

EAST FRIESIAN MILK SHEEP



The large and fertile East Friesian Milk Sheep is a dairy and meat breed originating from the Frisia region of northern Netherlands and northwestern Germany. Its milk production capability is exceptional, making it a popular breed worldwide. The breed was first imported to Finland in 2002, with animals brought to Åland from the Netherlands and to mainland Finland from Sweden.

The breed is large and robust, with adults rams weighing 90 to 120 kg and ewes 70 to 90 kg. The breed is long-legged and polled with long thin ears; the head and long tail are clear of wool. White is the preferred colour in breeding, though a dark brown variety also exists. The animals are friendly and easy to handle.

East Friesian ewes are fertile and give birth to an average of 2.4 lambs at a time. The lambs are born relatively large and, thanks to the mothers' excellent milk production, grow quickly. Average birth weight for lambs is 5.5 kg, with an average daily growth of 250 grams and an average weight of 37 kg at four months of age. Lambs reach slaughter weight at approximately six months of age. Thanks to this rapid growth, carcasses are typically low in fat.

The East Friesian's milk production ability is excellent, and it is widely considered the world's best dairy sheep breed. The lactation period lasts 210 to 230 days, with an average total milk yield of 300 to 600 litres if the ewes are weaned early. Daily milk production is 2.5 to 4 litres during the early part of the lactation period and 1 to 1.5 litres near the end.

East Friesians are often used in crossbreeding to improve milk production and fertility. It has been exported all over the world for crossbreeding with local breeds.

Information repository:

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