

## Breeds of Sheep and their Characteristics

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### Breeds of sheep

#### Indigenous

##### 1.Apparel wool breeds

Hissardale, Nilgiri, Nellore, Kashmir Merino, Avivastra, Meecheri

##### 2.Superior Carpet wool breeds

Gaddi, Chokla Nali, Magra, Poonch, Marwari

##### 3.Coarse carpet wool

Mandya, Coimbatore, Bellari, Malpura, Vembur, Madras Red

##### 4. Hairy Meat breeds

Ramnad White, Trichy Block, Keezhakaraisal, Avikalin breeds, Karnah Jaisalmeri **Neelagiri**

- These are distributed in Neelagiri district of Tamilnadu.
- It is wool purpose breed.
- They are medium weighed animal.
- Majority are found in white colors.
- Certain breed are found with purple spots on their body and face.
- Ears are broad and drooped out.
- Females are without horns.
- Adult male average body weight 31kg.
- Adult female average body weight 31kg.



#### Mecheri

- It is distributed in Salem, Erode, Karur, Namakkal, and few parts of Dharmapuri districts of Tamilnadu.
- It is a meat purpose breed.
- It has medium sized body with pale purplish skin color.
- There are no horns for both the sexes.
- Tail is smaller and slender.



- Adult male average body weight 36kg.
- Adult female average body weight 22kg.

### Nellore

- It is distributed in Nellore, Prakasam and Ongole districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- They are tall animals with little hair except at brisket, withers and breech.
- Rams are horned ewes are polled.
- Long and drooping ears;
- Majority of animals carry wattles.
- Males have average body weight of 36 kg and female have 28 kg.
- Nellore is the tallest breed of sheep in India, resembling goats in appearance.
- It has a long face and long ears with the body densely covered with short hair.
- The majority of the flocks are of fawn or deep red fawn colour.



### Coimbatore

- It is distributed in Coimbatore district of Tamilnadu.
- It is wool purpose breed.
- Medium weighed animal.
- Found in white colors, with black- or purple-colored bands, seen over the regions of head and neck.
- 30% of adult females are free of horns.
- Adult male and female average body weight 25kg and 20kg.



### Vembur

- It is distributed in Vembur, melakarandhai, keezha karandhai, nagalapuram regions, Tuticorin and Virudhunagar districts of Tamilnadu.
- It is meat purpose breed.
- These are taller breeds.
- They have white color skin with red color spots over their body.
- Ears are drooped out.
- Tail is smaller and slender.
- Adult males are found with horns and absence of horns in case of females.
- Adult males average body weight 35kgs.
- Adult females average body weight 28kgs.



### Chennai red

- This is distributed in Chennai, Kancheepuram, Villupuram, Thiruvannamalai districts of Tamilnadu.
- It is meat purpose breed.
- Majority are purple in color.
- Adult male averagebody weight 36kg.
- Adult females average body weight 24 kg.





### **Mandya**

- It is distributed in Mandya district of Karnataka.
- Relatively small animals' colour white - sometimes face is light brown which may extend up to neck.
- Compact body with typical reversed "U" shaped conformation from the rear.
- Ears long, leafy and drooping.
- Both sexes polled.
- Coat extremely coarse and hairy adult male weighs 35 kg and female weighs 23 kg.
- Best mutton type conformation among the Indian breeds.



### **Deccani**

- Deccani breed is an admixture of the woolly types of Rajasthan and the hairy types of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- It is found in Bombay-Deccan region and parts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh States.
- The sheep is small and hardy, and well adapted to poor pastoral conditions.
- It possesses a coloured fleece, black and gray colours being more dominant.
- The average annual yield of wool being 4.54 kg per sheep.
- The wool is of a low grade and is a mixture of hair and fine fibres, mostly consumed for the manufacture of rough blankets (Kambals).
- The flocks are maintained chiefly for mutton.



### **Trichy black**

- These are distributed in Trichy, Perambalur, Dharmapuri and Salem districts of Tamilnadu.
- It is wool purpose breed.
- These are smaller breeds.
- Black coloured all over the body.
- Adult males are found with horns and females without horns.



