

North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association

The North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association, or NASSA, assists breeders of Shetlands in maintaining the purity and quality of this unique and colorful breed. NASSA provides registration and pedigree records for informed breeding decisions.



NASSA was founded early in 1991 with the support of the Shetland Sheep Breeders Group of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust of Great Britain. NASSA uses the Shetland Sheep Standard, as adopted by the Shetland Flock Book Society in 1927.

Experience new adventures in color with Shetland sheep.



Shetlands often display affectionate personalities.

Welcome to the Colorful World of Shetland Sheep



Shetland wool has one of the widest ranges of colors of any breed, with 11 main colors ranging from white to gray to black and from light brown, reddish brown to dark brown. Shetland wool dyes beautifully. Shetlands may display more than 30 different markings.

Easy lambing

Because Shetlands are a primitive breed, they have successfully reproduced without any help for centuries. During lambing season you will sometimes find new lambs in your pasture nursing vigorously and wagging their tails.

Hardy and economical

As with all animals, Shetlands require basic care; however, they have retained their ability to survive well without intervention.

Tasty meat

Although not typically raised for meat, lamb from Shetlands has a mild, delicious tasting flavour.

Beautiful wool

The wool from a Shetland is one of the finest and softest wools available. Many think that Shetland wool is not scratchy against the skin like some other wools. Average fleeces weigh between 2—6 pounds and have a staple length of 2—7”.

Small and manageable size

Shetland’s smaller size make them very easy to handle. Ewes usually weigh about 75 to 100 pounds with rams weighing about 25 pounds more. They are an ideal animal for children since they possess a calm and docile temperament.

Benefits of membership

- A four generation Pedigree for each registered sheep.
- *NASSA News*, a quarterly newsletter with educational articles, news of recent and upcoming events.
- Access to our members-only web site where you will find:
- All sheep registered by NASSA
- List of current NASSA members and breeders
- The Shetland Handbook which contains a history, breed standard, information about Shetland characteristics, colors, genetics and more is a good source of information about Shetlands.

North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association

For more information visit
shetland-sheep.org

email: secretary@shetland-sheep.org

Your membership will assist in the preservation, protection & promotion of this unique & colorful breed



The characteristic fluke-shaped tail of the Shetland Sheep is frequently known to wag.

Why Shetland sheep?



Why Shetland wool?



Perhaps you have been thinking about owning sheep or perhaps you would like to add a new breed to your already established flock. Now is the time to take a closer look at the colorful Shetland sheep breed.

Shetland wool is soft, fine, silky, and durable and a delight to spin, knit or crochet. Shetland wool can be spun fine enough to make a shawl that can be drawn through a wedding ring!

Shetland sheep are considered a primitive or “unimproved” breed. This means that although they are small and relatively slow-growing, they maintain their natural hardiness, thriftiness, easy lambing, adaptability and longevity.

Having retained most of their primitive survival instincts, Shetlands are easier to care for than many of the “improved” breeds seen today.

Rams have beautiful spiral horns, whereas ewes are typically polled (although there are polled rams and ewes that have horns). They are fine-boned and agile. Their short, fluke-shaped tails do not require docking. Ewes are excellent mothers and are very protective of their lambs.

A Brief History of Shetland Sheep

Shetland sheep roots go back more than 1,000 years, probably to sheep brought to the Shetland Islands by Viking settlers. They belong to the Northern European short-tailed group which includes the Finnsheep, Norwegian Spaelsau, Icelandics and others.

Dailley Importation

With the assistance of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST), G. D. “Colonel” Dailley from Ontario, Canada imported 28 ewes and four rams from the Shetland Islands in 1980 to help preserve this primitive, rare breed.

The first importation into the United States was in 1986 when Tut and Linda Doane brought home a group of Shetlands from the Dailley farm.

Descendents from both the Doane and Dailley flocks soon began appearing across Canada and the United States.

Flett Importation

In 1948, three ewes and one ram were brought to Saskatchewan, Canada from the Orkney Islands by the Flett family. In 1993, a select group of NASSA breeders began evaluation of flock descendents to see if they might be eligible for NASSA registration. In 1995, all Flett lineage Shetlands were entered into the registry with no restrictions.

Semen Importation

In 1997 semen from four rams was imported into the US for use in artificial insemination of ewes. In 1998 semen was collected from two more UK rams. Independent individual importation has taken place since. These importations broaden the genetic base of Shetland sheep in North America.

NASSA Registry
P.O. Box 231, Wamego, KS 66547
shetland-sheep.org

N o r t h A m e r i c a n S h e t l a n d S h e e p b r e e d e r s A s s o c i a t i o n



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