


Lamb Breed Classification Guidelines



A collaboration by the Texas County Agricultural Agents Association, Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, TCAAA Animal Industries Committee, ATAT 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.

Lamb Diagram



Classification Terminology

1. Acceptable: Characteristics that represent the breed
2. 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.
3. Absolute Disqualifications: Unfavorable visual characteristics resulting in removal from a breed division.
4. Scur: Horn growth that is not completely attached to the skull.
5. Birthmark: Dark pigmented skin with dark fiber present within the margins of the pigmentation.
6. Callipyge: A genetic mutation causing muscular hypertrophy (growth), with associated leanness and improved feed efficiency. Lambs expressing the gene have meat tenderness and quality issues.

Scurs

Scur



Callipyge



Finewool



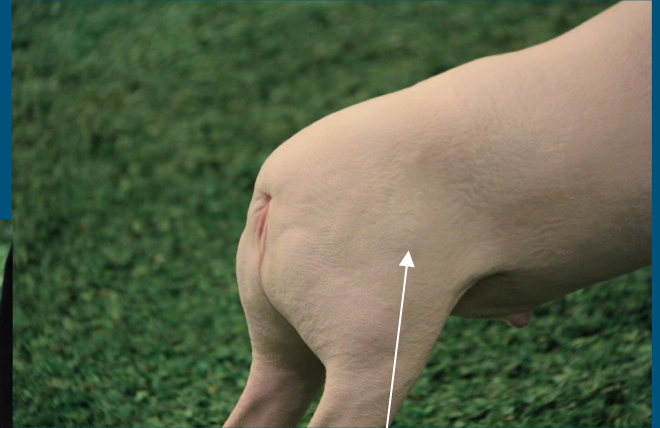
Acceptable Breed Traits

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.

Acceptable Breed Traits



Silky white face
Moderate length ears

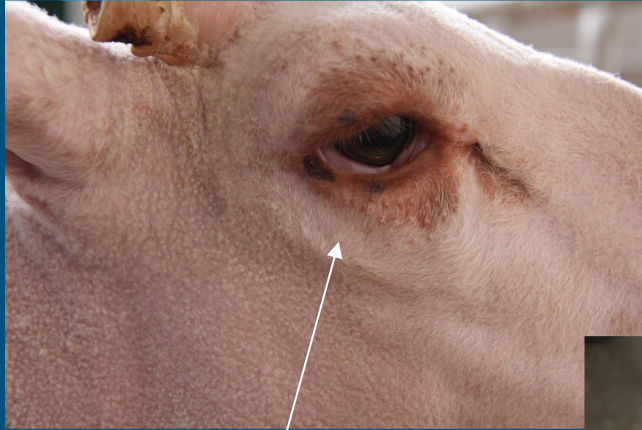


Correct softness of britch

Discriminatory Breed Traits

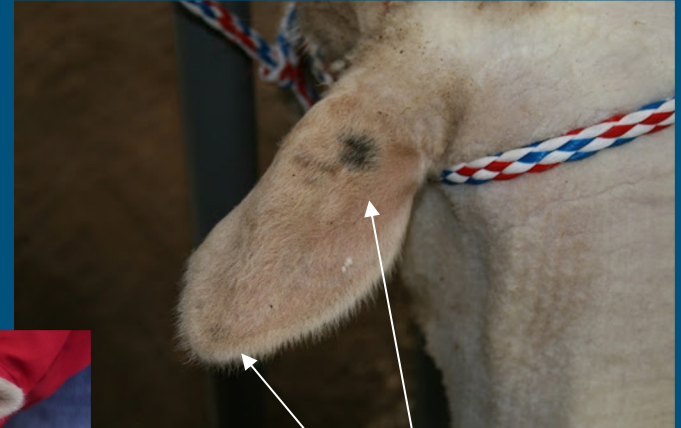
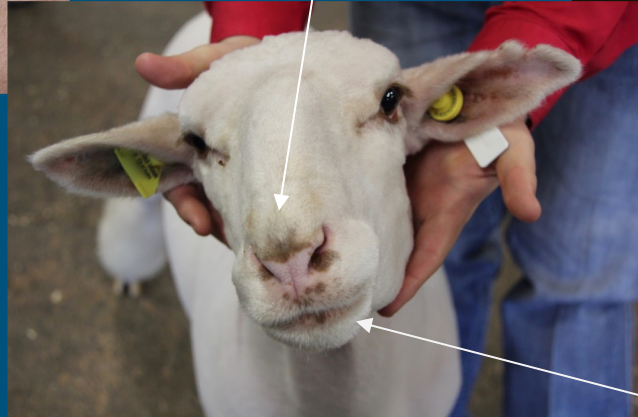
1. Moderate amounts of brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool.
2. Moderate freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, nose, and lips.
3. Black eyelashes.
4. Excessive black streaking in hooves more than 1/8 cumulative of hoof surface.
5. Birthmarks.