- Ears are smaller, facing forward and downwards.
- Adult male average body weight 26kg.
- Adult female average body weight 19kg.

#### **Ramanadhapuram white**

- This is distributed in Ramanadhapuram, Sivagangai, and Virudhunagar districts of Tamilnadu.
- It is meat purpose breed.
- It has medium sized body.
- Majority of them are white in color.
- Certain goats hold black colored stripes all over their body.
- Adult males have their bent horns, whereas females with absence of horns.
- Legs are smaller and slender.
- Adult male average body weight 31kg.
- Adult female average body weight 23kg.



#### **Marwari**

- The sheep are found all over Jodhpur and parts of Jaipur districts.
- Flocks are raised in Pali and Barmer districts.
- The animals migrate to distant places in Uttar Pradesh, remote districts of Madhya Pradesh and sometimes to the northern parts of Maharashtra.
- Sheep are hardy, yielding coarser carpet variety white wool of a mixed hairy composition.
- This sheep is characterized by long legs, black face and a prominent nose.
- Fleshy appendages under throat, known as wattles, are often present.
- Tail is short and pointed.
- They possess high resistance to disease and worms.
- The yield of wool per year is 0.90-1.81 kg per animal.



### Gaddi

- Sheep are small in size, and are found in Kishtwar and Bhadarwah tehsils of Jammu.
- A large number inhabit the Kulu valleys in HP winter, and in summer they graze the highest elevations of them Pir Panjal Mountains, mostly in the Paddar range.
- Rams are horned, ewes hornless; fleece is generally white with brown coloured hair on the face.
- Wool is fine and lustrous; average annual yield is 1.13 kg per sheep, clipped thrice a year.
- A part of this clip is sent to Dhariwal mills and Amritsar markets.
- Undercoat is used for the manufacture of high quality Kulu shawls and blankets.



### Exotic sheep breeds

#### Merino

- The most popular fine wool breed of the world, originated in Spain.
- It is a white faced sheep with white feet.
- Rams have horns whereas the ewes are hornless.
- Most of the head and legs are covered by wool.
- The animal is extremely hardy being able to survive under adverse weather and poor grazing conditions.
- The ewes live and yield longer than any other breed.



#### Rambouillet

- It was developed in France.
- This breed has a large head with white hair around the nose and ears.
- Rams have horns and ewes are hornless.





- Rams weigh as much as 125 kg and ewes up to a maximum of 90 kg.
- It produces an excellent fine-wool fleece. i.e. 4-5kg/yr
- The fleece is heavy, close, compact, covering most of the body including face and legs.

### Southdown

- Found in south-eastern England (south down)
- This breed is one of the oldest English breeds and has greatly contributed to the development of many other breeds of sheep.
- It is a small sheep excellent for mutton production.
- Body is low-set, compact, wide and deep with legs wide apart. Head is broad; face is light brown coloured.
- Rams weigh about 80 kg and ewes 55kg at maturity.



### Dorset

- This is native of U.K (England) and are polled and horned.
- Face, ears and legs white in colour and free from wool.
- Wool yields 2.75 to 3.25 kg produce mutton of superior quality.
- Rams weight 80-110 kg and ewes weigh 50 to 80 kg.



### **Cheviot**

- Is a medium wool breed, primarily developed in Scotland.
- The breed is small with erect ears, a clean white face and white legs, covered with short white hair.
- The nose, lips and feet are black.
- Rams weigh on an average upto 80 kg and ewes up to 55kg.



### **Suffolk**

- It is native of U.K. and is large animals with black face, ears and legs.
- Head and ears entirely free from wool.
- Both rams and ewes are polled
- This breed has good mutton breed, but poor in fleece yield. Its average wool yield 2-3 kg.
- Mature Rams weigh 100-135 kg and ewes from 70-100 kg.
- Ewes are very prolific and excellent milkers.
- Suffolks imported to India have performed poorly than Dorsets.

