

# Alpine Wool Atlas

Interreg



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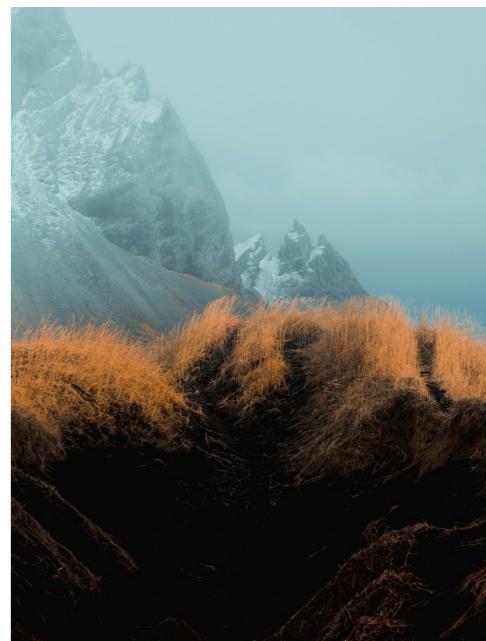
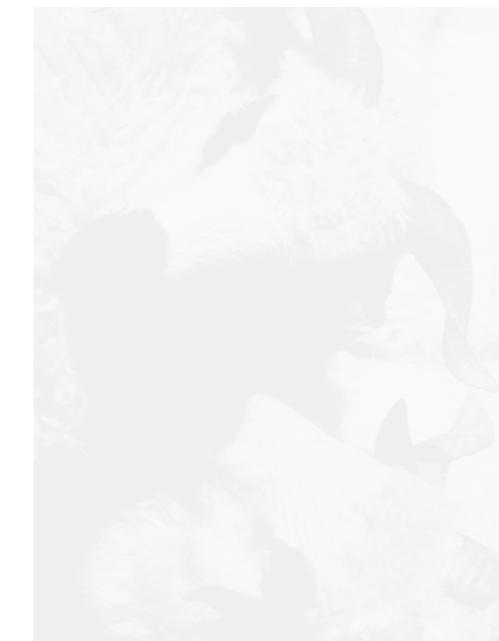
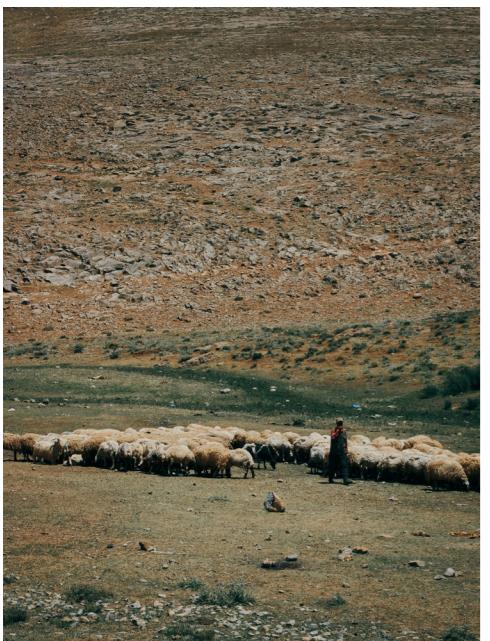
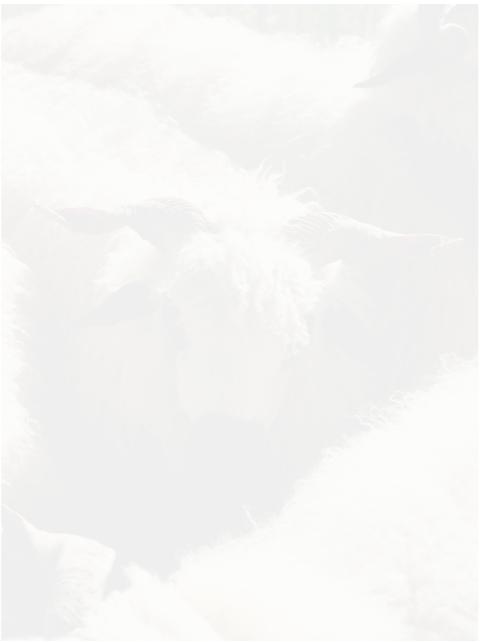
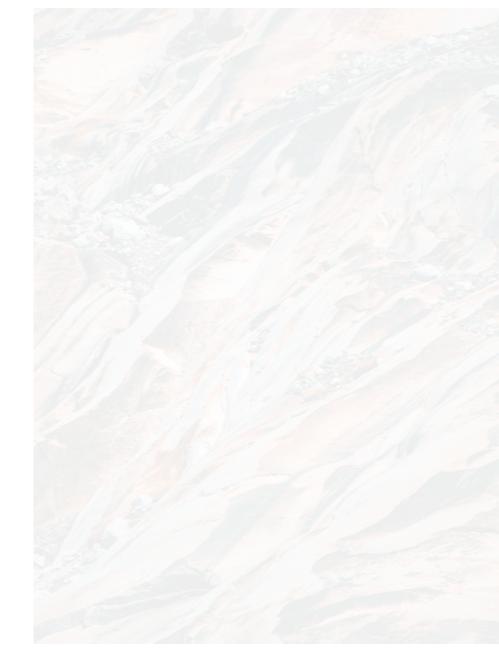
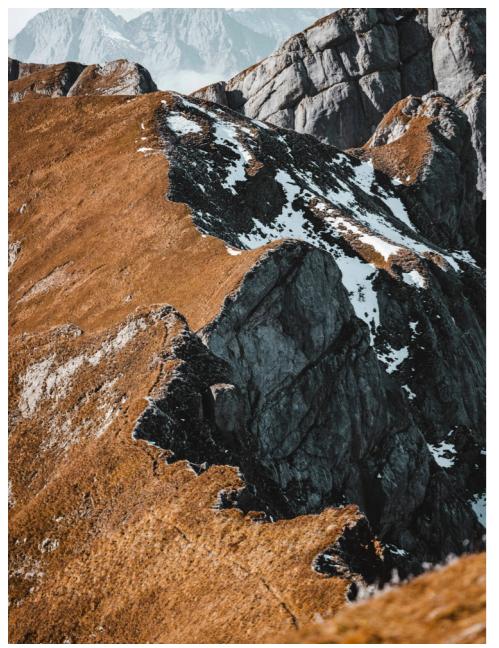
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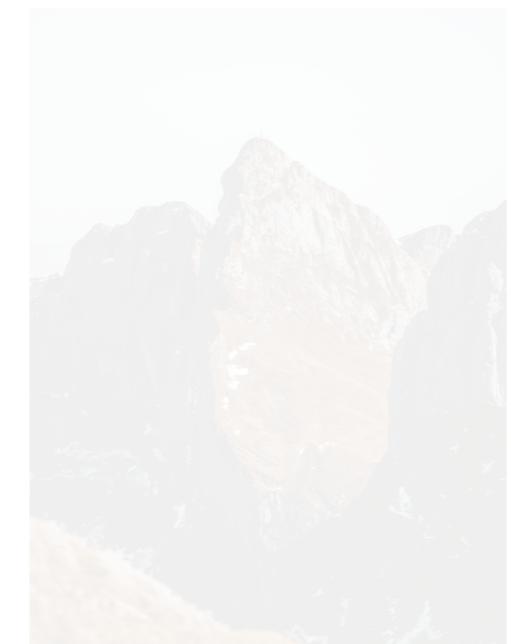
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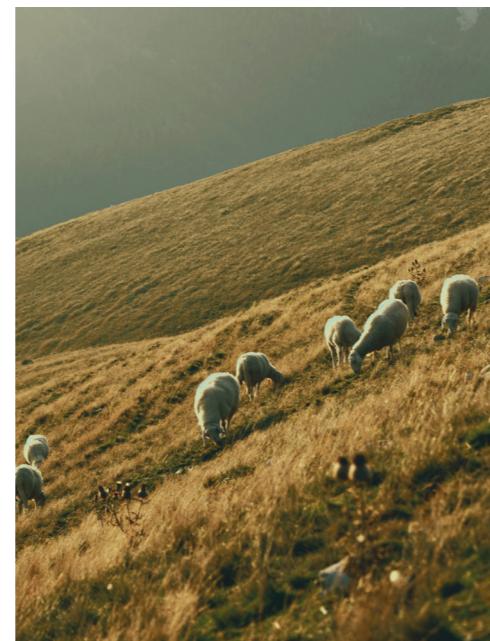
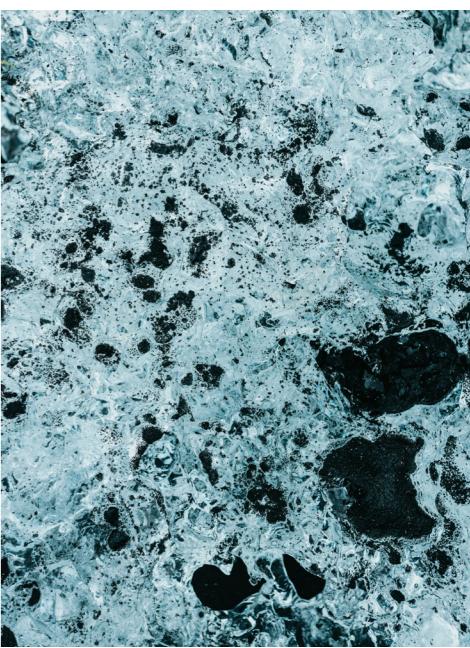
A New Era for Alpine Wool











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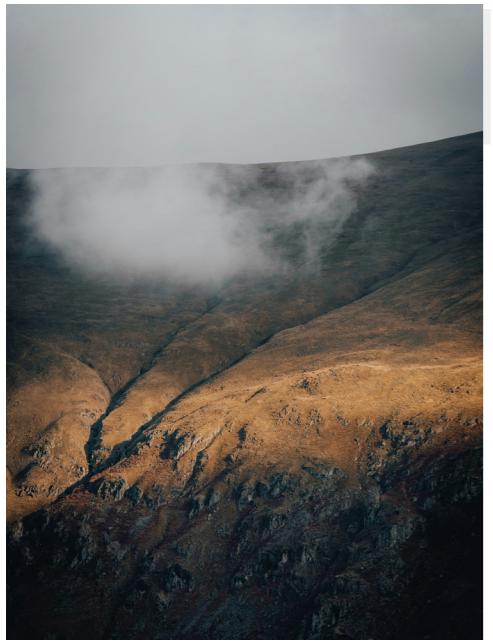
Woolshed

Alpine Space



Woolshed

A New Era for Alpine Wool



# Alpine Wool



Alpine  
Wool

Woolshed



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The Woolshed project, funded by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within Interreg Alpine Space programme, represents an ambitious initiative to revitalize the Alpine wool industry through sustainable innovation, collaboration, and a focus on circularity. In its 3-year activity the project aims to operate by leveraging existing knowledge, engaging diverse stakeholders, and promoting the uptake of innovative wool products, to achieve long-lasting economic, social, and environmental benefits for the Alpine region. We titled this digital publication Wool Atlas because an Atlas is usually defined as a bound collection of maps, charts, plates, or tables illustrating a subject, and for us is a starting point for exploring rustic wool in a non-extractive way. Our approach aims at honoring relationships—with animals, landscapes, people, and knowledge systems—while creating sustainable local economies and regenerative futures in mountainous regions.

### The Essential Role of Sheep

Territories around us depend on sheep to perform essential functions maintaining healthy and productive natural ecosystems. Their grazing activities represent a dynamic element to support vegetation expansion fostering a robust network of living organisms across the landscape. In fact sheep perform natural “pruning” operations which cause herbaceous plants to develop denser and wider structures that enable better light and oxygen soil penetration for plant renewal. In this context transhumance refers to the seasonal movement of people with their livestock—such as sheep, cattle, or goats—between distinct summer and winter pastures, typically involving migration from mountain highlands to lowland areas in response to climatic changes.

Sheep movements together with their saliva and urine assist in breaking down dead organic material which accumulates on the soil surface. The process enables earthworms and microorganisms to work better so they produce easily accessible nutrients while substantially improving organic matter levels in the soil. Better soil conditions enable upcoming plants to develop stronger root systems which enables them to obtain additional water sources and access deeper nutrient reserves.

The collective grazing activities of millions of animals throughout history resulted in the build-up of several meters of organic matter across soil surfaces which demonstrated their power to restore ecosystems. Their manure functions as an essential microbiological activator which draws in beneficial insects and earthworms that bring in birds which distribute nutrients and fight parasites and maintain ecological harmony.

Through their consumption of diverse plant materials which other livestock avoid such as tree branches, sheep maintain undergrowth while promoting plant diversity in their environment. The combination of diverse stock environments with genetic rusticity and integrated management practices produces healthier animals that resist diseases better so farmers can reduce antibiotic and antiparasitic use which damages animal microbiota and environmental health.

In this holistic approach proper grazing management supports better nutrient cycling of carbon and nitrogen and phosphorus which creates a sustainable and productive agroecosystem. The ability of ruminants to transform plant fiber into meat and milk allows them to avoid competing with humans who eat cereals and legumes thus helping to secure global food availability.