Moderate freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, nose, and lips.



Discoloration around the eyes

Freckling/Markings on and/or around nose



Mild freckling on ears and head

Pigmented skin/marks on lips

Black Eyelashes



Dark Eyelashes



Dark brown/Black eyelashes

Excessive black streaking in hooves more than $\frac{1}{8}$ cumulative of hoof surface.



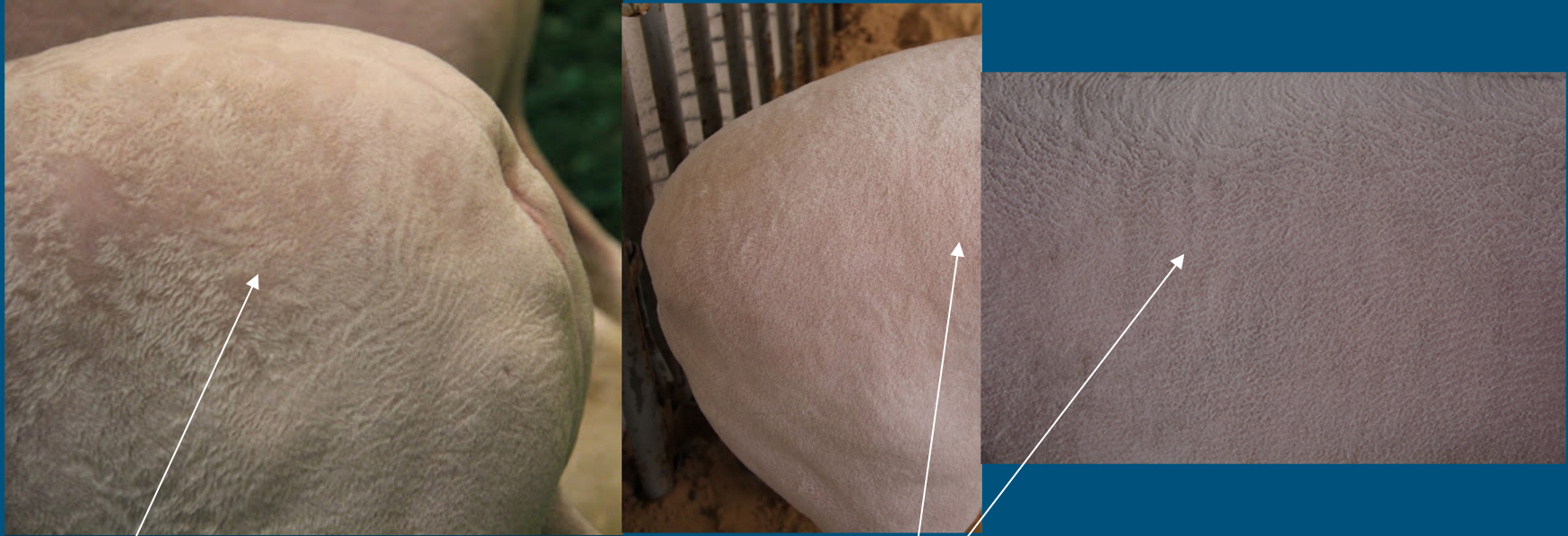
Defined black markings on hooves

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 toe or 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).

