

## KAINUU GREY



The Kainuu Grey, called *kainuunharmas* or *harmas* in Finnish, is a Northern European short-tailed sheep breed and one of Finland's three landrace breeds. As the name suggests the breed originates from the Kainuu region of Finland, and was bred from individuals discovered there in the 1980s. Kainuu Grey sheep are lively, agile and sociable, with a strong herd instinct.

Kainuu Grey ewes are fertile nearly year-round. According to animal recording data, an average of 2.6 lambs are born at a time and reach a weight of 3.7 kg at three days of age. The ewes' mothering and milk production abilities are good. The average combined weight of the lambs in a litter at 120 days of age, relative to the weight of the mother, is higher than in most other sheep breeds.

Slaughter yields for the breed are average. The lambs take from 5 months to up to a year to reach slaughter weight, depending on feed and genetic factors. Average muscularity is not as high as with Finnsheep, but recent breeding efforts have led to considerable improvement. The breed is not prone to excessive fat even when slaughter weight is allowed to exceed 25 kg.

The Kainuu Grey can be considered an average-sized breed, with an average adult live weight of 65 to 85 kg for rams and 55 to 65 kg for ewes. For coloration, breed standard allows for all shades of grey and brown as well as white and black; patches of white guard hairs in otherwise darker fur on the head and legs are also allowed. Lambs are typically born nearly entirely black and reach their adult coloration at one to two years of age. Light grey overall coloration with dark head and legs is the most common variety. Most Kainuu Grey sheep are polled, though horned individuals also occur.

Kainuu Grey sheep are usually divided based on the quality of their pelt into wool-type and fur-type varieties, though intermediate forms are common. Wool is mostly medium fine, and often has a pearlescent sheen to it. The fur-type variety's wool is fluffy, with large curls.

Information repository:

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