



Blacknose Sheep SN

1 Origin

The breed of Blacknose sheep was first mentioned in the 15th century. Its characteristics, acquired over centuries, such as adaptability to the harsh mountain climate, feed efficiency, fertility, resilience, and loyalty to its location, make this breed unique..



2 Brief Profile

The Valais Blacknose sheep is a large-framed, resilient, frugal, and harmonious mountain sheep with a strong foundation. The horns, the distinctive black markings on the head and legs, and the long wool make this animal expressive and unique.

It is important to note its sensitivity to high temperatures, which significantly influences its grazing behavior and food intake during the summer months.

Due to its aseasonality, good mothering qualities, and meat performance, the Blacknose sheep has remained part of the cultural heritage of Valais and is especially popular among breeders in the Upper Valais region.

3 Breeding Goal

- Preservation and improvement of resilience, free of genetic defects
- Adaptability to alpine conditions
- Mountain capability, loyalty to location
- Optimal grassland-based feed efficiency
- Longevity, with an average productive life of 5 to 7 years
- Medium meat quality (T)
- Wool quality F 5–4, free of coarse hairs, length over 10 cm in 180 days
- Correct color markings in both female and male animals

4 Temperament

The Valais Blacknose sheep has a calm temperament. Natural grazing occurs in the morning from dawn until sunrise and in the evening from sunset into the night.

5 Reproduction

5.1 Lambing

Lambing occurs aseasonally, mainly in autumn and winter, as well as in spring. The first lambing should occur at 18 months.

5.2 Fertility of Ewes (Breeding Value)

- Ø 1.6 lambs per ewe per year
- By age 3, at least 2 live-born lambs
- By ages 4 and 5, at least 4 live-born lambs



6 Exterior Evaluation

6.1 Type (Format)

Large-framed sheep with a harmonious body, medium meatiness, with good growth and distinctive color markings.

6.1.1 Color Markings

- Black from the nose to the middle of the head; black eye rings connected to the black nasal coloration; black ears; black horizontal markings on the pasterns; even black spots on the hocks and knees.
- For females, a black tail spot is desirable but must be interrupted; for males, no tail spot is tolerated.

6.1.2 Head and Neck

- Short, compact head, wide mouth, broad forehead, and Roman nose
- Medium-length ears
- Teeth correctly aligned
- Pronounced head shape in males
- Short, well-muscled neck

6.1.3 Horns

♀	• Spiraled, well separated from the cheeks; horizontal or curved
♂	• Large spirals, well separated from the cheeks
♀, ♂	• Occasional black stripes in the horns are tolerated

6.1.4 Chest and Shoulders

- Wide, deep chest with good rib curvature
- Close-fitting shoulders

6.1.5 Withers

Reference for adult animals: ♀ 28.35–30.71 in / 72 – 78 cm ♂ 29.53–33.46 in / 75 – 85 cm

- Broad and closed withers

6.1.6 Back, Pelvis, Loin, Thigh

- Straight top line, broad back
- Broad and well-muscled loin
- Good flank depth
- Medium-length and broad pelvis
- Well-muscled thighs

6.1.7 Gewicht

Reference for adult animals: ♀ 154–198 lbs / 70 – 90 kg ♂ 176–265 lbs / 80 – 120 kg

6.2 Foundation

6.2.1 Gliedmassen

- Strong bone structure
- Sturdy, well-positioned, evenly wool-covered limbs

6.2.2 Position / Stand

- Correctly positioned hind legs; not cow-hocked or bow-legged
- Front legs with a wider stance and not knock-kneed
- Moderate hock angle
- Short and strong pasterns

6.2.3 Gait

- Spacious (not swaying)
- Surefooted
- Wide-legged gait



6.3 Wool

6.3.1 Wool / Fleece / Density

Fleece limits:

- Lower line: Elbow and udder joint
- Upper line: Ear and neck line (including tail)

Balanced, natural wool (fleece) over the entire body

Uniform white fleece

Occasional black wool hairs are tolerated on the neck of female animals and males over 18 months

Staple length over 10 cm in 180 days

Fineness: F 5–44

6.4 Aesthetic Defects

6.4.1 With Point Deduction (Type)

♀	Missing breed characteristics
♀	Color errors, including intermediate spots Gray or brown discoloration of the breed-specific black markings on the head and limbs White or black tongue at the pastern
♂	Missing Roman nose White base of the ears Black beyond the ears (ear rose) Unkempt animals

7 Disqualifying Factors (Grade 1)

Initial assessment or up to 18 months

Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monorchidism, unequal or missing testes • Dwarfism • Uneven jaw length, incorrect tooth alignment • Tail not docked per Swiss Animal Welfare Regulations
Foundation	Overextended pasterns, extreme limb misalignment
Wool	Mixed-colored wool Missing black spot on the hock or front knee

7.1 Breed-Specific Disqualifications (Grade 1)

Initial assessment or up to 18 months, male animals

Body spots within fleece boundaries

Missing black spot on the hock or front knee

8 Not to Be Judged

Sheep without ear tags

Additionally for intercantonal exhibition markets

Animals with diseases or injuries such as:

- Foot rot, mange, lip scab, chamois blindness, udder diseases and injuries, laminitis, venereal diseases
- Animals with obvious discrepancies in staple length within the fleece boundary

Severely emaciated animals

Heavily soiled animals (clumped fleece)