Recently, the listing of transhumance as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity serves to recognize both its importance for community survival and its essential role in ecosystem and biodiversity protection. The transhumance tradition which emerges from Mediterranean and Alps cultural heritage serves as an example of how people can maintain equilib-

rium with environments through natural resource stewardship. Through this practice rural communities located in different regions have developed cultural connections which help transfer traditional wisdom between generations while building social unity and collective identity.

### Coarse Wool and its Properties

Despite these clear ecosystemic benefits, the coarse wool growing on sheep, especially in regions like the Alps, is largely underutilized and often discarded without valorization. This “troubled abundance” is a significant environmental and economic issue, with over 3,110 tonnes of coarse wool produced annually in the Alps alone, much of which becomes a burden for farmers due to high disposal costs and a lack of local processing infrastructure. However, this material possesses a multitude of inherent properties that make it a valuable, sustainable resource. It offers excellent thermal and sound insulation, is highly moisture-absorbent, prevents odors, and can absorb volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

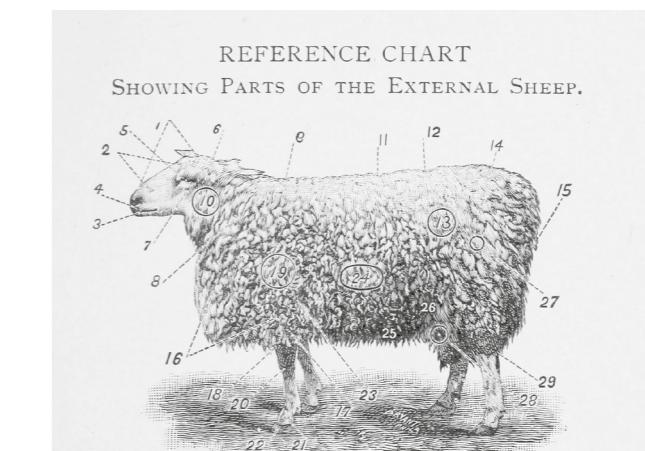
Unlike synthetic fibers, wool is biodegradable, decomposing naturally in 1-3 seasons without shedding harmful microplastics. It also acts as a natural fertilizer, releasing nitrogen and potassium that promote plant growth, and even possesses pesticidal effects against slugs. Utilizing coarse wool can significantly reduce reliance on plastics in various sectors such as construction, automotive, packaging, and agriculture, offering eco-friendly alternatives to products currently made from non-renewable and polluting synthetic materials.

Historically, sheep were not merely animals to be farmed—they've always been agents of material innovation, social cohesion, and economic development. The domestication of sheep transformed human society by providing essential fibres and enabling settled life, from hand-spun Neolithic fabrics to today's advanced wool products, wool remains a living legacy of human-sheep partnership and evolution.

The coarse wool contains numerous valuable properties which establish it as a sustainable resource. The difference between coarse wool and fine wool primarily lies in the thickness (micron count) of the individual wool fibers, a feature that affects texture, use, and market value, especially because the second is softer and better suited for garment production. Coarse wool, though, provides outstanding thermal protection and sound insulation while its moisture absorption capabilities prevent odors. Wool stands out from synthetic fibers because it naturally decomposes during 1 to 3 seasons while producing no microplastic pollution. This material could also be used as a natural fertilizer which releases nitrogen and potassium helping plants grow while demonstrating pesticidal qualities that protect against slugs and snails.

In general, the usage of coarse wool enables substantial reductions in plastic dependence across different industries which include construction, automotive, packaging and agriculture because it provides sustainable replacements for products that currently rely on synthetic materials from non-renewable sources.

Local coarse wool adoption could promote circular economies by reducing waste and enabling continuous resource recovery and recycling processes which establish new value chains and local jobs. The transition to increased use of this material supports the protection of traditional sheep farming practices in mountainous areas while providing a distinctive natural appearance through its inherent colours and textures. The successful promotion of local use requires collaboration between different stakeholders as well as investment in basic processing technologies which will transform this byproduct into a valuable asset for both local communities and the environment.



1. Head.	16. Chest.
2. Face.	17. Shoulder.
3. Muzzle.	18. Elbow.
4. Nostril.	19. Forearm.
5. Eye.	20. Knee.
6. Ear.	21. Ankle.
7. Cheek.	22. Claw.
8. Neck.	23. Girth Measure.
9. Withers.	24. Side or Barrel.
10. Throat.	25. Belly.
11. Back.	26. Flank.
12. Loins.	27. Hip Joint.
13. Angle of Ilium.	28. Stifle Joint.
14. Rump.	29. Hock Joint.
15. Tail or Dock.	

The Woolshed project aims at developing an alternative model for coarse wool management, in-between industrial and artisanal production because both systems have fundamental shortcomings that make them inadequate for processing local wool at a small scale. Large-scale industrial systems tend to see wool detached from sheep's ecological role and their manufacturing plants need continuous operation and extensive maintenance together with long-distance material transport which makes them unsuitable for processing rustic wool from local distributed sources. Alternatively traditional artisanal methods face challenges because their manual processes generate high costs when working with wool from local communities.

Woolshed aims to blend traditional techniques with modern digital technologies, collaborative practices and open innovation to bring coarse wool into the future.

Fig. 01-02      01      Séve, Jacques de (1715-1795). Dessinateur. [Le Belier] : [dessin] / De Seve 1753. 1753  
 02      Jacob Biggle, *Biggle Sheep Book. Something Practical About Sheep. All Wool and a Yard Wide, Mutton Chops Cooked to Suit the Taste of the Most Fastidious*. Wilmer Atkinson Co., Philadelphia, 1912.

\*Table on the following page International Wool Textile Organisation (2020). Wool Notes. Issue 2  
[https://iwt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/IWTO\\_Wool-Notes-Web-min.pdf](https://iwt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/IWTO_Wool-Notes-Web-min.pdf)

## From the fiber to its use

Wool is a natural fiber that grows from the skin of sheep and is one of the oldest and noblest fibers known to mankind. Human beings have been using wool for several thousands of years to make clothing and other textile items. It has various unique physical and chemical properties, which make it an extremely versatile fiber so as to stand out as a valuable and luxurious one among all the textile fibers.

After shearing, wool handlers work on the fleece, which is the wool fibers from one sheep, shorn in a single piece, covering the sheep's body to remove low-quality edges (skirtings, bellies, locks) to separate them from other categories based on mainly fineness, length, strength, colour and create uniform patches suitable for spinning and to meet other processing specifications. The fibre fineness and length varies not just depending on the breed but also on the sheep's body area and the age of the animal.

Wool is primarily graded to determine its quality and suitability for specific end-uses, and this process involves assessing several key characteristics. The quality of raw wool significantly influences its market value. Historically, grading was more subjective, relying on visual appraisal, but advancements in technology have led to more objective and precise measurement methods.

The Micron System is the most common and universally accepted classification method by wool buyers and manufacturers. It's a descriptive method of measuring the average fiber diameter of wool fleece through a projection microscope. The average fiber diameter in micrometers ( $\mu\text{m}$ ): with increasing diameter significantly decreasing the raw wool price, especially for wool with a mean fiber diameter less than 20  $\mu\text{m}$ .

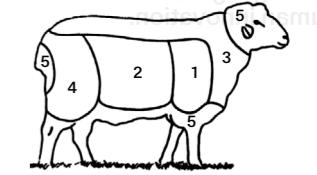
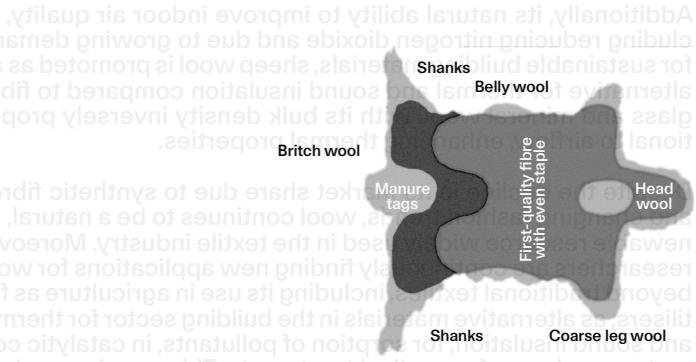
Fiber Length or Staple Length is the second most important characteristic after fiber diameter. Longer staples are generally easier to spin and produce stronger, more even yarns with fewer machine stoppages. Short staple length increases waste and can lead to fuzzy yarns. Wool from the shoulders and sides is typically of better length and fineness, while wool from the lower legs and rear (pieces or locks) is shorter.

Yield is the amount of clean wool fiber obtained after removing contaminants like vegetable matter, wax, suint, and dirt. It's the estimation of wool remaining after the removal of impurities which can account for 30% to 50% or more of the greasy fleece weight. The value of greasy wool is significantly determined by its yield, which is measured before defining the price.

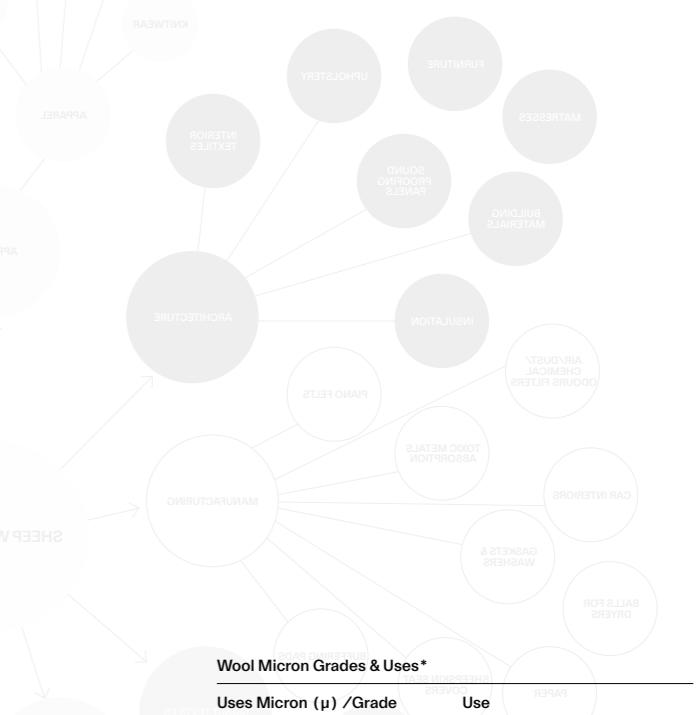
Coarse wool, characterized by a fiber diameter of around 30 µm and varying lengths, excels in applications where durability, bulkiness, and resilience are prioritised over softness. Its coarser nature and specific structural properties make it ideally suited for a range of uses beyond traditional apparel.

This stronger wool is preferred for many applications due to its fibers' characteristics such as good retention appearance, excellent durability, natural flame resistance, esthetic characteristics, elasticity, strength, and bulkiness so that they can be utilized in sportswear, furnishing, upholstery, and industrial uses such as carpets, custom rugs, wool mulch mats, fertilizer or soil conditioner.

Wool is a great alternative to synthetics especially for being naturally fire-resistant, possessing a high ignition temperature (570–600°C) and a low flame temperature (around 680°C), making it a promising material for fire safety applications. Its noise-reducing properties in tapestry and carpets, contribute to comfort in homes and improved job satisfaction and performance in offices. Beyond weaving techniques, the unique overlapping scales of wool fibres contribute to its felting property, which allows for the production of dense structures like felts and floor coverings from coarse and low-grade wool fibres.



