

PURCHASERS' GUIDE



This is an easy reference guide to assist you through the selection & sale process when purchasing Shropshire Sheep.

BREED STANDARD

The Shropshire is medium size, with mature rams & ewes typically weighing 120kg+ & 70kg+ respectively. Shropshire sheep are active & alert with a free action.

- HEAD:** Naturally clean soft black face, with a covering of wool on the poll. Rams should possess a bold masculine head.
- EARS:** Soft black in colour, of medium length and well set on.
- NECK:** Muscular & not too long.
- BODY:** Well fleshed, long, deep & symmetrical. A broad, straight back with well-sprung ribs. Rump: - quarters long & wide, dock well set on & gigot full & deep.
- LEGS:** Medium length, of strong bone & upright joints, well set apart & soft black in colour.
- SKIN & WOOL:** Cherry pink skin covered with a dense, fine quality wool of good staple.

MAEDI VISNA

If a flock is MV Accredited it has been blood tested, which involves 2 blood tests 6 months apart and isolation of the flock (12 months), so the sheep do not come into contact with a non-MV flock before being declared free from MV. If you want to keep this status when purchasing MV sheep you will need to contact your local DEFRA who will come out and inspect your boundaries and your premises. It is advisable to do this prior to you bringing sheep onto your property. This inspection will enable you to keep the MV status. If you would like to show your sheep there are more classes for MV classification.

Copy this link for full explanation of MV

https://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120113/premium_sheep_and_goat_health_schemes/511/diseases_covered/2

NON MAEDI VISNA *(self explanatory)*

It is important to note that this does not mean that the sheep are not of the same breed standard as MV sheep just a different health status. You can grade-up to MV if and when you decide *(see above)*.

SCRAPIE GENOTYPE *(do not confuse with Scrapie Monitoring)*

You can test your sheep to determine what genotype they are. The grading is: ARR/ARR (R1), ARR/ARQ (R2), ARQ/ARQ (R3). R1 is the least susceptible to Scrapie. If you wanted to grade up to R1 status it just takes longer eg: R1 ram on a R3 ewe will produce an R2; R1 ram on a R2 ewe could be either an R1 or R2.

[*The national testing scheme has now ceased, but some members still test privately.*](#)

SCRAPIE MONITORED

Please copy this link for full explanation

https://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120113/premium_sheep_and_goat_health_schemes/511/diseases_covered/5

CHECK

1. Check teeth – teeth should match stated age of animal and be in correct position.
2. Inspect feet – should be free from scald, foot rot and recently trimmed
3. Rams – 2 testicles of the same size
4. Rams – No swelling or lumps on sheath or penis
5. Ewes – 2 teats, udders of ewes that have lambed should be free from milk, lumps, both quarters should be the same size,
6. Ewes - check under tail to ensure everything is correct
7. Ewe lambs – exactly the same check as ewes
8. Check that two tags are present (including one EID tag or a bolus and appropriate tag) for lambs born 2010 onwards
9. All sheep have to move freely (loosely) and have a straight action

REJECT

Please refer to Critical Selection booklet (on web site), which clearly shows desirable & undesirable traits - particular attention should be made as to:

1. Skin Colour – cherry pink, not grey/blue
2. No black fibres in wool or kemp
3. No long/drooping ears
4. Pasterns should be short and not fall in / out / or backwards.
5. Check on face and under jaw that there is no white mottling
6. Head, legs, ears should not be brown or lighter (*see breed description*)
7. Feet should be free of foot rot
8. Males should not have horn stubs
9. Should have a good covering of wool on top of head and no black showing (*see breed description*)

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW / RECEIVE FROM THE BREEDER ONCE YOU HAVE SELECTED YOUR SHEEP

CERTIFICATION

Female sheep over 4 months of age have to be registered by the Breeder before being sold. Male sheep can be registered by the Breeder or new Owner. All lambs need to be birth notified.

- For rams or females under 4 months old request a copy/sight of the birth notification number, the vendor can do this via Grassroots. (*if not birth notified they cannot be registered*)
- For all other females or registered rams, make sure you receive a copy of the pedigree certificate with the transfer of ownership section completed and signed.

Good Practice: Take note of the ear tag numbers of the sheep you wish to purchase (if they don't have their pedigree certificate) then contact our Registrar Ruth Mawer (shropreg@gmail.com) who will advise whether they are registered or eligible to be registered.

The ideal: All sheep should come with their pedigree certificate (*failing this see above*). If from MV flocks & Scrapie Monitored flocks you will be given a current MV Certificate & Scrapie Certificate.

MEMBERSHIP

Finally, please remember to ask for a Membership Form from the Breeder or download from our web site (FORMS). It costs only £40 per year, and in return you will receive a Flock Book, four newsletters, eligibility to Society Show and Sale, support and advice if needed.

SOCIETY SALES OFFICER

Please contact **Claire Jakeman** (07766 238346) or clairejake@aol.com who will ensure that your sheep are registered or eligible to be registered as pedigree animals before making a purchase. Please don't hesitate to contact Claire who will be happy to answer any of your questions or assist in any way she can.

Thank you