

Defining breed characteristics of the Jersey Wooly

There are three characteristics that differentiate the Jersey Wooly from other breeds: A bold, blocky head; the distinctive rise; and wool texture.

Bold, blocky head

Many breeds call for a bold head; the same is true of the Jersey Wooly. In the Jersey Wooly, we want a head that is indeed bold; it should appear “blocky,” that is, wide and even in width from crown through eye and lower muzzle. It should not display any sign of a wedged or snipey muzzle. The Jersey Wooly head should be nearly square in profile, with its depth nearly equal to width. We like to call this a “mug head.” Certainly, there is some curvature to the skull, but the blocky appearance will be exaggerated by wool cap that consists of longer and denser wool from between the ears to above the eyes, as well as by the cheek furnishings, which should not stand out straight, but rather have enough length to blend into the chest and shoulder wool.

Rise

The rise in a Jersey Wooly is not the same as the rise in a New Zealand, nor any other breed. It starts behind the head, which should be mounted fairly high, but not on top of the shoulder. This allows for a slight dip at the neck, then it rises smoothly up and over the high and down to the table in a smooth, full arc that is not undercut. The highpoint should be situated above the stifle (or knee) joint.

Texture

The wool coat in a Jersey Wooly is different from any other wool breed. We value texture above all else, as evidenced by the largest number of points given in this category. No other wool breed gives prominence to texture. Texture is displayed in a preponderance of guard hairs, which should be longer and thicker than the dense undercoat. That thickness in the guard hair will make it coarse; we call for a coarse coat, not a soft one as compared to the other wool breeds. A guard hair that is shorter or thinner will create a softer, silkier coat, which is not what we are looking for. It is within this context that we want as much density as possible. A coat that carries too much density will be soft, cottony, and will stand erect. The Jersey Wooly coat should have enough density to stand up when fluffed, but enough texture to immediately drape down a bit, giving that flowing coat you’ll often see. The Jersey Wooly should have an easy-care coat; it is the texture that gives this quality.