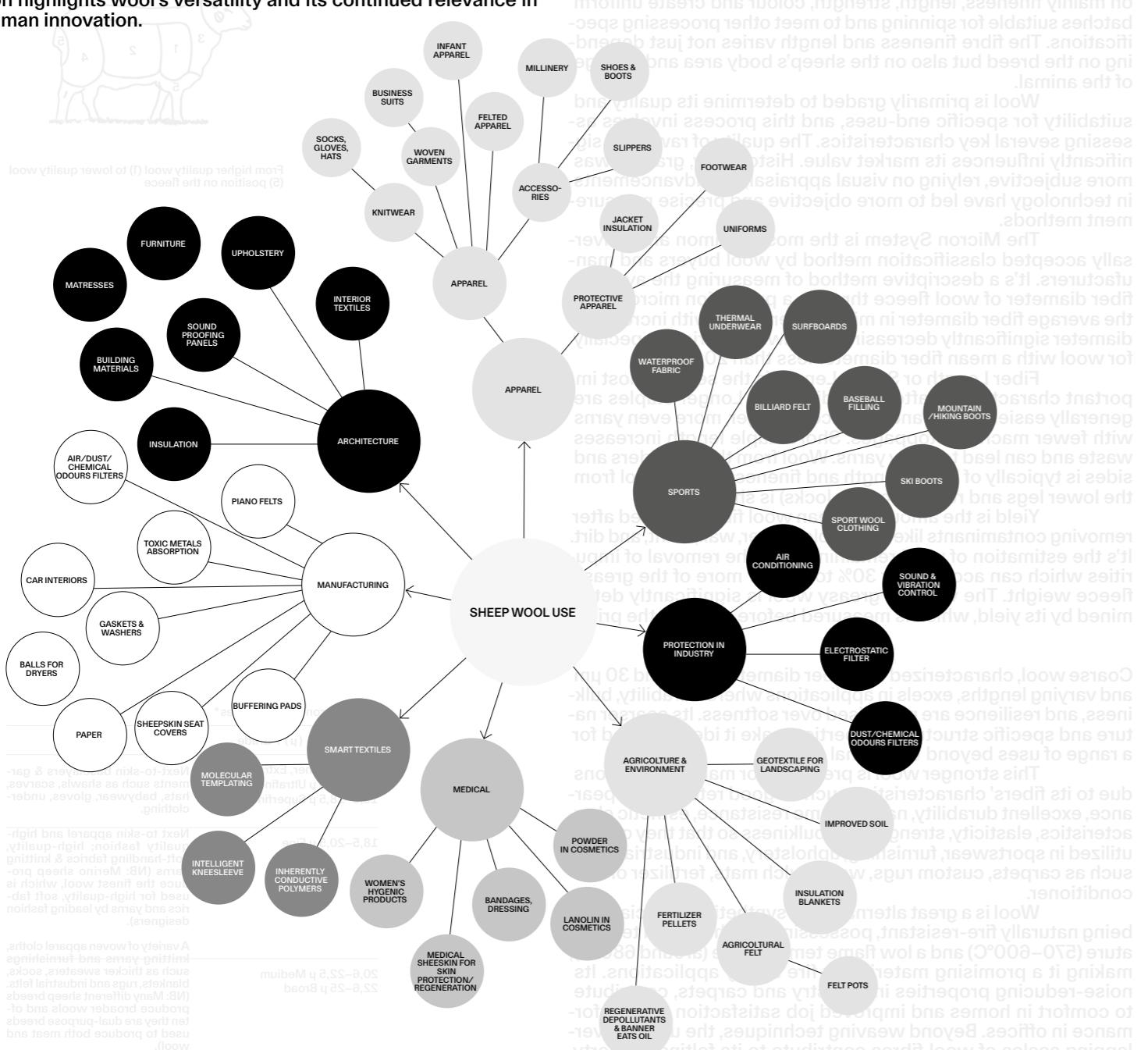
From higher quality wool (1) to lower quality wool (5) position on the fleece



Wool Micron Grades & Uses*	
Uses Micron ( $\mu$ ) /Grade	Use
145 $\mu$ and finer, Extrafine 14.6–16.5 $\mu$ Ultrafine 16.6–18.5 $\mu$ Superfine	Next-to-skin baselayers & garments such as shawls, scarves, hats, babywear, gloves, under-clothing.
18.5–20.5 $\mu$ Fine	Next-to-skin apparel and high-quality fashion; high-quality, soft-handling fabrics & knitting yarns (NB: Merino sheep produce the finest wool, which is used for high-quality, soft fabrics and yarns by leading fashion designers).
20.6–22.5 $\mu$ Medium 22.6–25 $\mu$ Broad	A variety of woven apparel cloths, knitting yarns and furnishings such as thicker sweaters, socks, blankets, rugs and industrial felts. (NB: Many different sheep breeds produce broader wools and often they are dual-purpose breeds used to produce both meat and wool).
26–32 $\mu$ Coarse	Rugs, upholstery and insulation
32–48 $\mu$	Carpets

Additionally, its natural ability to improve indoor air quality, including reducing nitrogen dioxide and due to growing demand for sustainable building materials, sheep wool is promoted as an alternative for thermal and sound insulation compared to fiberglass and mineral wool, with its bulk density inversely proportional to airflow, enhancing thermal properties.

Despite the decline in its market share due to synthetic fibres and changing fashion trends, wool continues to be a natural, renewable resource widely used in the textile industry. Moreover, researchers are continuously finding new applications for wool beyond traditional textiles, including its use in agriculture as fertilisers, as alternative materials in the building sector for thermal and sound insulation, for sorption of pollutants, in catalytic converters, and even for medical treatments. This ongoing exploration highlights wool's versatility and its continued relevance in human innovation.



# Sheep Breeds

# in the Alps

On this spread  
Map of the Alps and project partners



Wichtige Abkürzungen, soweit sie nicht auf Bl. 29 und 32 Erklärung finden:  
Adm (ond) - Bärl (ücke) - C (ol) od. C (oma) - Brun (ek) - Dürm (stein) - Flon (ing) -  
H (ohe) - S (onne) H (ohes) T (or) - 3 H. Sp. (Dreiherrnspitze) - L (iesen) - Magg (ure) -  
Pres (onella) - Sch (naufrag) - 3D (achkar-spa) - So (st) - con (so) - kluar (spide) -  
Unt (ersberg) - Ven (ediger) - W (alcher See) - W (enzelalpe) - Sest (ries) - Vezz (ano)

# Braunes Bergschaf

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Bieliese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschaf	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grivette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



IT

WHERE TO FIND THEM

## Austria

SHEEP BREEDS IN THE ALPS

Woolshed: A New era for Alpine Wool



Country

## History

Braunes Bergschaf had repeatedly appeared in the Tiroler Bergschaf breed in the past. Due to the demand for dark, undyed wool, there was an increased need for breeding animals. In 1977, the breed was officially recognized, and the animals began to be recorded systematically.

## Where to find them

Tirol, Salzburg, Vorarlberg, Oberösterreich, Niederösterreich, Kärnten, Steiermark.

## How to recognize it

The Brown Mountain Sheep is a medium-sized, slightly lighter sheep with a strongly rammed, narrow head and long, broad, drooping ears. Both sexes are hornless. Their wool is plain, cognac-colored to brown. They are well adapted to the new high mountain climate and are hardy.

### Breeding Objective

MEAT	MILK	WOOL

### Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	90 mm
FINESS	32–36 µ diameter
COLOUR	Brown
SCOURING YIELD %	/

# Juraschaf/Schwarzbraunes Bergschaf

AT

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
<b>Juraschaf</b>	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärntner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The breed, initially called the black-brown mountain sheep (schwarzbraunes Gebirgsschaf), originated from the Frutig, Jura, Saanen, and Simmental breeds. At the beginning of the 19th century, Flemish sheep and Spanish Merinos were crossed.

## How to recognize it

The Jura Sheep/SBS is a medium-sized, highly fertile, non-seasonal mountain sheep, bred in black and brown colour variations. Its head and legs are free of wool and covered with sleek black or brown hair. The ears are of medium length and well-carried. The body is deep and well-proportioned, with uniform wool coverage from the ear line down to the front and hock joints. The fleece is dense, even, and tightly closed, with a consistent black or brown coloration. Straight nose. Ears medium length and carried. Neck fully muscled, well connected to shoulders and withers.

## Where to find them

Oberösterreich, Niederösterreich, Kärnten, Salzburg, Steiermark, Tirol, Vorarlberg.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	80 mm
FINESS	32–36 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	Dark brown
SCOURING YIELD %	60–70%

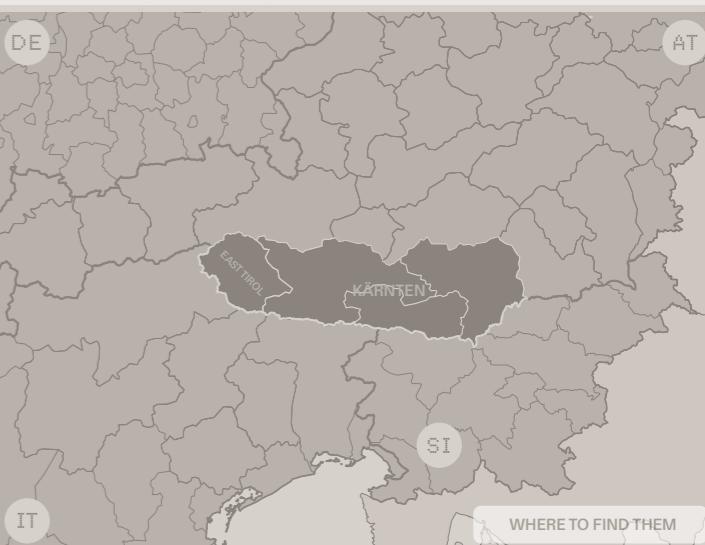
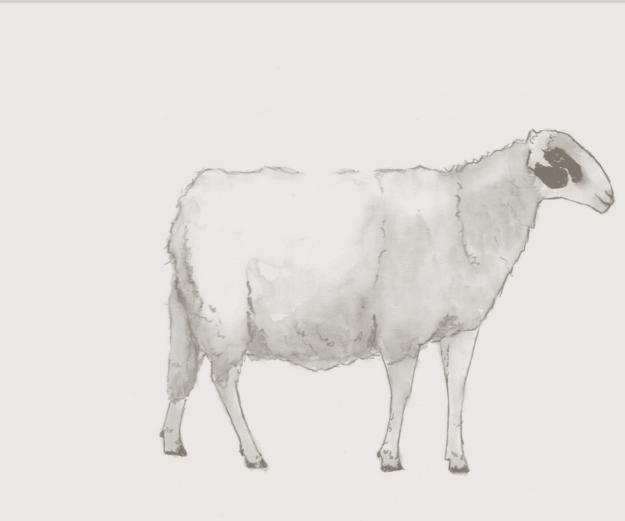
# Kärntner Brillenschaf

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AT

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
<b>Juraschaf</b>	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärntner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
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Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Kärntner Brillenschaf originated from the crossbreeding of the old local sheep breed with the Bergamasca sheep and, in particular, the Padovana Silk Sheep. In the past, it was widespread throughout large parts of Austria as well as the Bavarian Alpine and pre-Alpine regions.

## How to recognize it

It is a sturdy, medium-sized white sheep with a strongly arched, wool-free head and medium-length ears that hang down or stick out slightly. A distinctive feature is the black spots (glasses) around the eyes, as well as ears that are black on the outer half to up to two-thirds. Occasionally, there are also black spots on the lips. It is hornless and has a weakly developed, non-seasonal breeding cycle. The fleece is white and plain, with coarser outer hair, starting behind the ears on the head.

## Where to find them

Carinthia, East Tyrol, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Styria, Burgenland.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	80 mm
FINESS	35–37 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–70%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
<b>Krainer Steinschaf</b>	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
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Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
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Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## How to recognize it

The Krainer Steinschaf is a strain of the Steinschaf, which was once widespread throughout the Alpine region and descends from the Zaupelschaf. Over the centuries, the Krainer Steinschaf was specifically bred for milk production in line with the milk tradition of the Julian Alps.

## Where to find them

Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Styria, Burgenland and Slovenia's Triglav National Park.

The Krainer Steinschaf is a fine-boned, small-framed sheep with non-seasonal estrus behavior, short, non-drooping ears, and a delicate, wool-free, hornless head that is not arched. The wool is mixed, often white, but black, brown, and spotted animals also occur. The heads, in particular, are often colorfully marked. These animals have exceptionally good adaptability and resilience, along with excellent milk production. Ewes are partly milked from the 5th to 6th week of lactation (about 1.5 liters per day). Estrus is non-seasonal, making two lambings per year possible, and the breed shows high fertility. Due to their trustful nature, they are well suited for keeping in small flocks.

## Breeding Objective

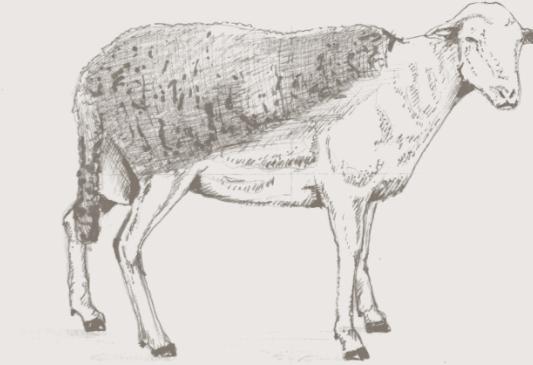


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~120 mm
FINESS	Coarse
COLOUR	Mixed
SCOURING YIELD %	65–70%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
<b>Krainer Steinschaf</b>	Brogna	Skudde
<b>Lacaune</b>	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

A native breed from the mountains of Lacaune in the southeast of the Tarn department. Through selective breeding, milk production has been significantly improved since 1870. The herdbook was established in 1928, and milk performance testing has been carried out since 1945.

## Where to find them

Oberösterreich, Niederösterreich, Tyrol, Salzburg and Burgenland.

