

Handbook for the New Hampshire Breeder...



The American Hampshire Sheep Association

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HISTORY OF THE HAMPSHIRE BREED

The Hampshire sheep acquired its name from the agriculture county of Hampshire in Southern England where they were developed. The Hampshire-Down evolved from the mingling of different strains of kindred blood from sheep in co-existence along the borders of Hampshire County. The Old Hampshire, Berkshire Knot, Willshire Horn, and Southdown sheep were believed by most writers to be the original breeds found in and along the borders of Hampshire County. Mr. John Twynam made a valuable contribution to the Hampshire-Down through the use of an improved Cotswold ram and Mr. William Humphrey by the introduction of two of the largest and most outstanding Southdown rams. The sheep farmers in the district of Hampshire continued though selection to improve the Hampshire-Down, which was considered far superior to any other sheep. In 1889 the Hampshire-Down Sheep Breeder's Association was established in Salisbury, England, where it is still active.

During the same year (1889) the American Hampshire-Down Sheep Association was also organized, now known as the American Hampshire Sheep Association. Hampshire sheep were reported in the US around 1840 although there are no records to indicate that any survived the Civil War. Around 1865 to 1870 Hampshires were again imported from England but the first authentic record of importation was made in 1879. For over a century, US breeders have bred and selected Hampshires to fill specific sheep industry needs. Hampshire sheep have the genetic ability to efficiently convert forage into meat and fiber and are adaptable and productive in various geographic regions of the United States.

HAMPSHIRE BREED STANDARDS

1. GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Hampshire is a large, open faced and active sheep with a mild disposition.

Appearance: Major emphasis, is placed on such traits as weight per age, muscling, freedom from unsoundness, breed type, multiple births and strength while maintaining quality and general balance. Hampshires are noted for their rapid growth and efficient feed conversion. Lambs should be youthful in appearance.

Size: Mature rams should weigh 300 pounds or more and mature ewes should weigh 200 pounds or more in breeding condition.

2. BREED TYPE

Head: The face should be of good length, dark in color, and practically free of wool from the eyes down. An unbroken wool cap should extend from the neck over the forehead.

Ears: The ears should be moderate in length, thick, covered with a coarse dark brown or black hair and free from wool.

Nose: Broad muzzled, covered with a coarse dark brown or black hair. Wool feathering is acceptable and desirable. Should be open around the eyes. Small amount of "frostiness" on the nose is acceptable.

Legs: Some wool is desirable below the knee.

Off Color: The Hampshire should be free of white spots on jaws, legs and ears. Judges should be encouraged to discriminate against off color.

General: The Hampshire should show quality without weakness and size without coarseness. Masculinity in the ram and femininity in the ewe should be notable.

3. STRUCTURE

Feet and Legs: Both the front and rear legs should be well placed under the corners of the body with ample elevation off the ground to give it the height to balance with the body size. Short legs are associated with a small short body and early maturity. The legs should be of ample bone as noted by the circumference below the knees. Hocks that are straight (post legged) or have too much set (sickle hocked) are indicators of unsoundness. The angle of the hock should allow free movement. Proper shoulder angle and neck set should allow sheep to reach with a long stride in front. The pasterns should be strong with toes rather close together, even in size with a deep heel.

Movement: Should be free with long fluid strides. Should stand squarely with no bends in the knees. Toes should face forward.

4. BODY

Neck: The neck should come out of the top of the shoulder.

Shoulders: The shoulders should be smooth in appearance and not extremely course.

Chest, Brisket and Heart Girth: Should have width of chest and smoothness of brisket.

Back: The body should be relatively deep with a strong level top and the greater length from the last rib to the base of the dock. The back should be strong, well muscled and uniform throughout. It should be covered well with muscle and not fat.

Ribs: Should have adequate spring and depth of the rib.

Loin: Loin should be long, deep and wide

Rump & Hip: Should be long, level and wide at the pins.

Hindquarters: Considerable depth and bulge should be displayed in the leg muscle.

Underline: Should extend relatively straight from chest floor to flank. It is an indication of depth of body and capacity.

Skin: Should be relatively free of wrinkles

Fleece: The fleece of the Hampshire should be of good length, uniform and grade 1/4 to 3/8 bloods (54's to 60's spinning count). Black fibers in the fleece and hairy breeches should be avoided. A

pink skin in a healthy animal is preferred. A year's production of wool should weigh approximately 8 pounds.

5. REPRODUCTIVE TRAITS

The reproductive organs of both the ram and ewe should be normal and well developed.

RAMS

Testicles: At 12 months of age scrotal circumference should be 33 cm. Larger testicle size in rams has proven them to be fertile for more extended periods of time and to sire daughters with earlier puberty.

Fertility: High fertility and sex drive in rams. Regardless of season of year, the ram should breed a large number of ewes, which produce a high percentage of multiple births. The sire should transmit livability and ease of lambing to his offspring.

EWES

Conception Rate: Ewes should conceive on first service regardless of the season of the year. Replacement ewes and prospective sires should be selected from ewes that settle within 42 days after the introduction of the ram to the breeding flock.

