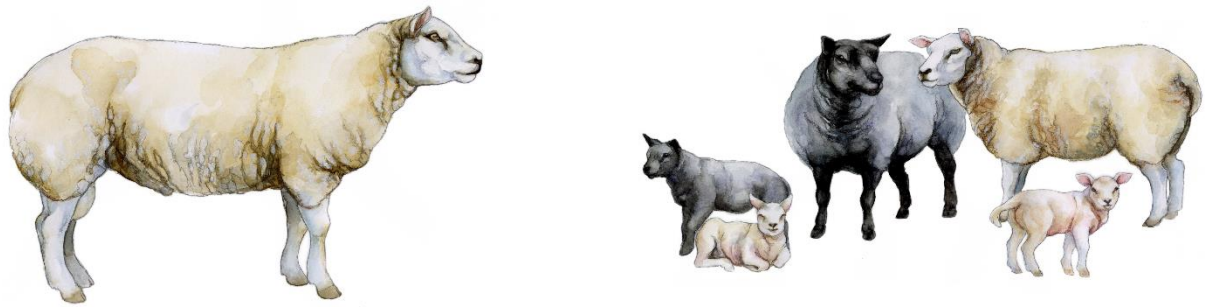


TEXEL



Originally a Dutch breed, the Texel is one of the world's most popular sheep breeds for meat production. The development of the breed started in the late 19th century when the Texel island's landrace breed, originally smallish in size, was crossbred with English breeds. Over time the breed developed to be fast-growing, muscular and low in fat. Texel sheep have been grown in Finland since the end of the 1960's.

Texel sheep are calm, quiet and easy to handle, yet large and robust in build; adult rams weigh 90 to 110 kg and adult ewes 75 to 90 kg. Distinctive breed characteristics include a boxy overall shape and rounded, muscular thighs. The back is straight and broad and the legs strong and well aligned.

Mothering ability is good and lamb mortality low. Fertility is average, and the ewe can be expected to rear two lambs without issues. Lambs reach an average weight of 5.3 kg at three days of age, with a daily growth rate of 230 g.

Texel sheep use fodder, particularly roughage, very efficiently. When sufficiently high quality roughage and pasture are available the ewes are able to nurse lambs without needing more than minimal amounts of concentrated feed. Lambs grow quickly, reaching slaughter weight at approximately five to six months of age, sometimes as early as four months.

Slaughter yield is excellent. The carcasses are muscular and low in fat, with a typical EUROP classification of U2. Texel sheep are also popular for crossbreeding, providing improvements in growth rate, fat reduction and muscularity.

Texel sheep are polled. The most common colour is white, with darker markings around the eyes and nostrils. The blue texel variant has a grey overall colouration with black head and legs.

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