## How to recognize it

The head is long and narrow, with a straight or slightly convex (ram-like) profile. It is covered with fine, shiny hair. The ears are medium-length and stick out horizontally. The body is long and voluminous, with a broad back and a clearly arched rib cage. The topline should be straight from the base of the neck to the base of the tail. The chest is deep and set between the forelegs. The Lacaune has white wool, though the head, lower neck, and belly are typically free of wool, as is characteristic of the breed.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~60 mm
FINESS	~25–32 µ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–70%

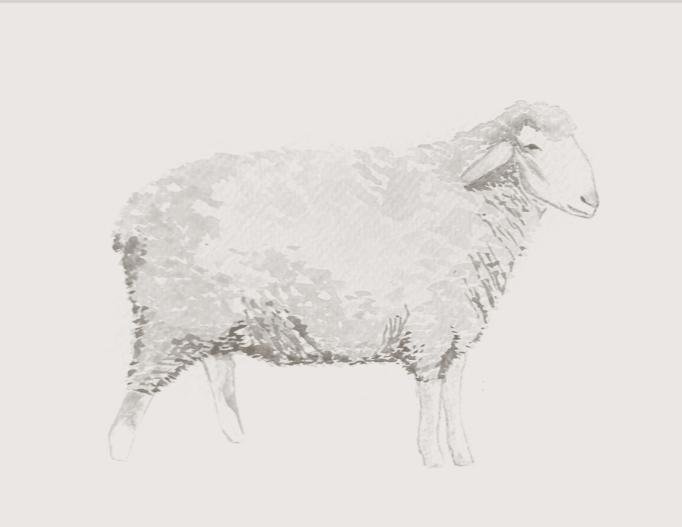
# Merinolandschaf

?

AT

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
<b>Merinolandschaf</b>	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschaf	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Ježersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Ježersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



History

In the mid-18th century, fine-wool sheep came to Germany from Spain. Sheep of this type were used in southern Germany (mainly in Württemberg) at the end of the 18th century to improve local sheep breeds. The "Württemberg" breeds were crossed with numerous other breeds.

How to recognize it

Where to find them

Oberösterreich, Niederösterreich, Burgenland, Kärnten, Vorarlberg, Steiermark.

**The Merino sheep** is a medium-sized sheep with a wedge-shaped, long head, a typical tuft of wool on the forehead, and broad, slightly drooping ears. The chest is broad and deep. The back is long, broad, and well-sprung. The pelvis is broad, with well-muscled outer and inner legs. The wool is pure white. The estrus cycle is aseasonal. The breed is characterized by excellent fertility and lactation, as well as its good meat production.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~80–100 mm
FINESS	~25–33 µ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–75%

# Ostfriesisches Milchschaf

?

AT

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
<b>Ostfries. Milchschaf</b>	Vicentina (Foza)	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Ježersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Ježersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



History

It was already mentioned in the 16th century for its exceptional fertility. Originally native to East Frisia. In 1897, the first breeding associations were founded, and since 1901, rams have been subject to mandatory approval. Systematic breeding has been carried out since 1908.

How to recognize it

Medium-weight, well-framed, fast-growing, and early-maturing sheep. Slightly ram-nosed, hornless, and without wool on the head. The ears are long, thin, and point forward. It has a deep, broad chest and a long back. The limbs are fine with tight patterns. The tail is thin, long, and free of wool. The wool is white or dark brown, with a uniformly closed staple and medium fineness.

## Breeding Objective

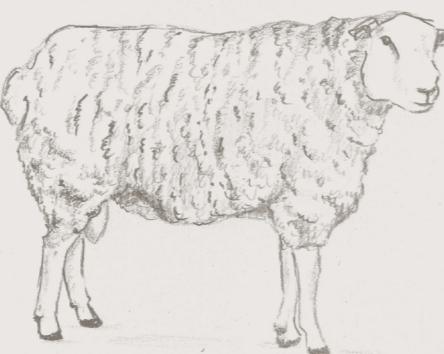


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~100 mm
FINESS	~25–32 µ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–70%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
<b>Texel</b>	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Texel sheep takes its name from the North Sea island of Texel, where it has been bred since ancient times. From there, various types have developed, primarily through crossbreeding with the English Leicester and Lincoln breeds.

## How to recognize it

The Tiroler Steinschaf is a large-framed sheep with an arched head. There are pure white, gray, black-headed with black legs, and entirely black animals. It has silky, shiny plain wool with longer, coarser outer hair and finer undercoat, and a wool-covered forehead. The ears are upright, pointed, and medium-wide. Males have uniformly curved horns, while females are hornless. The breed has a tight topline and strong legs.

## Where to find them

Oberösterreich, Niederösterreich, Burgenland, Kärnten, Steiermark, Salzburg.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~80 mm
FINESS	~30–35 µ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–70%

## Tiroler Bergschaf

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
<b>Texel</b>	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
<b>Tiroler Bergschaf</b>	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

A dual-purpose breed developed in the Alpine region of Tyrol (Austria and Italy) by crossing local landraces with Bergamasca sheep from northern Italy. It is well adapted to mountainous terrain and transhumance. Widely used post-WWII for both meat (known as Berglamm) and wool. It has a non-seasonal estrus cycle, very high fertility, and an excellent rearing rate, with a well-developed, well-attached udder and a strong maternal instinct. Due to its agility and sure-footedness, it is well-suited for alpine pastures. The breed reaches early to medium breeding maturity.

## How to recognize it

The Tyrolean Mountain Sheep is a medium to large-framed breed with a narrow, roman-nosed, wool-covered head from the forehead to the nape, and long, flat, drooping ears that extend to the corners of the mouth. It has a well-developed body with a deep chest, well-arched ribs, a long, straight back, compact shoulders, and a slightly sloping pelvis. The legs are correctly positioned, with firm patterns and well-closed hooves. The breed has white, straight to slightly wavy wool of medium fineness and is bred exclusively in pure white, with no pigmentation or "piebald" eye markings allowed.

## Where to find them

Found in Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Carinthia, Styria, Upper Austria, North and South Tyrol, especially in parts of the northern Italian-Austrian border.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	~100 mm 1 or 2 times shearing
FINESS	~34–38 µ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	65–75%

# Tiroler Steinschaf

?

AT

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschaf	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Ježersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Ježersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	

## History

The oldest Tyrolean sheep breed, closely related to the now-extinct Zaupelschaf. It was crossbred into the Tiroler Bergschaf, passing on its excellent fertility to the breed. Starting in 1974, a breeding organization was established and the animals began to be recorded in a herdbook.



SHEEP BREEDS IN THE ALPS

Woolshed: A New Era for Alpine Wool

France

Country

## Where to find them

Tyrol (Austria), South Tyrol (Italy), and nearby alpine regions.

## How to recognize it

The Tiroler Steinschaf is a large-framed sheep with an arched head. There are pure white, gray, black-headed with black legs, and entirely black animals. It has silky, shiny plain wool with longer, coarser outer hair and finer undercoat, and a wool-covered forehead. The ears are upright, pointed, and medium-wide. Males have uniformly curved horns, while females are hornless. The breed has a tight topline and strong legs.

**Breeding Objective**

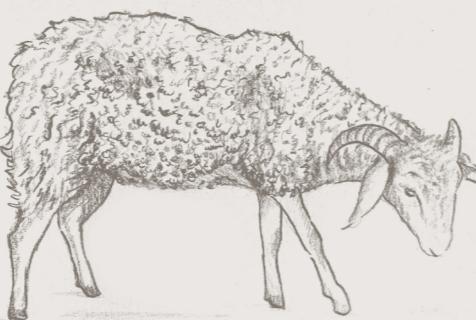
- MEAT
- MILK
- WOOL

**Fiber characteristics**

LENGTH	~120 mm
FINESS	Longer, coarser top hair and a fine underhair
COLOUR	Mixed
SCOURING YIELD %	65–75%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezerško Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
<b>Brigasque</b>	Improved Jezerško Sol.	
Grivette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

The Brigasque ewe is a large, hardy dairy sheep. Excellent walkers, they are not afraid of long distances, withstanding harsh winters and heatwaves. Documentary resources trace the Brigasque transhumant pastoralism dates back to 12th century. Its name in local dialect means "sheep-goat." Crossbreeding has long been practiced, in search of animals adapted to high mountain ranges, good milk yielders, and wool production. In response to a sharp decline with the gradual cessation of winter transhumance, the Brigasque Sheep Breeders' Association was founded in 2012 to preserve the breed and promote its development, through the making of carpets and hats. The yearly "Brigasque Sheep Festival" was created to celebrate the sheep, and more broadly, regional agricultural and artisanal production.

## Where to find them

The Brigasque sheep is found mainly in the South of the French Alps: Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Hautes-Alpes, Alpes-Maritimes, and Var. It was born in honour to the village "La Brigue" situated in the Valley of La Roya.

## How to recognize it

The Brigasque males & females have horns, acrobatic muzzles and long ears. The fleece, with long locks, is mostly white, with some reddish patches, often on the neck.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	38 µ diameter
COLOUR	White/Ecru: reddish/roux in the neck
SCOURING YIELD %	/

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezerško Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
<b>Brigasque</b>	Improved Jezerško Sol.	
<b>Grivette</b>	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Grivette originates from the Bas-Dauphiné region, where it became widespread at the beginning of the 20th century. It almost disappeared in absorption crosses with rams with strong beef aptitudes, but was saved in the 1960s by a handful of breeders, notably thanks to the intervention of the Fournier family. The Grivette is a hardy sheep, capable of making the most of its food and drawing on its reserves in the event of a shortage, if it does not last too long of course, and if its needs are limited to maintenance requirements.

## Where to find them

Originally from Bas-Dauphiné, the grivette is mainly present in the Loire and Rhône departments, but the interest it presents in crossbreeding has allowed it to also be exported outside its cradle to neighboring departments.

## How to recognize it

The Grivette is a medium-sized breed with a white fleece that leaves the head bare. This is marked with brown-black spots. Horns are not present in this breed, neither in the male nor in the female.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	40 mm
FINESS	34 µ diameter
COLOUR	White/ecru
SCOURING YIELD %	50%

# Marron des Aravis

?

FR

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
<b>Marron des Aravis</b>	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

History

Originating from Haute-Savoie, this is the smallest French sheep breed. Also named "Fine de Flumet, Rossette de Flumet, or Marron de l'Arly" Marron des Aravis are lively and agile, pioneering and are hardy excellent walkers. The breed has been present around the Aravis Massif since at least the 1940s. They are on the verge of extinction, with fewer than 100 purebred specimens in France. The head is fine, dry, and sparsely woolled, with a clear profile. The muzzle is broad and the tip is brown. The skin is brown, regardless of the color of the wool.

Where to find them

The cradle of the breed is the Aravis, the Maurienne and Giettaz valleys in Savoie.

How to recognize it

The fleece is rather fine, initially straight then curly to wavy towards the outside, light brown to dark brown in colour and tending towards almost black. The head and legs are woolless. The carded wool is glossy brown.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	28–30 µ diameter
COLOUR	Light to dark brown
SCOURING YIELD %	/

# Merinos D'Arles

?

FR

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
<b>Merinos D'Arles</b>	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

History

The Arles Merino is a sheep breed bred for lambs and wool, improved in southeastern France during the 19th century by crossing local ewes with Spanish Merino rams. It is a medium-sized sheep (the ewes weigh 40 to 60 kg), originally selected for the quality and fineness of its wool, and is very hardy. The sheep are well adapted to transhumance between the Crau plain and the high mountains in summer. Its population in France is approximately 250,000 ewes. Arles Merino wool can be used to make second-skin garments (jackets, sweaters), accessories (scarves, hats, socks), or more traditionally, knitting wool. The Collectif pour la promotion du Mérinos d'Arles (CPMA), an association created in 2018, is working to promote the breed's products, and more specifically its wool, through the development of technical hiking clothing.

Where to find them

Today, 90% of this Merino descent is present in Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, but also extends into Drôme and Isère.

How to recognize it

Its white fleece is known for its length, its density and for the fineness of its wool.

## Breeding Objective

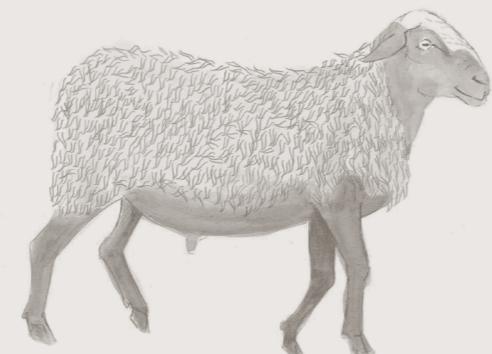


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	7 mm
FINESS	21 µ diameter
COLOUR	White/ecru
SCOURING YIELD %	35%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
<b>Mourerous</b>	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

The Mourerous, meaning red muzzle in Provençal, is a breed of little-known origins, originating in the Alpes-Maritimes region. Also known as "Péone" or "Rouge de Guillaumes", the origins of the Mourerous breed are little known: According to some hypotheses, indigenous alpine strains or imports from North Africa contributed to its genetic makeup. Actions implemented from 1977 and the creation in 1983 by breeders of a union responsible for the defense and promotion of the Mourerous allowed this breed to be saved. Depending on the available grass resources and the proximity of the consumption areas, the lambs produced are runner or tardon (coastal area) or sheepfold (pre-Alpine and mountain areas), some of which are labeled as Label Rouge PGI Agneau de Sisteron. Local initiatives are developing to promote the wool of Mourerous ewes, which is prized for its loftiness.

## Where to find them

Originally from the Maritime Alps, it has spread throughout the mountainous part of the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region (southern Pre-Alps). It is also found in Drôme and Savoie.