Finewools classed out will be assigned to either the Finewool Cross or Medium Wool breeds at the determination of the classifiers

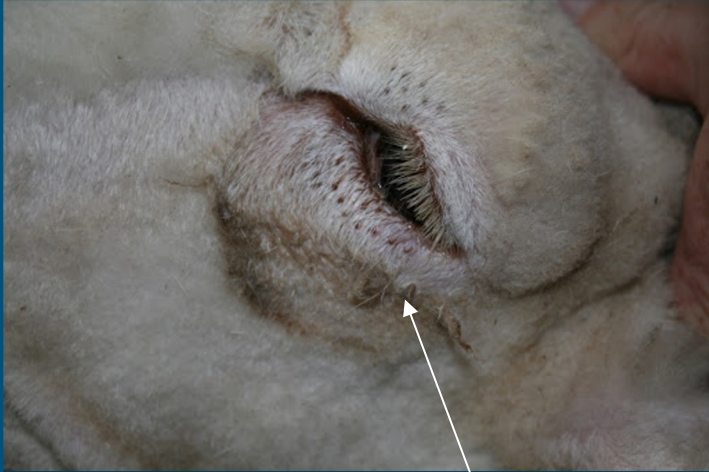
Excessively coarse britch and/or harsh pelt



Inconsistent pattern
of wool

Consistent pattern of
wool

Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs.



Chalky and rough facial characteristics



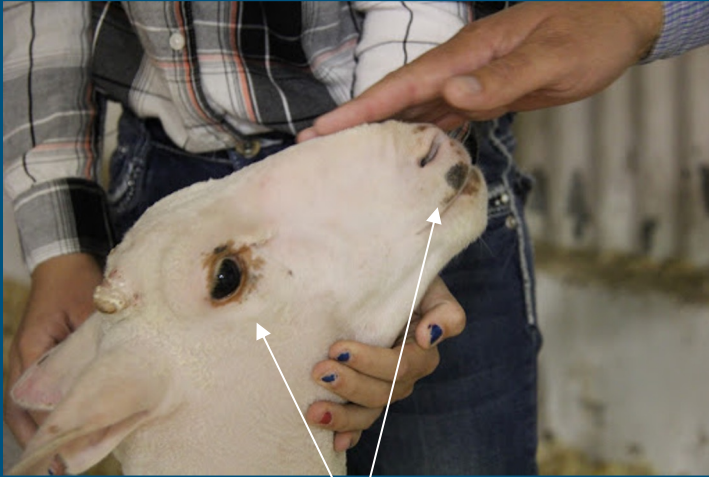
Chalky face and dark eyelashes

Excessive brown or black spots in the skin and/or wool



Example of a black spot

Excessive freckling or pigmented skin (brown or black) on the ears, eyes, nose, and lips



Excessive eye and nose discoloration



Excessive nose markings

Brown or black spots in hairline above the hooves to the dew claw.

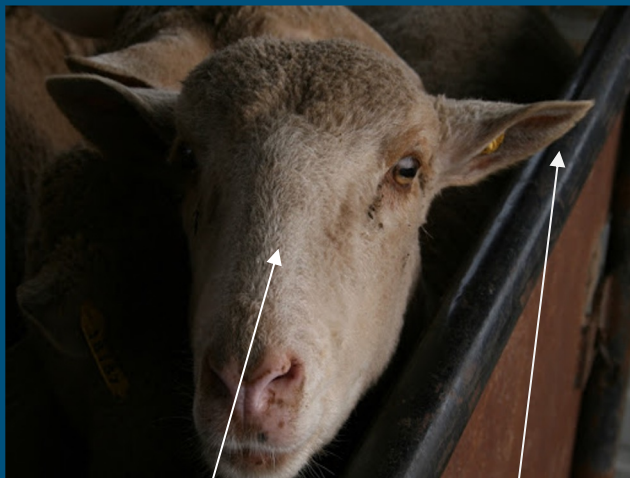


Black spots above hooves

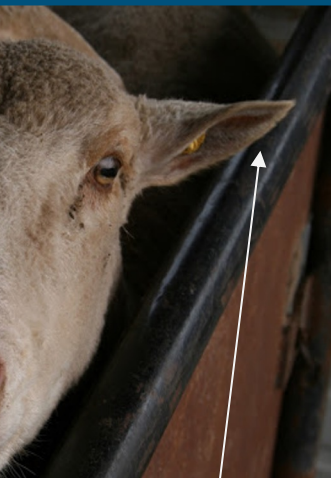


Discoloration of wool around hooves

Head, ear and/or horn shape non-typical to the Finewool breeds (Rambouillet, Delaine, Debouillet, or a cross between these breeds).



