314, Fax: 4829-2316,
 M: 0427 600-528 Fleeces for sale (See Advert)
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Jacki Waugh "Temuka" 37 Stockade Lane Boxers Creek via Goulburn NSW 2580
 pjwaugh@interact.net.au Phone: (H) 4829-8157 (M) 0428 298-157 Fax: 4829-8157



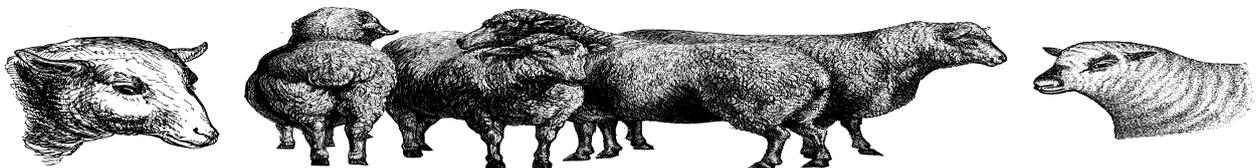
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2	Fine Wool	20 – 25µ (58 – 64)	5	Rug Wool	38µ and stronger (< 38)	

kg	Ewes & Wethers					Rams				
	1 Xtr Fine	2 Fine	3 Medium	4 Strong	5 Rug	1 Xtr Fine	2 Fine	3 Medium	4 Strong	5 Rug
7.4										15
7.2										14
7.0										13
6.8										12
6.5								15		11
6.3								14		10
6.1								13	15	9
5.9								12	14	8
5.6							15	11	13	7
5.4							14	10	12	6
5.2					15		13	9	11	5
5.0					14		12	8	10	4
4.7			15		13		11	7	9	3
4.5			14	15	12		10	6	8	2
4.3			13	14	11		9	5	7	1
4.1			12	13	10	15	8	4	6	
3.8		15	11	12	9	14	7	3	5	
3.6		14	10	11	8	13	6	2	4	
3.4		13	9	10	7	12	5	1	3	
3.1	15	12	8	9	6	11	4		2	
2.9	14	11	7	8	5	10	3		1	
2.7	13	10	6	7	4	9	2			
2.5	12	9	5	6	3	8	1			
2.2	11	8	4	5	2	7				
2.0	10	7	3	4	1	6				
1.8	9	6	2	3		5				
1.6	8	5	1	2		4				
1.3	7	4		1		3				
1.1	6	3				2				
0.9	5	2				1				
0.7	4	1								
0.5	3									
0.3	2									
0.1	1									