## How to recognize it

It is a hardy local breed, recognizable by its red head and legs, adapted to dry and cold environments, with good walking ability for alpine pastures and rangeland grazing.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	30 µ diameter
COLOUR	White and clear brown
SCOURING YIELD %	/

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
<b>Noire Du Velay</b>	Brun noir du Pays	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Moutin d'Engadine	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

Like the Bizet, the Limousine and the Rava, it is one of the rustic breeds of the Massif Central. The Syndicat d'Élevage du Mouton Noir de Bains was created in 1931 with the aim of reviving the breed, improving it and setting the standard. The name Noire du Velay dates back to 1950. While the breed nearly disappeared in the 1970s due to the general decline in livestock farming in France following the shift from family farms to specialized farms, it is now experiencing renewed interest due to its adaptability and lambing abilities. Its fleece varies from poorly dyed black to brownish highlights, or even pure black. Its locks are tightly packed and shell-like, resulting in fine, wavy wool. It is a hardy ewe, excellent for its maternal qualities. It is precocious, quite prolific and has good milk production. Part of the wool is currently collected & transformed without dyeing processes by local actors such as Seraphines & Terres de Laines.

## Where to find them

This sheep is mainly found in Haute-Loire, in its original region, but also in other mountain and mid-mountain areas including alpine area such as Ardèche and Savoie.

## How to recognize it

The Velay Black had a camouflage technique using the colour of the wool with brownish reflections, in a volcanic territory with a "pozzolana" colour.

## Breeding Objective

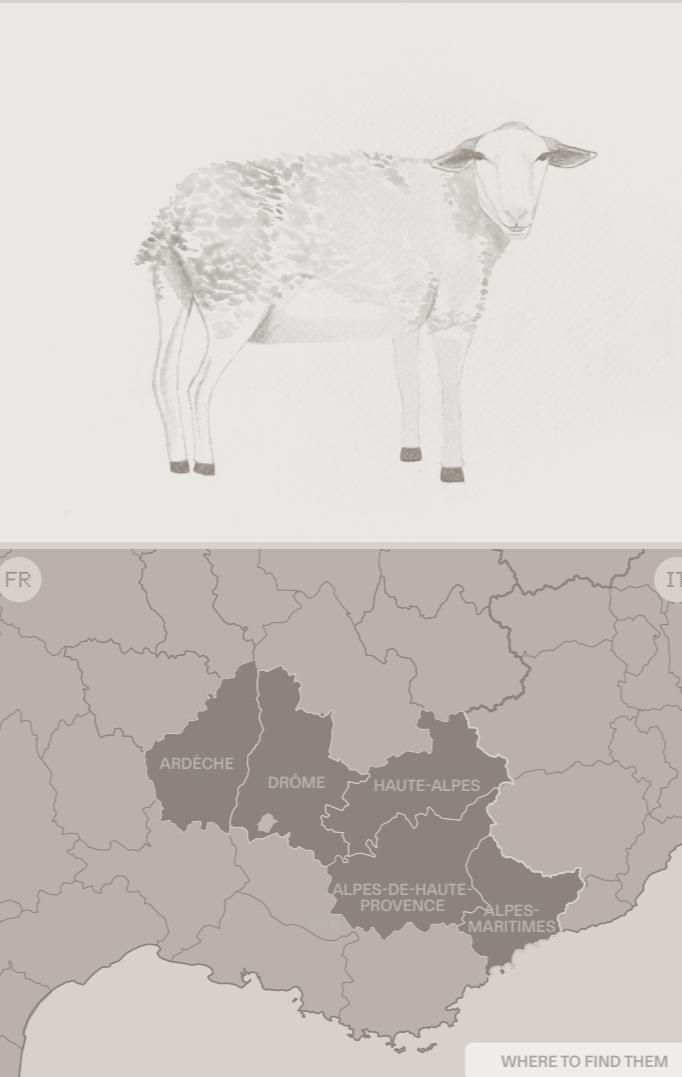


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	10 mm
FINESS	38 µ diameter
COLOUR	Black
SCOURING YIELD %	45%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchsach	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezerško Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezerško Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	

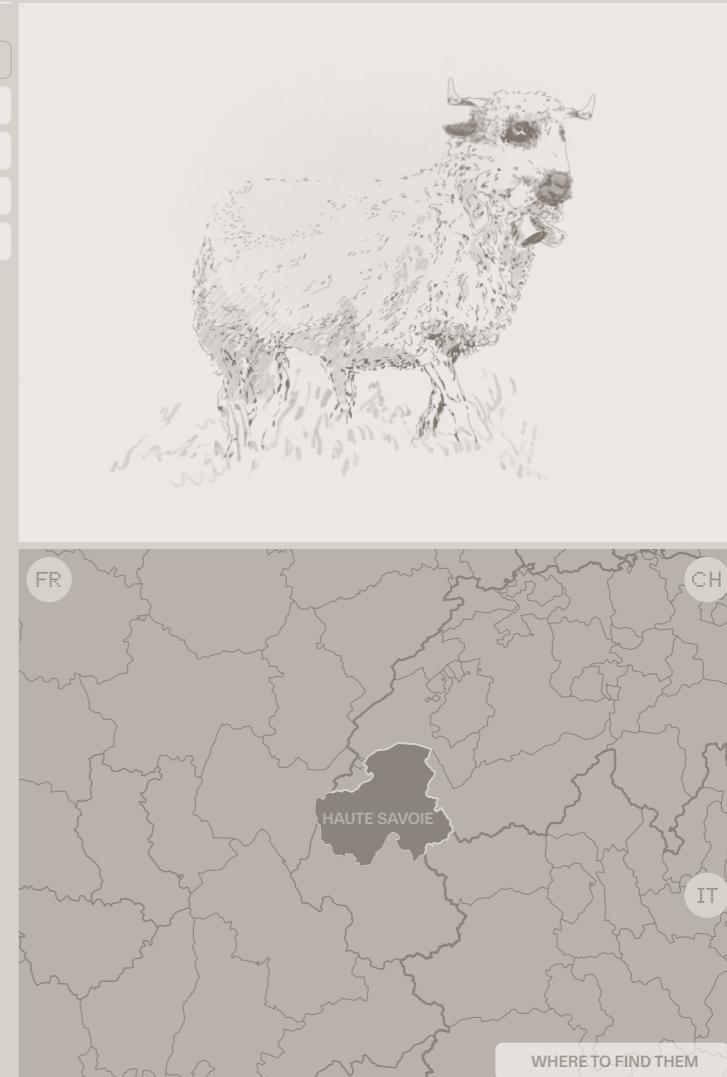


## History

The Southern Prealps are the dominant breed of Alpine sedentary pastoral systems. It can be found under different names by local associations as the Savournon, Sahune, or Quint breed. The breed was definitively named the Préalpes du Sud in 1948. Prealps breeds have a fine fleece also white and densely packed with short locks, that molt and do not require shearing or a medium fleece, & which however does not cover the head, limbs or belly.

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchsach	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezerško Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezerško Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

Thônes et Marthod is a French sheep breed originating from Savoie and Haute-Savoie. It is a fairly early-maturing, hardy breed, well-suited to summer grazing, where it spends three or four months. The Thônes et Marthod Union is supporting the preservation and development of the breed. There are approximately 8,000 Thônes et Marthod ewes today. The association Defrise Ton Mouton initiated a collective to connect breeders and artisans supporting the transformation of fleeces into carded wool. The association transforms and sells around 300kg per year. The breeds are sheared twice a year to optimise the quality of wool.

## Where to find them

The breed's cradle is located in the foothills of the Alps. Its current geographical range is mainly found in the departments of Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Hautes-Alpes, Alpes-Maritimes, Drôme, and Ardèche.

## How to recognize it

The Southern Prealps is a sheep with a thin, elongated head, a more or less broad forehead, and a narrow, hooked muzzle, especially in males. It also has a characteristic depression at its junction with the frontal bone. Both males and females are hornless.

## Where to find them

Thônes and Marthod are presents in Haute-Savoie and Savoie mainly, in the valley of Thônes and Marthod as suggested by their name. We can also find them close to Sixt Fer à Cheval.

## How to recognize it

It is characterized by its white fleece and skin, and black markings on the muzzle, eyes, and ears. The fleece is rustic wool with long fiber with jar.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	40 mm
FINESS	26 µ diameter
COLOUR	White/ecru
SCOURING YIELD %	44%

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	17 mm
FINESS	35-39 µ diameter
COLOUR	Ecru, and some black
SCOURING YIELD %	/

# Alpagota

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Bieliese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grivette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## Italy

### Country

### SHEEP BREEDS IN THE ALPS

### Woolshed: A New Era for Alpine Wool



## History

The lamb of Alpagota is a Slow Food Presidium that is part of the communities that work every day to save from extinction native breeds and rare varieties. The meat is renowned for its tenderness, for the balance between fat and lean components and for the taste reminiscent of herbs, with which animals come into contact during mountain grazing. Some farmers also get excellent mixed sheep-and-cow cheeses from milk. This breed is connected to a small, but virtuous wool chain in collaboration with the historic Paoletti Wool Mill of Follina.

## How to recognize it

### Where to find them

They are located mainly in their area of origin (Alpagota) and in neighboring municipalities of the provinces of Belluno and Treviso; other flocks are present in the nearby province of Pordenone.

Medium size, acorn head in both sexes, proportionally, with a slight muttonino profile in females and muttonino in males. The coat is thick white with a peculiar dark maculation. Medium-length ears, often short and sometimes almost non-existent, so much so that it is remembered with the name of "monca", "muca" or "oca".

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	40–48 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	/

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	<b>Bergamasca</b>	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchsach	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Bergamasca breed, likely of ancient Sudanic origin, is primarily found in the province of Bergamo, especially in the municipality of Clusone and surrounding areas. It is a very rustic sheep capable of adapting to any environmental and management situation. The transhumant farming system has helped shape the characteristics of this breed, selecting animals suited to movement and life in the mountains.

## How to recognize it

### Where to find them

Due to its traditional practice of transhumance, the breed influences much of the Lombardy region. It has also gradually spread—both as a pure breed and more commonly through crossbreeding—to other regions of Italy.

Similar to Biellese, it represents one of the largest Italian sheep breeds: the rams can weigh up to 120-130 kg, while ewes usually range between 80-100 kg. They have long, narrow head with a convex profile, large drooping ears, and no horns. Its wool is white and coarse, covering much of the body but leaving the face and legs bare.

## Breeding Objective

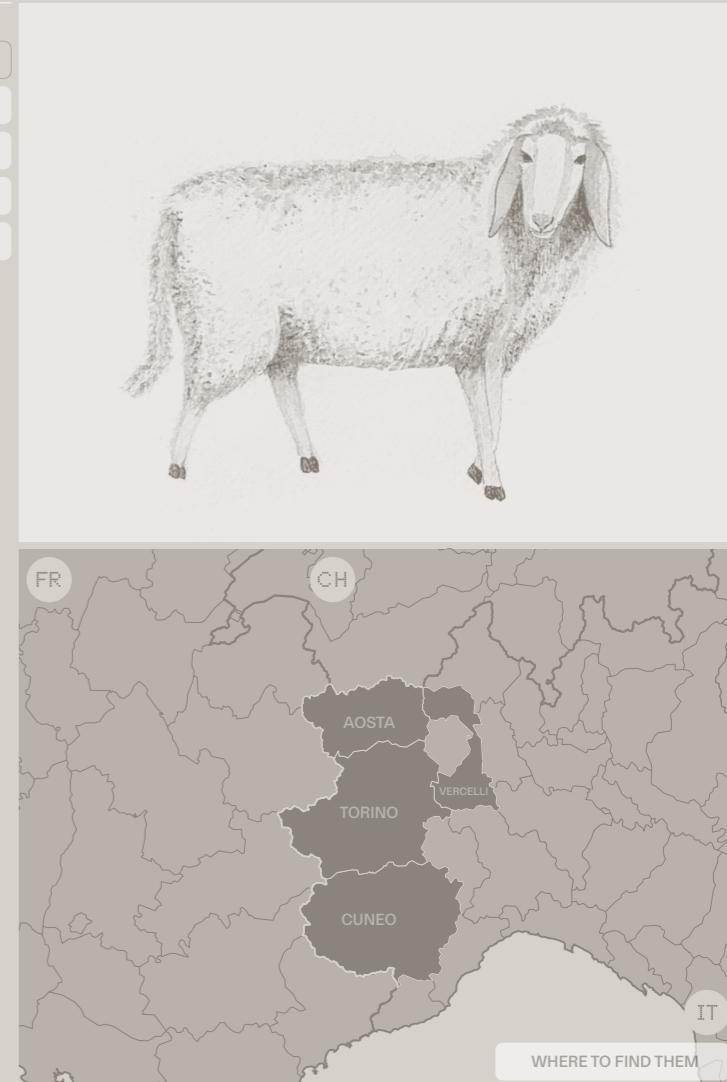


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	40-48 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	/

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	<b>Bergamasca</b>	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchsach	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Biellese sheep breed is derived from the *Ovis Aries sudanica*, it is to be placed ethnically in the group of Alpine sheep breeds with hanging ears and montonino profile. They are raised with a transhumance system, with use of pasture in summer and winter staying in sheepfold in plain or with grazing wandering throughout the year. The wool is of medium quality with conical biocchi, long and thick filaments and mixed to yellow; suitable for mattresses, padding and carpets but once also for sweaters, socks, hats those thicker and rough ones suitable for outdoor activities.