Incorrect head shape



Ear shape and size does not match Finewool breed characteristics



Dorset type horn - Incorrect



Good head shape

Dorset h

Finewool Cross - Acceptable

1. The standard for Finewool Crosses is a Finewool Ewe (Rambouillet, Delaine, Debouillet, or a cross between these breeds) bred to a hampshire or suffolk rams.
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. Birthmarks.
9. Scurs are acceptable

Finewool Cross



Acceptable Breed Traits



Red leg wool is acceptable



Good wool covering
and color



Discriminatory Breed Traits

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.
5. White-faced or Ring-eyed crosses
6. Horns are discriminatory on finewool crosses (except classed out finewools with horns indicative of acceptable finewool breeds)

Excessive black spotting in the skin above the knees and hocks



Black spotting above knees and hocks

Moderate black or chocolate brown color on face, ears
and legs (including wool)



Dark coloring of wool around legs

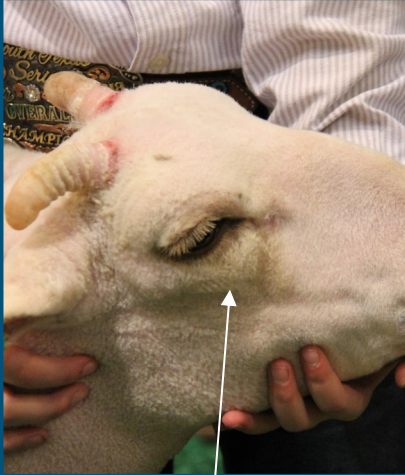


Color on face

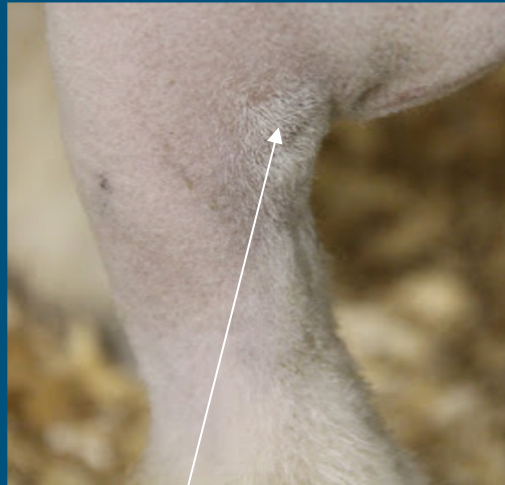
Moderately coarse britch and/or harsh pelt



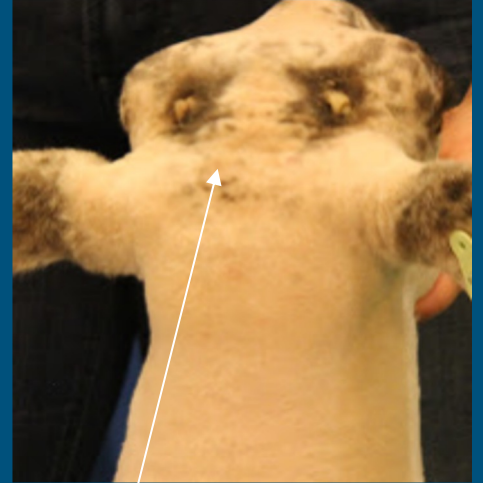
Moderately coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs



Coarse and Chalky hair



Chalky Hair on Legs



Chalky hair

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.

Excessive black or dark chocolate brown color on face, ears, and legs (including wool)



Dark color wool on legs



Solid color pattern/dark face coloring

Excessive coarse, chalky, white hair on the face, in the flanks, and/or down the front and/or rear legs.



Chalky hair around eye

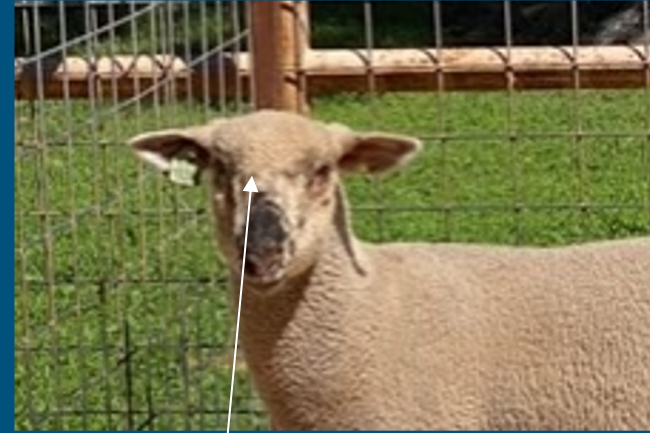
Evidence of other breeds including, but not limited to Dorset and Southdown breed types (head and ear shape of Dorset and/or Southdown)