Parturition: Ewes in satisfactory physical condition should need minimal assistance when lambing. They should have the ability to produce, at least, two strong and active lambs. They must provide adequate milk supply to insure maximum growth. The ewe should exhibit a strong desire to protect her offspring. Ideally a ewe should produce 100% or more of her body weight in 120 days.



Teats and Udder: Should have two moderate size and shaped teats and tightly attached udders.

OTHER DESIRABLE TRAITS

Parasite and Disease Resistance: Breeders are encouraged to select animals that exhibit resistance to disease of hoof and body.

Environmental Adaptability: The ability of an animal to adapt to immediate surroundings is reflected in a faster rate of growth and an increased reproductive capacity. Hamps are quiet and not easily excited.

6. HIGHLY OBJECTIONABLE CHARACTERISTICS

- A. Scurs
- B. Split scrotum
- C. Black fiber
- D. Insufficient weight for age
- E. Over aging

7. DISQUALIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

- A. Absence of Breed Type (no wool cap or leg wool)
- B. Mal-formed mouth
- C. Less than 2 testicles in rams
- D. Less than 2 teats in ewes
- E. Excessive white spots
- F. Narrow/shallow body appearance

8. DNA TESTING INFORMATION

Scrapie:

1. Scrapie is an infectious disease caused by a prion which is transmitted through placental tissues and fluids.

2. The presence of Scrapie can be detected only in the brain and lymph tissue, including tonsils and third eyelid tissue, but not in blood.

3. Genetic testing called Codon 171 & 136 indicates whether sheep are resistant or susceptible to the scrapie prion.

4. Codon 171 classifications (hereinafter referred to as genotype) are RR, QR and QQ.

5. Sheep with RR and QR genotypes are resistant to scrapie. Those with QQ are susceptible to scrapie only if exposed to the scrapie prion.

6. Codon 136 classifications (hereinafter referred to as genotype) are AA, AV and VV.

7. Sheep with AA genotypes are resistant to scrapie. Those with AV and VV are susceptible to scrapie only if exposed to the scrapie prion.

8. Ewes with a QQ genotype can only have lambs with a QQ or QR genotype

Spider Syndrome:

1. Genetic Testing is also available for this disease. An NN result is means that animal is not a carrier. An NS indicates a carrier for this disease.

RULES OF ENTRY - REVISED 1991

1. **Registration Eligibility** - Hampshire sheep shall be eligible for registry in this association that can be traced in unbroken lines of descent through both sire and dam to stud books recognized by your Board of Directors.

2. **Membership** - Owners of Hampshire sheep or duly authorized agents or representatives of good moral character shall be eligible for membership in this association. We have no provisions for deleting names or transferring membership. Corporations, partnerships, and family or farm names are acceptable on permanent membership only. (See list of fees)

3. **Junior Membership** - A free junior membership is available to Hampshire breeders under the age of 19. Annual dues apply only after the first year. A Junior membership is given the same fee or rate privileges as an Active or Senior member (non-member fees are double). Only individuals may become Junior members. Partnerships, family or farm names are not accepted. (See list of fees for Junior Renewal Memberships)



4. **Annual Dues** - These dues must be paid prior to registration work being done in a calendar year. (See list of fees)

5. **Application for Registration** - Application must be in entry form furnished by the Secretary and must be signed by the owner of the dam and the sire or accompanied by a signed breeding certificate. Different breeders and owners should be on separate forms. Entry forms and breeding certificate forms may be obtained from this office by request. As a requisite for registration, all breeders are required to preserve at least two years and to keep subject to the inspection upon demand of the Secretary or his representative, all original record books in which are kept the information required. (See list of fees)

6. **Identification** - AHS ear tags were discontinued as of 7-1-88. All sheep to be recorded shall have been identified by means of an ear tag, with the owner's name or farm name and the ID number of the animal. For a more permanent identification, ID ear tags in both ears, a tattoo or ear notch is encouraged. Animals, when approved, will have Association Registry Numbers assigned and a Certificate of Registry issued to the owner. All animals shall be known by the name of the owner at the time of registry and by the identification of

the animals and Association number recorded. The Association shall issue separate series of registration numbers for rams and ewes.

7. **Breeder** - The breeder of an animal is the person owning the dam at the time she was bred and dictating the mating. When bred ewes are sold, the sellers shall supply the purchaser with a breeding certificate. A breeding certificate must accompany the entry form for registration.

8. **Owner** - The owner is the person owning the dam (ewe) at the time the lamb was born. Registration shall be made only to the owner of the dam.

9. **Transfer** - Subsequent changes of ownership of a recorded animal shall be made on the back of the certificate of registry marked "Transfer" and this transfer recorded in the Association Office. The final payment is the date of sale from animals purchased "on time". (See list of fees)

10. **Christening an Animal** - Any owner desiring to christen an animal that has been registered shall return the original certificate of registration to the Secretary's office and apply for a new certificate bearing the new name. The Association number under which the animal was originally registered shall remain the same. (See list of fees)

11. **Duplicates** - Duplicate certificates of registry may be ordered through the Association office. (See list of fees)

12. **In Case of Doubtful Pedigree** - Questionable quality or for any reason deemed necessary on recorded animals or animals offered for registry, the Secretary has the authority to cause an investigation to be made and the right to check parentage by blood typing. The Secretary shall report to the Board of Directors his/her findings as to the purity, parentage, and merits of such animals. All breeders are required to permit the Secretary and/or his/her representative to view, examine, or draw blood for blood typing on breeding stock registered with this Association, on the breeder's premises at any time with the exception of legal holidays.