## How to recognize it

Similar to Bergamasca, it represents one of the largest Italian sheep breeds: the rams can weigh up to 120-130 kg, while ewes usually range between 80-100 kg. They have long, narrow head with a convex profile, large drooping ears, and no horns. Its wool is white and coarse, covering much of the body but leaving the face and legs bare.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	/
FINESS	40-48 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	/

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	<b>Brogna</b>	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschat	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Brogna sheep is the native Veronese breed, with limited diffusion, as there are less than 1500 heads. It's a Slow Food presidium, mainly bred for meat production, characterized by a delicate and balanced taste. More and more local restaurants and Verona offer it. Traditionally it could be considered a breed with triple attitude (meat, milk and wool) but now the main production is represented by lamb meat and only secondarily from milk (used for the production of a mixed sheep-cow cheese) and wool, which due to its fineness is also suitable for the production of knitting yarns. Its wool is suitable to be worked both for the production of knitting yarns and for the padding of soft quilts and pillows.

## Where to find them

The Brogna sheep is a local breed of sheep from Lessinia, the mountain area in the province of Verona collected between the Lessini mountains and valleys that descend towards the plain.

## How to recognize it

Medium-sized breed, with acorn head in both sexes, proportioned with a slightly montonino profile in females and montonino in males, with more or less extensive spots of red colour and long tail reaching the hock. It has medium-length ears, usually obliquely downwards.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	44,5 mm
FINESS	28,7 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White with reddish spots
SCOURING YIELD %	Unsorted wools: fluctuating between 65 and 70%; If sorted, higher yield between 70 and 75%.

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	<b>Brogna</b>	Skudde
Lacaune	<b>Lamon</b>	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschat	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Lamon sheep, indigenous to the valleys between Belluno and Trentino, has ancient origins and, until after World War II, was widely distributed and used for meat and wool. Once considered to have a triple aptitude, it was a very hardy breed and was well suited to transhumant herding, requiring no special shelter even for long journeys. With the decline of transhumant pastoral activity in the Lamon area, and the abandonment of the mountainous areas, the number of animals plummeted dramatically: from about 10,000 in 1960 to less than 200 today. At present, the Lamon sheep is raised mainly for meat production, but a process is underway to enhance the value of its rustic wool, and projects aimed at its recovery and repopulation of mountain areas have been launched.

## Where to find them

Lamon sheep are found mainly in the municipality of the same name, in the Feltrino area and in some farms in Primiero.

## How to recognize it

Generally large and without horns, it possesses wide, drooping ears. Head, ears and limbs are characterized by generally brown spotting.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	fibers are suitable for the production of carded yarns, however of relatively high counts, from Nm 3–4 to Nm 7–8
FINESS	36,5 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	Unsorted wools: fluctuating between 50 and 60%; If sorted, higher yield between 70 and 75%

# Foza (o Vicentina)

?

IT

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschaf	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Ježersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Ježersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

Vicentina sheep was originally used for the production of wool, supplying the textile industry of the Veneto foothills. In the 1940s there were around 13000 heads while today there are just over 200 left. Vicentina breeders produce, although in limited numbers given the small number of animals, products such as lamb and smoked meat, hams. Preference for the sale of lambs and rams is due to the rusticity of these animals, which grow slowly and are not sold before the year of life.

## Where to find them

Vicentina sheep is native to the plateau of Asiago, in the Vicenza Alps on the border between Veneto and Trentino-Alto Adige regions.

## How to recognize it

Medium-large breed with an acorn profile in both sexes with long, wide and drooping ears. The head, ears and limbs are covered with irregular spots of brown, dark brown or black but the fleece is predominantly white.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	47,7 mm – fiber tending to long and variability low though high; yarn with irregular structure and medium counts
FINESS	36,5 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	Unsorted wool: between 60 and 65%; If sorted, a higher yield of between 65 and 70%

SHEEP BREEDS IN THE ALPS

Woolshed: A New era for Alpine Wool

Slovenia

Country

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



WHERE TO FIND THEM

## History

The Bela Krajina Pramenka sheep developed along the bordering Kolpa river, deriving its name from the same-name region in southeastern Slovenia. Here sheep farming flourished during the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly among the Uskoks—Serbs and Croats who fled from the Ottoman invaders. The sheep are efficiently utilizing the sparse, rocky terrain covered with ferns and shrubs. The breed was influenced by Pramenka sub-types, commonly found in south-eastern Balkan countries. The breed is recognized for its excellent meat quality, but is considered critically endangered. Although the wool is coarse, it's also valued for various traditional products.

## Where to find them

Majority of the Bela Krajina Pramenka (90%) can be found within a radius of 18 km in the south-eastern region of Bela Krajina.

## How to recognize it

Predominantly white, these sheep feature distinctive black ears and black spots or patches around the eyes and on the legs. They possess long, coarse wool and a notably long tail that nearly reaches the ground. Rams have spiraled horns, while only some females have short horns.

## Breeding Objective

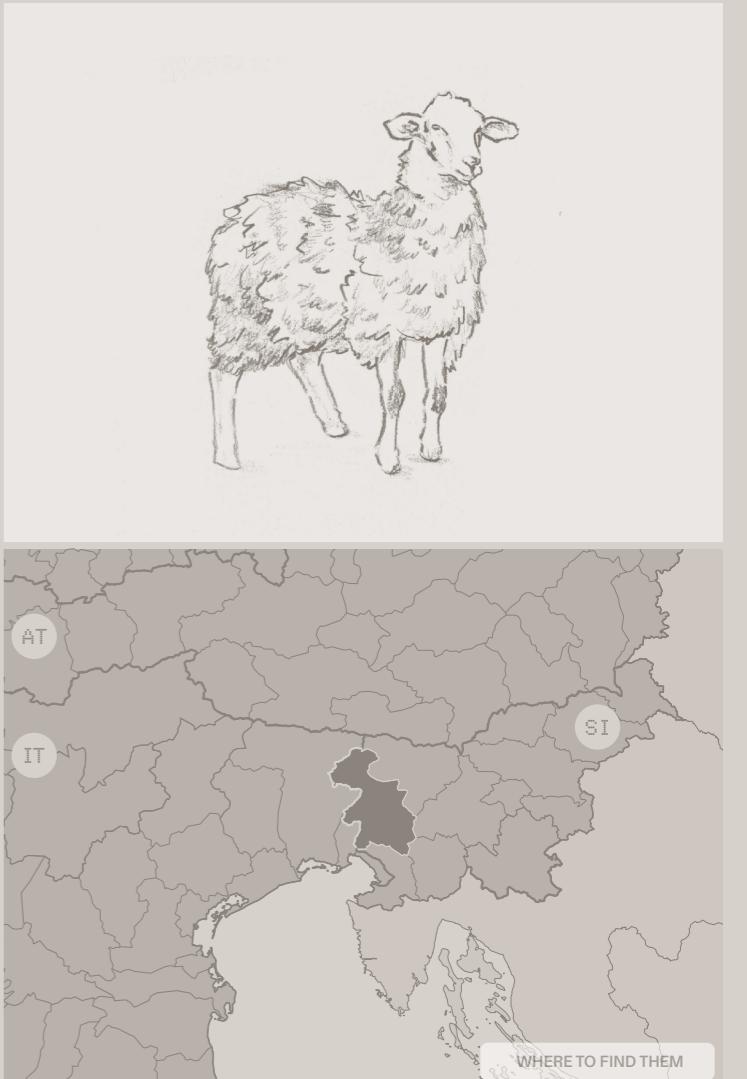


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	90 mm
FINESS	36 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	68 – 76 %

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Bovec sheep are developed from the indigenous white alpine sheep and intended for milk and lamb production, while alpine grazing during the summer helps prevent overgrowth. The breed is considered critically endangered, with approximately 3,000 animals registered in the original herdbook. They are characterized by good milk yield and can give more than 250 kg of milk during lactation, which is processed into Bovec cheese that has a European Protected Designation of Origin status since 2012 and first mentioned in 17th century historical records. By-products include albumin curd and whey. Wool isn't considered good quality.

## Where to find them

The Bovec sheep is locally widespread in the Upper Soča region (Bovec, Trenta valley with its surroundings, Log pod Mangartom), which is also the original area of the breed.

## How to recognize it

Bovec sheep are of small frame, gracile limbs, predominantly white with occasional black-brown variations/spotting. They have small horn-less heads covered with wool, with the Trenta valley subvariety displaying a typical top-head woolly tuft. The nasal profile is straight, and the small ears protrude sideways.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	7–9 mm
FINESS	34–42 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White, black/brown/mixed
SCOURING YIELD %	60% – 77%
FLEECE WEIGHT	1.2 – 1.5 kg

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Jezersko-Solčava sheep is the most wide-spread indigenous Slovenian breed that originated from crossbreeding the native long-tailed sheep in the northern alpine region of Carniola with Italian breeds Bergamasca and Padovana, considerably improving wool quality. First mentions of the breed go back to 1842/44. Today, the Jezersko-Solčava sheep is bred for lamb meat as well as wool production, the latter traditionally processed into various knitted and felted products. They are well-adapted to grazing on steep mountainous pastures rich in diverse grass species, which contributes to the high quality of its meat.

## How to recognize it

### Where to find them

Among Slovenian indigenous sheep breeds, the Jezersko-Solčava is the most numerous one and distributed across the entire country, with highest concentrations of flocks in their native northern regions Gorenjska and Savinjska.

These sheep are predominantly white, though dark brown individuals can also be found. Distinctive features include a convex nasal profile, large drooping ears, and a long, wool-covered tail. Some individuals have a black "tear" mark under eyes. Jezersko-Solčava sheep are non-seasonal breed, capable of reproducing throughout the year.

## Breeding Objective

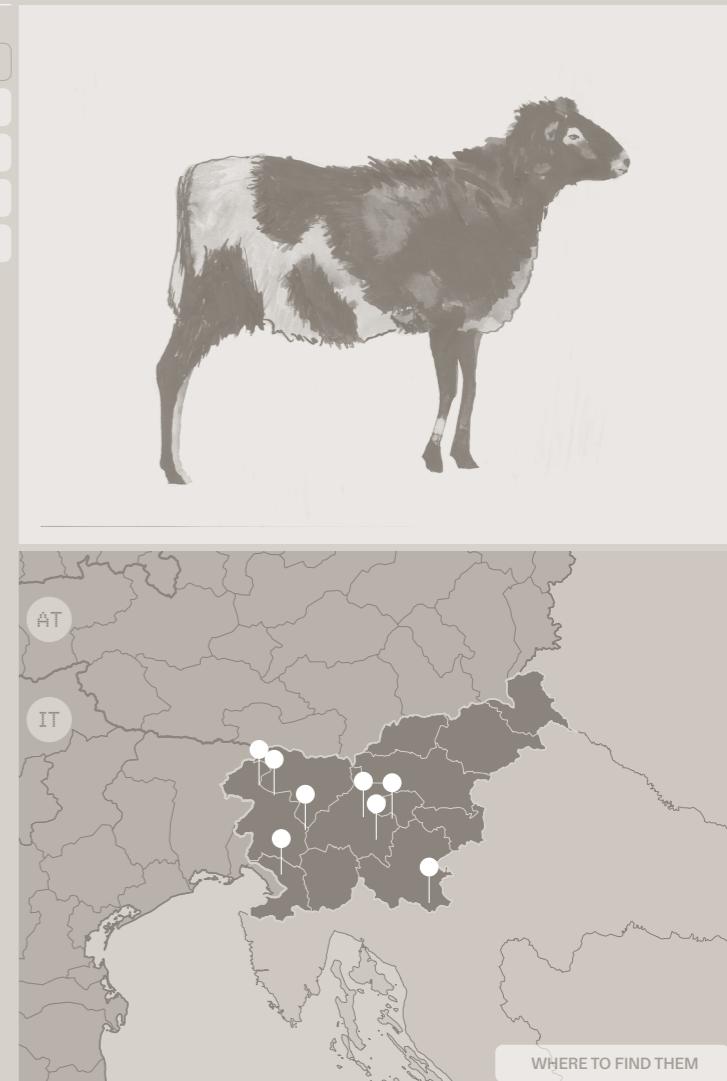


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	73–81 mm
FINESS	25–40 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	Mainly white
SCOURING YIELD %	73%

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

Improved Bovec sheep breed is classed as a traditional Slovene breed and was created in the 1980s with the aim of improving the production characteristics of the indigenous Bovec sheep by cross-breeding with East Friesian rams. The improved Bovec sheep is characterized by high milk yield, which enables production of various high quality dairy products. In addition to milk yield, good fertility and increase in the frame are also very important breed improvements. The breed has good results in slovene conditions, due to the similarity of environmental conditions with East Friesian's country of origin.

## How to recognize it

### Where to find them

The breed is popular among breeders and it's widespread throughout Slovenia, however it is an endangered breed due to low numbers of animals and potential in-breeding.