Other Breed Characteristics



Small Pointy Ears



Good Head Shape

Southdown

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.
10. Birthmarks

Southdown



Acceptable Breed Traits



Acceptable wool on legs



Correct hoof color

Discriminatory Breed Traits

1. Solid white color or dark chocolate color on muzzle and/or head.
2. Coarse britch and/or harsh pelt.
3. Predominantly pink nose with few black spots.
4. Excessive black pigmentation on ears.
5. No hair or wool on ears.
6. Scurs.
7. Absence of wool between scur areas.
8. Striped hooves.
9. Reddish, rust colored hair above hoof to pastern.
10. Black fibers in wool outside of birthmark.

Solid white color or dark chocolate color on muzzle

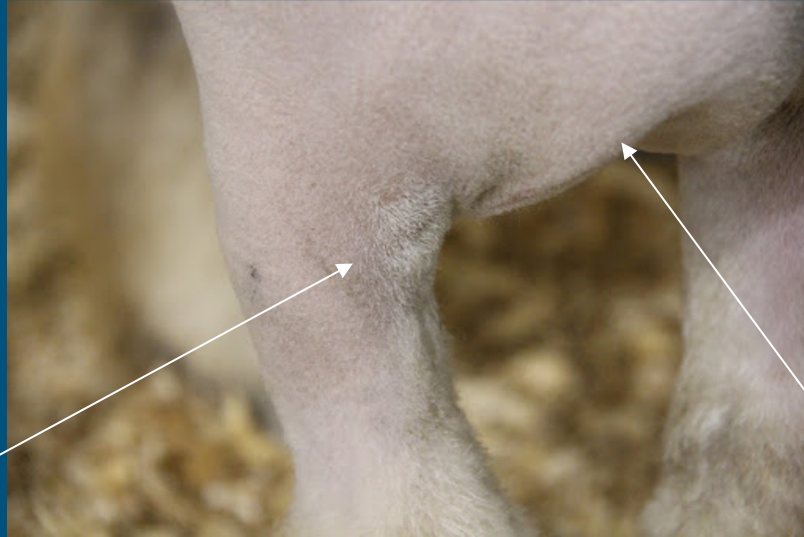


White/Chalky muzzle



Brown/Chocolate coloration

Coarse britch and/or harsh pelt



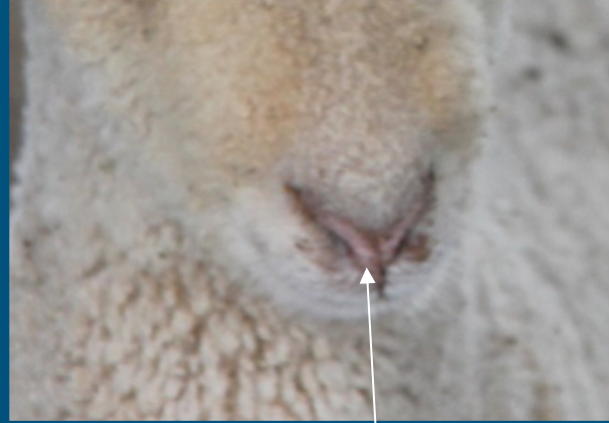
Chalky hair

Harsh pelt

Predominantly pink nose with few black spots

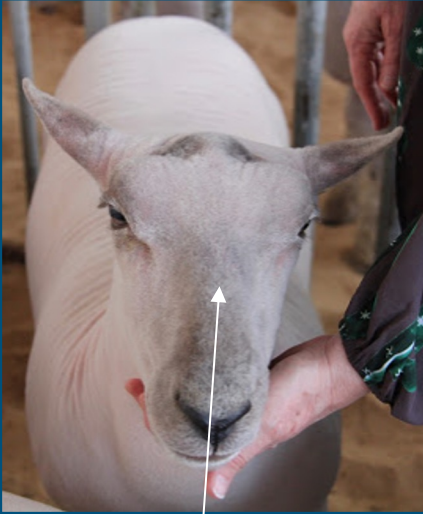


Pink nose with few black spots surrounding area



Pink nose

