

Lamb Breed Classification Guidelines

A collaboration by the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association, Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, TCAAA Animal Industries Committee, Texas FFA Major Livestock Show Advisory Committee, Texas FFA, and Texas 4-H.



Please keep in mind, registration papers, breeder affidavits, or other paperwork is not considered in the classification process. Eligibility for the class is determined only by visual appraisal, as evaluated by classifiers appointed by show management.

CLASSIFICATION TERMS:

Acceptable: Characteristics that represent the breed.

Discriminatory: Characteristics that are not reason for absolute disqualification but in combination with other discriminatory visual characteristics could lead to removal from a breed division.

Absolute Disqualifications: Unfavorable visual characteristics resulting in removal from a breed division.

Scur: Horn growth that is not completely attached to the skull.

Birthmark: Dark pigmented skin with dark fiber present within the margins of the pigmentation.

Breed Classification Guidelines

FINEWOOL

Acceptable

1. Rambouillet, Delaine, Debouillet, or a cross between these breeds.
2. Silky, white face.
3. Silky ears, medium to moderate in length.
4. Soft pelt.
5. Yellow to white hooves (neutral).
6. Black pads on hooves and black dew claws.
7. Minimal amount of black streaking in the hooves. Less than 1/8 of cumulative hoof surface.
8. Nose should be neutral to pink in color.
9. May be polled or horned. Horns must be indicative of acceptable Finewool breeds.

Discriminatory

1. Moderate amounts of brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool.
2. Moderate freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, nose, and lips.
3. Black eyelashes.
4. Excessive black streaking in hooves more than 1/8 cumulative of hoof surface.
5. Birthmarks.

Absolute Disqualification

1. Excessively coarse britch and/or harsh pelt.
2. Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs.
3. Excessive brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool.
4. Excessive freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, nose, and lips.
5. Brown or black spots in hairline above the hooves to the dew claw.
6. Solid black hooves.
7. Black lambs.
8. Surgical alterations other than re-docking.
9. Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene.
10. Head, ear and/or horn shape non-typical to the Finewool breeds (Rambouillet, Delaine, Debouillet, or a cross between these breeds).

FINEWOOL CROSS

Acceptable

1. Must be a cross with evidence of at least 50% Finewool breeding and the remaining percentage exhibiting predominance of ONLY Hampshire and/or Suffolk breeding.
2. Soft pelt which is characteristic of ½ blood wool (60's-62's spinning count).
3. Face and ears should be soft and silky.
4. Spotting and/or brown face and ears.
5. Moderate spotting and/or brown legs not extending above the rear flank and fore flank.
6. Wool must be present below the hocks on the rear legs; wool below the knees on the front legs is not necessary.
7. Reddish, rust colored legs are acceptable.
8. White-faced or ring-eyed crosses are acceptable if pelt is acceptable – as long as no discriminatory characteristics are present.
9. Birthmarks.
10. Scurs and/or horns are acceptable. Horns must be indicative of acceptable Finewool breeds.

Discriminatory

1. Excessive black spotting in the skin above the knees and hocks.
2. Moderate black or chocolate brown color on face, ears and legs (including wool).
3. Moderately coarse britch and/or harsh pelt.
4. Moderately coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs.

Absolute Disqualification

1. Excessive black or dark chocolate brown color on face, ears, and legs (including wool).
2. Excessively coarse britch and/or harsh pelt.
3. Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs.
4. Total absence of wool on rear legs.
5. Black lambs.
6. Evidence of other breeds including, but not limited to Dorset and Southdown breed types (head and ear shape of Dorset and/or Southdown).
7. Surgical alterations other than re-docking.
8. Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene.

SOUTHDOWN

Acceptable

1. Hair color on muzzle should be mouse-colored, gray to brown and match color on legs and pasterns.
2. Nostril pigmentation may be black to purplish-gray.
3. Head and muzzle should be broad and proportional to body.
4. Head of moderate length and in proportion to body.
5. Ears of moderate length, in proportion to body, and covered with short hair or wool.
6. Black hooves.
7. Slight chalk around eyes.
8. Slight chalk around muzzle.
9. Spots or speckles in the skin only when shorn.

Discriminatory

1. Solid white color or dark chocolate color on muzzle.
2. Coarse britch and/or harsh pelt.
3. Predominately pink nose with few black spots.
4. Long, narrow muzzle.
5. Excessive black pigmentation on ears.
6. Excessive ear length not in proportion to head.
7. No hair or wool on ears.
8. Scurs.
9. Absence of wool between scur areas.
10. Striped hooves.
11. Reddish, rust colored hair above hoof to pastern.
12. Black fibers in wool outside of birthmark.
13. Birthmarks.

Absolute Disqualification

1. Speckled face, ears, or legs.
2. Horns.
3. White hooves.
4. Intentional alteration of hair color or skin pigmentation.
5. Total pink pigmentation of nostrils.
6. Black lambs.
7. Surgical alterations other than re-docking.
8. Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge.

Breed Classification Guidelines

DORPER

Acceptable

1. Must be a Dorper or White Dorper.
2. Conformation: long, deep, wide body with well sprung ribs and excellent muscling.
3. Color: Dorper – white sheep with black limited to head, neck, and forequarters not below the knee or behind the heart girth; White Dorper – white sheep.
4. Must have at least 1/3 hair primarily on belly, forearm, and britch.
5. 100% hair below the knees and hocks.
6. 100% hair forward of poll.
7. Moderate size ear with no wool covering.
8. Head should be strong, bold with a deep jaw.
9. Polled or small horns or scurs.
10. Spots or speckled pigment in the skin only when shorn.
11. Black spots above the hoof line and below the dewclaw.

Discriminatory

1. Tall, leggy, shallow, and/or narrow-bodied lambs.
2. A limited amount of dark fibered spots on body and underline behind heart girth not to exceed a cumulative total of the size of a softball.
3. A white sheep with brown or red colored speckles in the covering, confined to the head and neck.
4. Tri-colored sheep
5. Excessive wool covering more than 2/3 of body (belly, forearm, and britch).
6. Wool forward of poll.
7. Heavy horns.
8. Long, pendulous ears.
9. Long, narrow muzzle.

Absolute Disqualification

1. All wool or very little evidence of hair on belly, forearm, or britch.
2. Wool below the knees or hocks.
3. Wool on the ears.
4. Excessive amount of dark fibered spots on body and underline behind heart girth exceeding a cumulative total of the size of a softball.
5. Solid brown, red, rust colored head.
6. Speckling or spots from knee to dewclaw or from hock to dewclaw.
7. Strong breed characteristics of breeds other than Dorper or White Dorper.
8. Surgical alterations other than re-docking.
9. Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene.
10. Evidence of color alterations.

Breed Classification Guidelines

MEDIUM WOOL

This class generally includes the Suffolk and Hampshire breeds, plus all lambs that do not fit into the Finewool, Finewool Cross, Southdown, or Dorper breed classes.