13. **An Unsound or Unworthy Animal** - These animals will not be recorded when facts proving inferiority are made known. If however, by any means, an animal is admitted improperly, the facts in the case shall be stated in the next succeeding volume of the record, and no progeny tracing to or through such animal shall thereafter be admitted.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of the AHSA is comprised of a Director from each district (listed below) and 3 at-large directors. They are elected for a 3 year term and may serve 3 terms before being retired for at least one term. There may be no more than 2 directors from any district and only 1 per state. Directors that are elected should be expected to attend two Board meetings per year. Directors do not receive a salary however, expenses are reimbursed to Directors for one meeting per year at their discretion.

District 1 - WA, OR, CA, NV, HA, AK

District 2 - MT, ID, WY, UT, CO

District 3 - AZ, NM, TX, OK

District 4 - ND, SD, MN, WI

District 5 - NE, IA, KS, MO

District 6 - IL, IN, OH, MI

District 7 - KY, WV, VA, AR, TN, NC, SC, LA, MS, AL, GA, FL

District 8 - PA, NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, CT, RI, NJ, DE, MD

VISITORS AT BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS

If a member would like to address the Board on an issue, please notify the Secretary or the President prior to the board meeting. Visitors will be acknowledged at the start of the meeting and will have ten minutes to make the presentation. They will be excused from the meeting so the Board of Directors may continue the required agenda.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board of Directors elects the Executive Committee. The Committee consists of the President, Vice President, and three other members of the Board of Directors.

NATIONAL SHOW

The National Show for the American Hampshire Sheep Association is held in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky. The National Show is the event of the year where the best flocks in the country compete for the top prizes. That event is held annually the third week in November. Along with the National Hampshire Show at Louisville, we also hold the North American Hampshire Sale following the show. Watch the Hampshire Heartbeat for information and a schedule of activities for that week.

REGIONAL SHOWS

Regional Hampshire Associations host regional Shows. If an Association is interested in hosting a regional show they should contact the AHSA office for more information on these schedules.

NATIONAL SALE

The National Hampshire Sale is held annually in conjunction with the Midwest Stud Ram Show & Sale in Sedalia, Missouri. The National Hampshire Sale is the third week of June. Watch for details in the Hampshire Heartbeat. For more information, contact the AHSA office or the Sheep Breeder Magazine, (the Midwest Stud Ram Sale Management) in Columbia, MO at 314-442-8257. This is the major consignment sale of the year where many of the top individuals that are to be sold that year will be consigned. This is also an opportunity to purchase animals from coast to coast as well as visit with the breeders from all parts of the United States and Canada.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The AHSA holds an annual meeting. The location of the next annual meeting is announced at the annual meeting for the current year. Announcements about the annual meeting can also be found in the Hampshire Heartbeat. During the annual meeting directors are elected to fill any vacancies on the board. If you are unable to attend you may vote for directors by absentee ballot and be represented on other issues that may arise by assigning your vote to a Proxy. Proxies and absentee ballots will be available in the Fall Issue of the Hampshire Heartbeat. Rules for voting by Proxy are as follows:

1. Each active Senior membership shall have one vote.
2. Voting by proxy shall be by instructed deputy. The deputy shall be an active member in good standing and shall be considered instructed upon presenting to the Secretary the proxy form prescribed by the Board of Directors and signed by the voting member.

HAMPSHIRE HEARTBEAT

The Hampshire Heartbeat is the official magazine of the American Hampshire Sheep Association. It is published in the Fall, Winter & Spring and mailed to all Senior members that have paid current dues and to Junior members that have registered or transferred animals in the calendar year (only one per household). This communication tool is to promote not only the Hampshire breed but the people who raise Hampshire as well. We appreciate and solicit information from members on activities around the country that involve Hampshire and Hampshire People! The Board of Directors have made the advertising rates reasonable so all members may take advantage of the publication. The advertising rates are posted at www.hampshires.com.

SEMEN COLLECTION, ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION & EMBRYO TRANSFER

If a member Collects Semen on a ram, Artificially Inseminates Ewes or does Embryo Transfers official documentation from the presiding Veterinarian or breeding service will be necessary to be presented at time of registration. Please use form located on the back of the Work Order enclosed.

WORK ORDER & FEE SCHEDULE

All association fees are located on the Work Order enclosed or can be found on the website at www.hampshires.com.

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Milo, Iowa 50166

Welcome, You are receiving the...

American Hampshire Sheep Association

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You will find all the information about the Association and Hampshire Sheep that you will need to get started. Also enclosed are the forms for Membership and Registrations.

If you need any other information please visit the website.

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