Long, narrow muzzle - left, Slick Ears - middle and traditional (Good) - Right



Extended muzzle - Not characteristic of Southdown



Chalky, Long Head and Slick Ears



Excessive black pigmentation on ears



Dark pigmentation of ears -
Characteristics of other breeds

Excessive ear length not in proportion to head



Ears unproportional to head

No hair or wool on ears



Not enough wool on ears

Reddish, rust colored hair above hoof to pastern

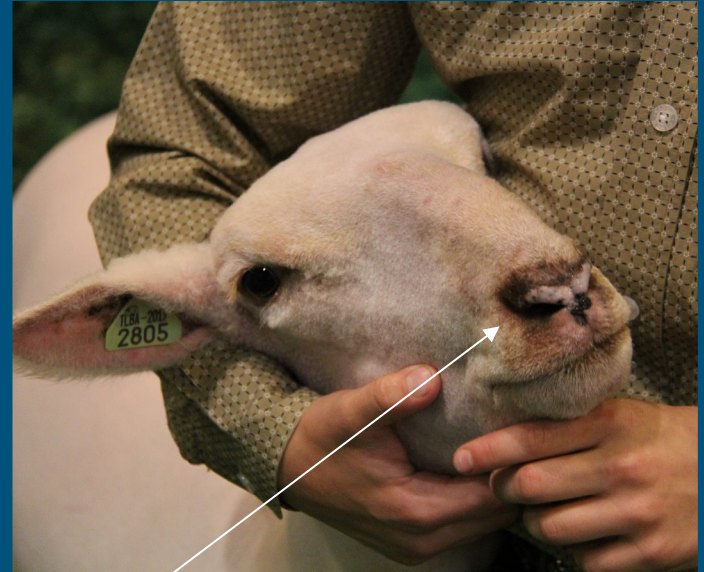
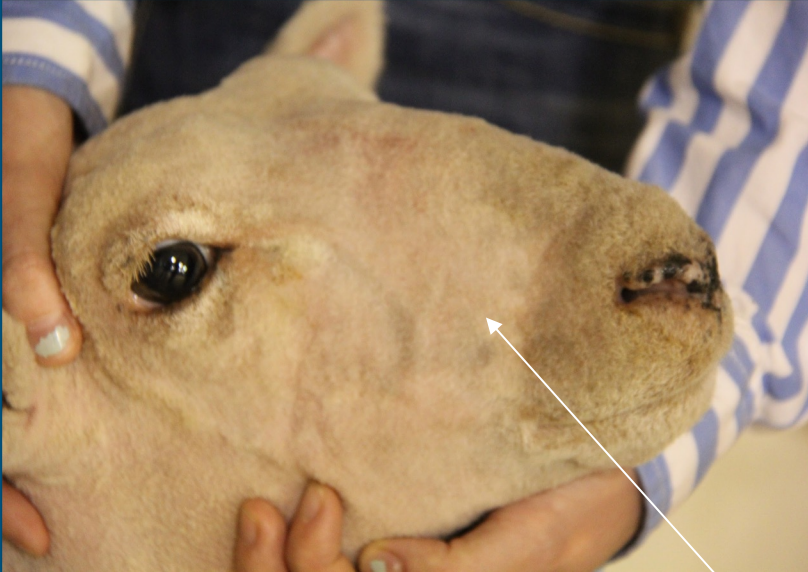


Reddish/brown tint in wool

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.
9. Excessive ear size and length not in proportion to head
10. Head, ear shape non-typical to the Southdown breed

Speckled face, ears, or legs



Speckled face

Pink pigmentation of nostrils



Off-colored/Pink nostrils

Dorper

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.

Acceptable Breed Traits



Typical dorper breed
(Black head, white body,
Hair lower $\frac{1}{3}$ body)

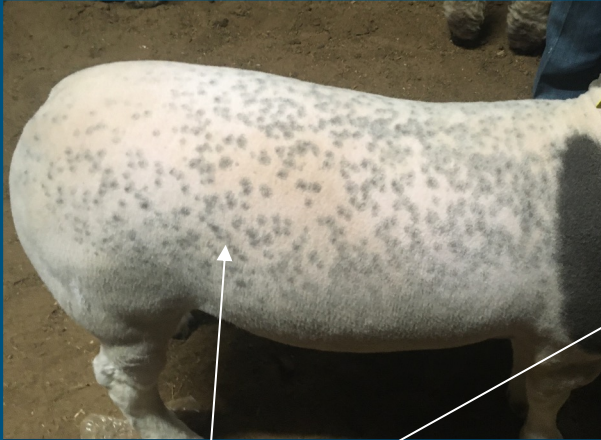


White dorper breed
(White head and body,
Hair lower $\frac{1}{3}$ body)