The animals are large in size. The head is large, hairless and hornless, the ears are protruding and poorly covered with hair. They have strongly pronounced ocular bone structure. The legs are strong and not covered with wool. The tail is medium long and moderately covered with hair. The wool is of medium quality, mostly white colour, with black or dark brown exceptions.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	82–98 mm
FINESS	31–36 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White
SCOURING YIELD %	75%

# Improved Jezersko Solčava

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SI

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Improved Jezersko-Solčava breed was developed by crossbreeding the indigenous Jezersko-Solčava sheep with the non-native Romanov breed, aiming to enhance fertility and litter size. This breeding program began in 1982, resulting in a sheep type suitable for intensive meat production and commercial crossbreeding with other meat breeds. The breed inherited high fertility from the Romanov sheep and environmental adaptability from the Jezersko-Solčava sheep. This breed exhibits excellent adaptation and grazing abilities and is primarily raised for lamb meat production as well as good quality wool.

## How to recognize it

### Where to find them

The Improved Jezersko-Solčava sheep is the second most common among slovenian indigenous sheep breeds and is the most geographically dispersed breed in Slovenia.

Head is small with flat profile and covered with wool. Ears are medium-sized and protruding to the side. The body is medium width, legs are shorter than in the JS breed and not hairy, as well as the short tail. The wool is mostly white, but due to the proportion of Romanov breed, the sheep are often also coloured, brown and black. All animals are hornless.

### Breeding Objective



### Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	77–187 mm
FINESS	28–31 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	White/grey hue
SCOURING YIELD %	75%

# Istrian Pramenka

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Istrian pramenka developed in the cross-border Karst and Istria regions connecting Italy, Slovenia and Croatia. The breed is critically endangered due to its limited geographical distribution. Istrian pramenka has adapted to the scarcity of fodder and arid aromatic vegetation found in the Karst landscape, which is also the main reason for their valued dairy products, particularly cheese with protected geographical origin. Looking for better pastures was also the primary reason for seasonal transhumance, which has now become an obsolete and forgotten tradition. The Istrian Pramenka is bred for milk and lamb production.

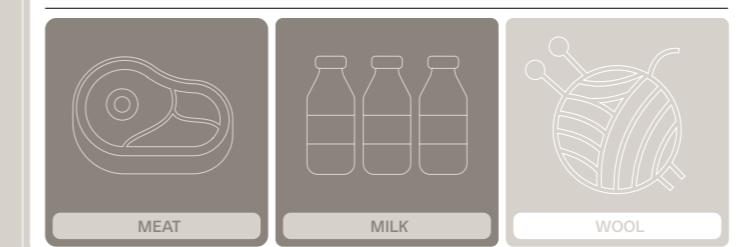
### Where to find them

Istrian pramenka can be found in the south-western part of Slovenia, in the Karst and Istria regions, as well as beyond the national borders in Croatian Istria and Italian Carst.

### How to recognize it

Sheep are generally hornless, while rams have well-developed and spiral horns. The coat colour of most sheep is white with black spots on the head, body and legs. The breed is characterised by a poor wool cover, with hairless legs and belly, while the body is covered with coarse, stranded wool.

### Breeding Objective



### Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	110 mm
FINESS	38–43 $\mu$ diameter
COLOUR	Mixed: white/brown/black
SCOURING YIELD %	56%–78%

# Blanc des Alpes

SHEEP BREEDS IN THE ALPS

Woolshed: A New Era for Alpine Wool

Switzerland



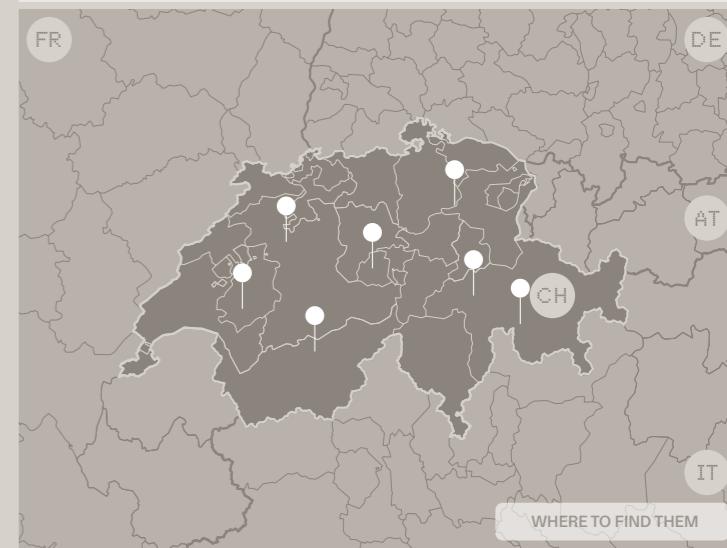
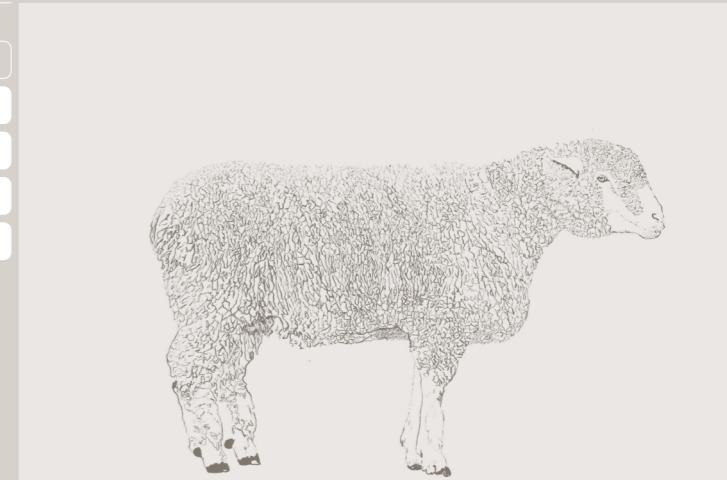
Country

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Bieliese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchschaf	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grivette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	

## History

The Blanc des Alpes originates from native white mountain sheep of the Swiss Alps, refined through crossbreeding with productive breeds such as Mérinoland and Île-de-France. It has become the most widespread sheep breed in Switzerland, representing nearly 50% of registered sheep. Known for its non-seasonal breeding capacity, it can lamb two to three times every two years. Its ability to efficiently digest coarse forage enables it to thrive in mountainous and extensive farming systems.



WHERE TO FIND THEM

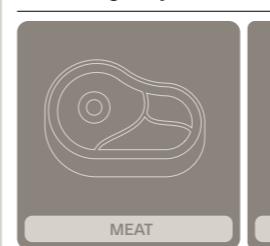
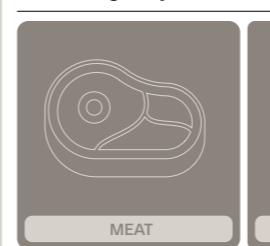
## Where to find them

The Blanc des Alpes is widespread across Switzerland, especially in alpine and mountainous regions where extensive grazing is common. It is the predominant breed in Swiss flocks, accounting for almost half of all registered sheep.

## How to recognize it

Large and well-built, the Blanc des Alpes is hornless with a medium-length head and neck covered in wool up to the eyes. It has a broad muzzle and medium-length ears held horizontally. The body is muscular with a long, straight back, wide chest, and shallow pelvis. Limbs are strong with slightly angled hocks and healthy hooves, allowing a sure-footed and efficient gait.

## Breeding Objective

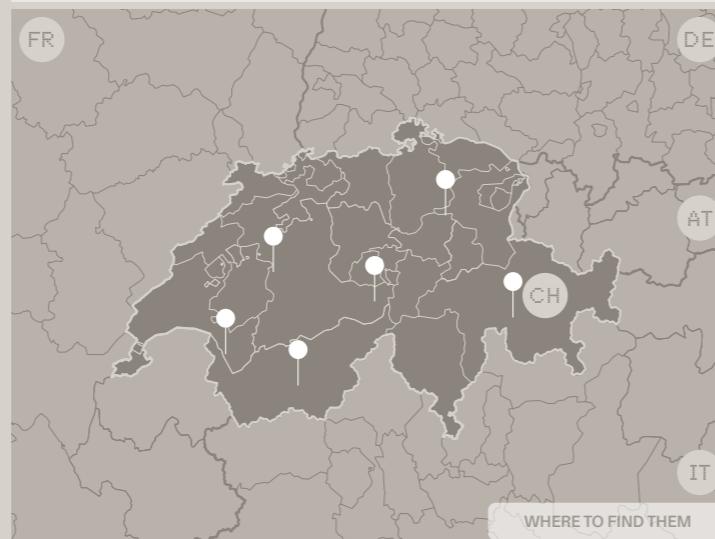
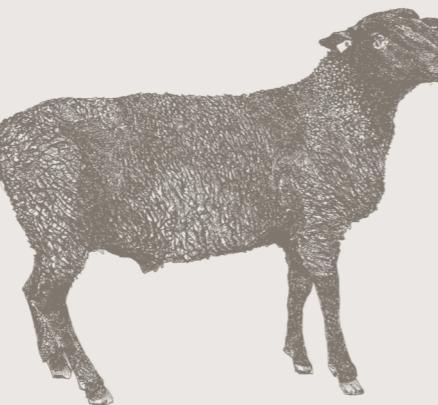


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Minimum 40 mm after 180 days growth
FINESS	F2-F3 or finer
COLOUR	Bright white, uniformly distributed
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Brun Noir du Pays is an ancient Swiss mountain sheep breed first recorded in the 14th century. It developed from local mountain sheep and was historically prized for its fine, dark wool. Early 20th-century selective breeding standardized the breed's traits and preserved its genetic purity. Today, it accounts for approximately 15% of Switzerland's sheep population. The breed thrives in rugged alpine environments and has a long tradition of use for milk, meat, and wool.

## How to recognize it

## Where to find them

The Brun Noir du Pays is widespread in the Swiss Alps, especially in mountainous regions suited to extensive, low-input grazing systems.

**Medium-sized with a robust and harmonious body, the Brun Noir du Pays has a broad muzzle, straight nasal profile, and medium-sized ears. The head and legs are covered with glossy black or brown hair, and both sexes are hornless. Its coat ranges from dark brown to beige with dense, uniform wool. Limbs are strong with well-positioned hooves and slightly arched hocks supporting an efficient gait.**

## Breeding Objective

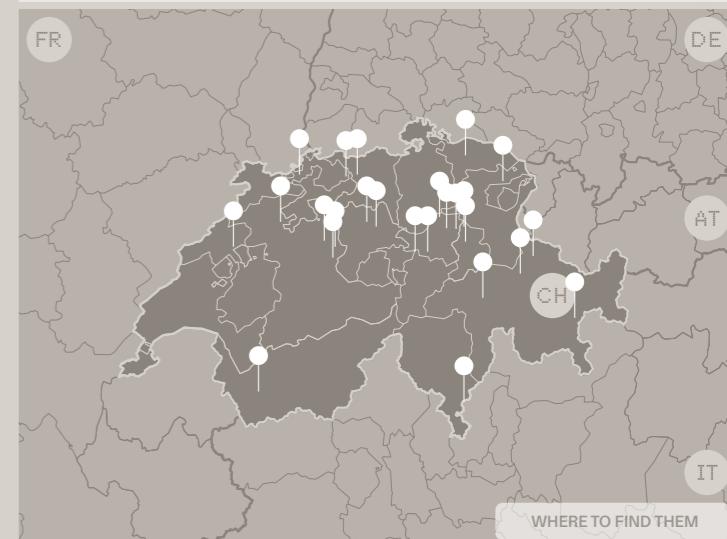


## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Minimum 25 mm
FINESS	F2-3 (fine to medium wool)
COLOUR	Typically dark brown-black to beige, sometimes with white fibers
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Mouton d'Engadine, or "Mouton-Moine," traces its origins to the late Middle Ages, from the crossing of native Alpine sheep with Bergamasca types brought by Italian shepherds. Once common across eastern Switzerland, its numbers declined in the 20th century due to breed standardization. Conservation efforts by ProSpecieRara and the creation of the Swiss Engadine Sheep Breeders Association in 1992 reversed this trend. The breed is now recovering and appreciated for its meat, wool, and adaptability to alpine pastures.

## Where to find them

Found across Switzerland, particularly in the Engadine valley and surrounding alpine regions.