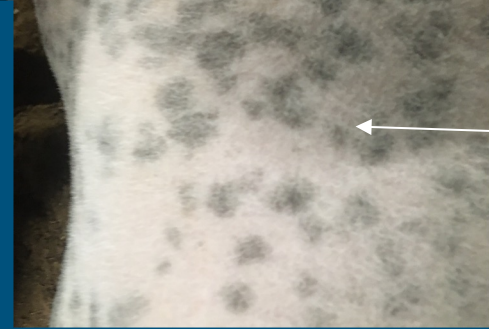
Correct Hair and Wool Combination



Pigment and Spotting in Skin



Darker



Lighter



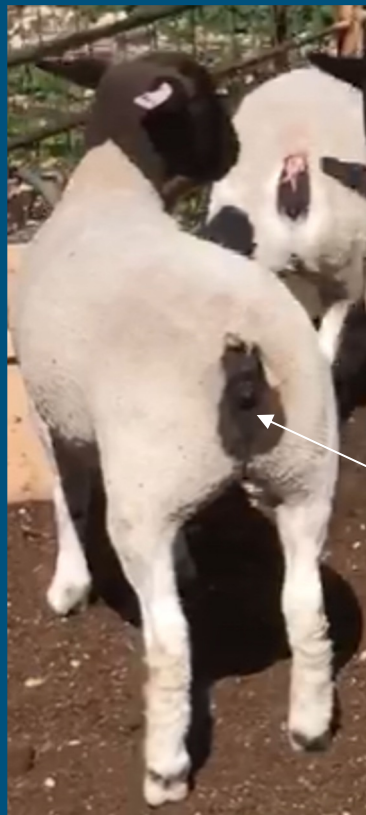
Dorper - Acceptable



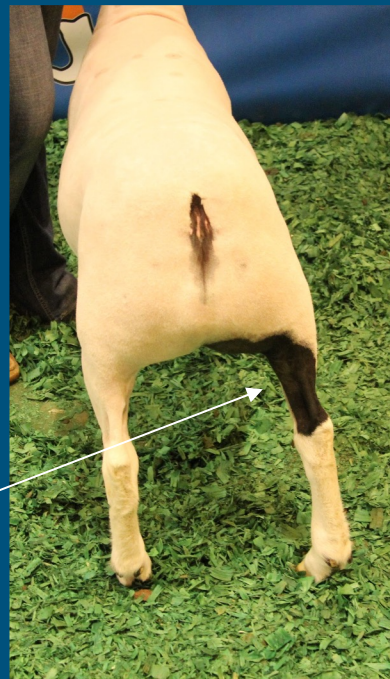
Discriminatory Breed Traits

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. Excessive wool covering more than 2/3 of body (belly, forearm, and britch).
5. Wool forward of poll.
6. Heavy horns.

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.



Acceptable amount of color



Excessive black coloring

Tri-colored sheep



Black, white, and red

Excessive wool covering more than 2/3 of body (belly, forearm, and britch)



Excessive wool covering body

Long, narrow muzzle



Longer muzzle



Narrow face

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 black fibered spots on body and underline behind heart girth exceeding a cumulative total of the size of a softball.
5. Black below the knee/hock to the dewclaw.
6. Tri-colored sheep
7. A white sheep with black hooves (stripes or solid) and/or black on nose
8. Solid brown, red, rust colored head.
9. Head, ear shape non-typical of the Dorper or White Dorper breed.
10. Strong breed characteristics of breeds other than Dorper or White Dorper, including but not limited to characteristics such as long pendulous ears with long narrow muzzle.
11. Surgical alterations other than re-docking.
12. Steep hip or tendency to show callipyge gene.
13. Evidence of color alterations.

Wool below the knees or hocks



Wool below knee

Excessive amount of dark fibered spots on body and underline behind heart girth exceeding a cumulative total of the size of a softball



Majority of body is black



Too much cumulative black



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.

Thank You!

Resources can be found @

www.texasyouthlivestock.com

* Special thanks to Dr. Shawn Ramsey (and team), AI Committee, MLSAC Committee, Major Livestock Shows and Texas Sheep Industry Representatives.*