## How to recognize it

Medium to large, hornless, with a robust frame, Roman nose, and drooping ears. Most individuals have reddish-brown fleece, though black variants exist. Strong hooves and confident posture reflect the breed's hardiness and alpine adaptation.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Long fibres (around 100–140 mm)
FINESS	Medium-coarse wool (around 32–40 µ diameter)
COLOUR	Reddish-brown, black
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

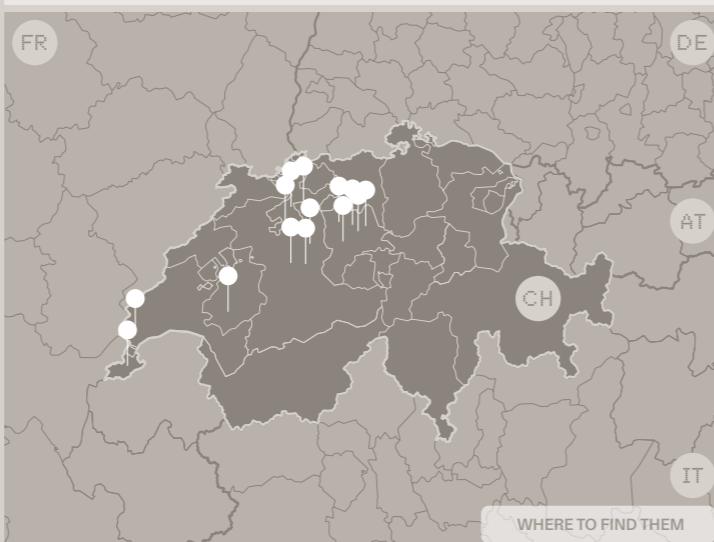
# Mouton de l'Oberland grison

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CH

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'O. gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Mouton de l'Oberland grison descends from the ancient Tavetsch and Nalps sheep, Alpine types linked to early European peatland sheep. After the Tavetsch died out in 1960, surviving lines were revived in the 1980s by ProSpecieRara. The breed is now found across Switzerland but remains rare. Well-adapted to mountainous terrain, it is prized for its lean, gamey meat and richly colored fleece used in crafts. Wool quality ranges from medium to coarse, and is particularly valued for felting and handspinning.

## Where to find them

Found throughout Switzerland, especially in alpine areas like Vrin, Medel, Lumnezia, Nalps, and Somvigt.

## How to recognize it

Medium to large-sized sheep with twisted horns on both sexes, a distinctively curved nose, and wool-free face and legs. Many have a white star on the back of the head and a white tail tip. The long fleece is coarse, reddish-brown or black, and provides excellent protection from cold and moisture.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	57,6 mm, fiber tending to long and variability low though high; yarn with irregular structure and medium counts
FINESS	/
COLOUR	/
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

# Mouton de Saas

?

CH

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'O. gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Saas Sheep originated in the isolated Saas Valley (Valais, Switzerland) from early 20th-century Bergamasca imports. Due to geographic isolation, the breed evolved into a genetically distinct local ecotype, confirmed by a 2015 genetic study. Once confined to its alpine valley, the Saas Sheep population declined sharply but is now recovering, thanks to conservation programs. Known for its calm nature and loyalty, it is raised primarily for meat but also produces medium-quality wool suitable for artisanal uses.

## Where to find them

Native to the Saas Valley (Valais), now also found in other parts of Switzerland through conservation breeding networks.

## How to recognize it

Large, hornless sheep with a long, narrow head, pronounced Roman nose, and long, drooping ears. Coat colours vary: white, mottled, and shaded variants exist. The posture is upright and robust. Calm and flock-oriented in behavior.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Medium-length (around 60–90 mm)
FINESS	Fine wool but not elite (around 28–35 µ diameter)
COLOUR	White, mottled, mixed
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

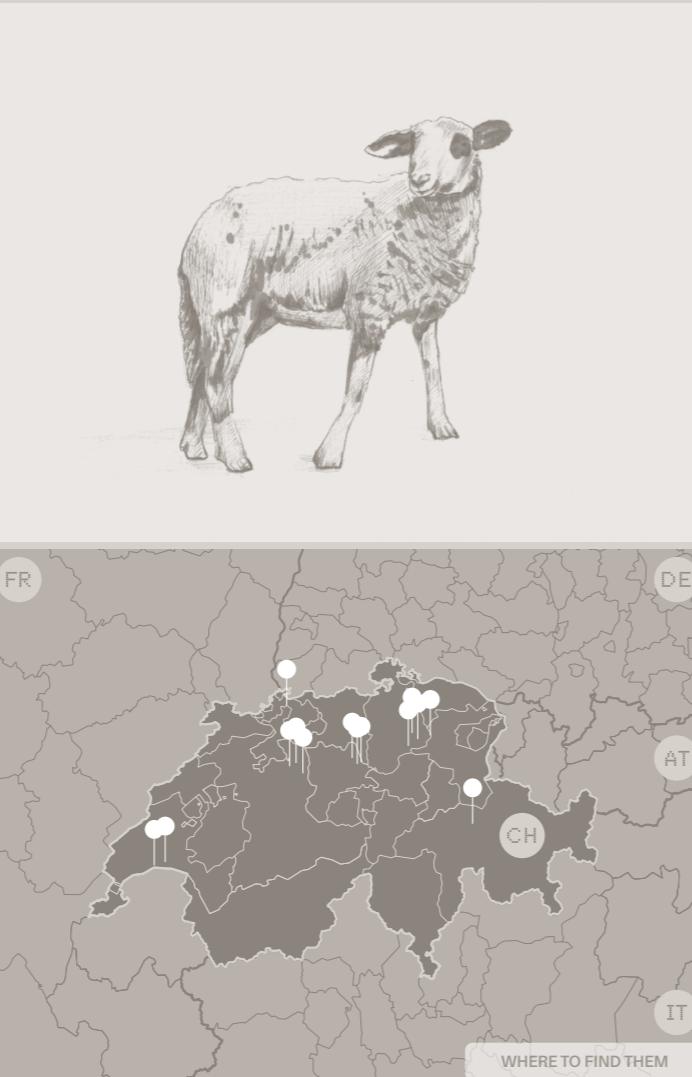
# Mouton miroir

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CH

Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Mouton Miroir originates from the canton of Graubünden (Grisons) in eastern Switzerland, especially the Prättigau region. It developed through centuries of alpine transhumance, influenced by flocks migrating from Austria and northern Italy during the 17th and 18th centuries. Nearly extinct by the mid-20th century, it was rediscovered in 1985 and has since been conserved by ProSpecieRara. The breed remains genetically vulnerable but is spreading across Switzerland.

## Where to find them

Mainly found in the eastern Swiss Alps, particularly Graubünden and neighboring alpine areas. Conservation flocks and breeders maintain populations across Switzerland.

## How to recognize it

Medium-sized, hornless sheep with a smooth, wool-free forehead ("miroir"), clean underbelly and legs, and a finely crimped, soft fleece. Distinctive dark markings ("glasses") appear around the eyes, mouth, and ear tips, which fade after the first shearing to a uniform white fleece. The nasal profile is straight.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Medium staple length (around 70–120 mm)
FINESS	Medium fineness (around 28–34 µ diameter)
COLOUR	White after first shearing; lambs show patchy dark markings
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

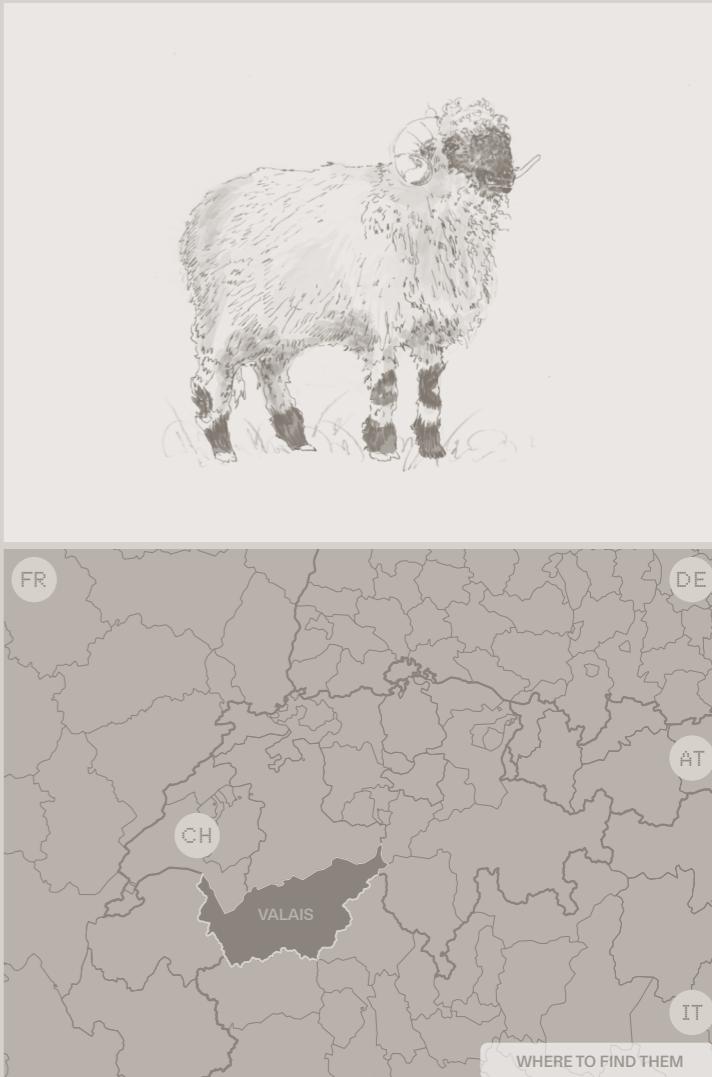
# Mouton nez noir du Valais

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Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton n. n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Valais Blacknose (Nez Noir du Valais) has been mentioned in historical documents since the 15th century and was officially recognized in 1962. Originating in the Upper Valais region of Switzerland, the breed developed to withstand harsh alpine climates. It is appreciated for its dual-purpose production (meat and wool) and plays a key ecological role in maintaining high-altitude pastures through traditional transhumance. Its meat, flavored by alpine herbs, is highly valued. The breed holds deep cultural significance in the region.

## How to recognize it

Large-framed and robust, Valais Blacknose sheep are unmistakable due to their striking black face, ears, knees, hocks, and horn bases, contrasted by a long, pure white fleece. Both ewes and rams have prominent spiral horns. The nose is convex, and the broad forehead is covered in wool. Limbs are strong, and the wool covers most of the body, including parts of the face and legs.

## Where to find them

The Valais Blacknose is concentrated in the Upper Valais (Haut-Valais) region of Switzerland, particularly around Visp, Brig, and surrounding alpine areas. It may also be encountered in other parts of Switzerland and in breeding programs abroad, but its traditional home is in Valais.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Minimum 100 mm (in 180 days)
FINESS	F4–F5 (~34–38 µ diameter)
COLOUR	Pure white (few black fibers tolerated in animals >18 months)
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Roux du Valais originates from the Valais Alps of Switzerland, descending from the extinct Fauve Sheep and Roux de Bagnes. The breed nearly vanished by the mid-1980s, but conservation efforts by ProSpecieRara and local breeders have revived it. Officially recognized in 1998, the breed is now established across Switzerland. Known for its ruggedness, the Roux du Valais was traditionally used for meat, wool, and landscape management in harsh alpine environments. Its wool was historically prized for felting and durable textiles.

## Where to find them

The Roux du Valais is primarily found in the Valais region of Switzerland, with populations expanding into other Swiss cantons through active breeding programs and conservation initiatives.

## How to recognize it

Generally large and without horns, it possesses wide, drooping ears. Head, ears and limbs are characterized by generally brown spotting.

## Countries and sheep breeds

AUSTRIA	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
Braunes Bergschaf	Alpagota	Mouton miroir
Juraschaf	Bergamasca	Mouton nez n. du Valais
Kärtner Brillenschaf	Biellese	Roux du Valais
Krainer Steinschaf	Brogna	Skudde
Lacaune	Lamon	
Merinolandschaf	Vicentina (Foza)	
Ostfries. Milchscha	SLOVENIA	
Texel	Bela Krajina Pramenka	
Tiroler Bergschaf	Bovec	
Tiroler Steinschaf	Jezersko Solčava	
FRANCE	Improved Bovec	
Brigasque	Improved Jezersko Sol.	
Grievette	Istrian Pramenka	
Marron des Aravis	SWITZERLAND	
Merinos D'Arles	Blanc des Alpes	
Mourerous	Brun noir du Pays	
Noire Du Velay	Moutin d'Engadine	
Pré-Alpes du Sud	Mouton de l'Oberland gr.	
Thônes et Marthod	Mouton de Saas	



## History

The Skudde is an ancient landrace breed from East Prussia and the Baltic region, historically numbering over 3,600 in 1936. Nearly lost after WWII, a few flocks survived in Germany, the Benelux countries, and Switzerland. Its primitive traits and genetic link to wild sheep make it valuable for conservation grazing and traditional wool crafts. Though still endangered, the breed is being preserved by dedicated breeders.

## How to recognize it

Small, lightly built sheep with fine limbs and a wild appearance. Rams have large, spiral horns; ewes are hornless or have small horn buds. The head and legs are wool-free. Fleece includes a coarse outer coat and dense underwool. Most are white, but black and brown variations exist.

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Approximately 12 inches (~300 mm annually, implying ~150 mm per shorter growth cycle)
FINESS	Coarse wool (around 35–45 $\mu$ diameter)
COLOUR	Natural reddish-brown, sometimes black
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

## Breeding Objective



## Fiber characteristics

LENGTH	Outer coat length: long, coarse guard hairs (around 150–250 mm), Undercoat length: shorter, softer fibres (around 50–100 mm)
FINESS	Outer coat: long, very coarse (~40+ $\mu$ diameter), Undercoat: finer and shorter (~25–30 $\mu$ diameter)
COLOUR	White (common), black, brown
SCOURING YIELD %	Not yet known

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