

BARBADOS BLACKBELLY SHEEP ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER – April, 2010

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return before the deadline. We update the breeder's directory on the BBSAI website each quarter, and any member who has not renewed by the deadline may be removed from the breeder's directory. Unfortunately, they may not be added back until the next quarterly update. So, don't delay!

- 2) **Special Vote** – Barbados Blackbelly Breeders. This edition of the newsletter also contains the *Notice of Special Vote*, the completely revised Barbados Blackbelly Breed Standards, and a *sample ballot*. If you raise Barbados Blackbelly, you will need to watch your mail for the actual ballot which will come under separate cover. It will need to be returned by June 1, 2010.

In other news, we've had some great activity in the Showing & Exhibiting world. There are some nice articles in these pages that will make you feel as if you were right there watching the show!

President's Message

BBSAI Members:

This edition of the newsletter contains a lot of information. Some of it requires action on the part of the membership.

- 1) **Membership Renewal**. The notice of renewal information is enclosed, as is the RENEWAL FORM, which needs to be returned. Please complete the form and



Sincerely,
JoAnne Hamsher,
President

HISTORY OF BARBADOS BLACKBELLY SHEEP

The Barbados Blackbelly as a breed originated and evolved on the Caribbean island of Barbados from crosses of African hair sheep and European woolled breeds. There were many environmental factors that naturally selected for hairiness, such as high tropical temperatures and burrs that tangled in the wool. Shepherds continued to select for sleek hair coats and striking coloration, and one of the resulting breeds is the Barbados Blackbelly sheep. Native Barbadians regard Barbados Blackbelly sheep as a national treasure.

In 1904, the U.S. Department of Agriculture imported from Barbados four ewes and one ram to Bethesda, Maryland. From that original importation, research flocks were established at North Carolina State University, Texas A&M, and Dixon Ranch in California. This is an answer. The next para is body.



named another the “Painted Desert.” Thus, three new breeds of sheep were developed out of the original Barbados Blackbelly/Mouflon/Rambouillet crosses.

TOO MANY NAMES MASKS THE DEMISE OF BARBADOS BLACKBELLY SHEEP

The most visible difference between the Barbados Blackbelly and the Corsican cross was the rack of horns on the ram. Some crossbred ewes occasionally had horns, but most ewes carried their genetics hidden inside, like a ticking time bomb. Within a few years, everyone had their own pet name for these crosses—barbado, barbie dolls, bbsheep, corsican, barbs, blackbellies, Texas Blackbelly, and Barbados Blackbelly—and it became very difficult to know what kind of sheep would result from any breeding effort. Some had horns; some did not; some had black bellies; some did not. A breeder wanting a sheep guaranteed to produce offspring with a desired horn and color combination was in for a miserable ride.

In 1996, a group of Oklahoma breeders established the Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International (BBSAI). They adopted the breed standard used in the country of Barbados, but allowed horned rams to be registered. Although this tightened the phenotype for the breed, it did nothing to help breeders separate purebred Barbados Blackbelly from the

horned crossbreds. In 2004, the Association researched the pedigrees of almost 1000 registered sheep and realized there were fewer than 12 breeding Barbados Blackbelly rams in the U.S. and fewer than 200 ewes. Of those, over half lived in university research flocks. The BBSAI finally recognized that unless it could educate the sheep world about the difference between the two sheep, the Barbados Blackbelly would quickly become extinct in the U.S.

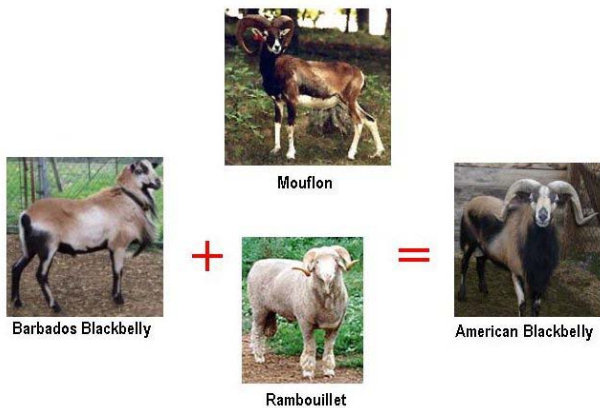
In 2004, the BBSAI developed a new breed standard and name for the crossbreed—officially recognizing it as the American Blackbelly. Because over 80% of the Association’s membership raise American Blackbelly sheep, this was a popular decision that enabled them to breed to a higher standard while protecting Barbados Blackbelly from further loss caused by misidentification. The Association closed the Barbados Blackbelly registry in 2007 to ensure that only sheep sired by known Barbados Blackbelly sheep can be registered, further protecting the small and precarious gene pool. The American Blackbelly registry will continue to be an open registry.

It is important that you understand the differences between these sheep because you need to know what you are buying. There is a tremendous amount of misinformation on the Internet, and it is very difficult for people new to blackbelly sheep to wade through the confusion of names. Hopefully this information will help ensure that you get the breed you want and that your sheep produce consistently for you across generations. It is important to refer to your sheep by the correct breed name and teach others to do the same. BBSAI breeders have two of the most beautiful breeds of sheep in the world!
—Carol Elkins, Critterhaven

Photo credits:
Barbados Blackbelly—Carol Elkins, Pueblo, CO
Mouflon—Edd Bissell, Knoxville, TN
Rambouillet—Terry & Viki Clark, Lapeer, MI
American Blackbelly—Tom and Nancy Richardson, Santa Fe, MO

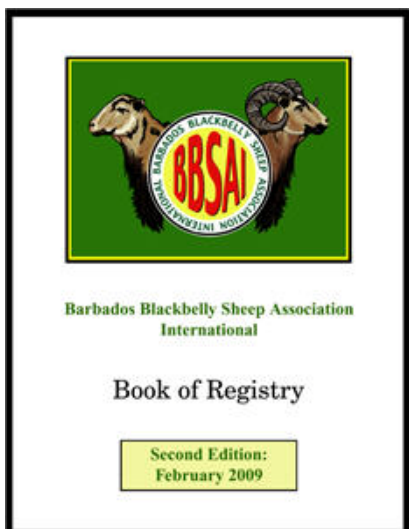
CREATION OF AMERICAN BLACKBELLY SHEEP

Sheep from many of these flocks were crossbred with Mouflon and Rambouillet to obtain a larger carcass and a rack of horns. These crosses created a wide variety of color combinations, and the one most popular with Texas trophy hunters was named the “Corsican” by the YO Ranch. Many Corsican sheep were identical in color to the original Barbados Blackbelly stock, but sported majestic horns that curled or spiraled out from their exotically colored heads.



A game rancher by the name of Thompson Temple created the first hunters’ record book in 1976, and the Corsican was the first category of sheep in the book. After awhile, trophy hunters had bagged their Corsican, and soon the entries in the trophy book for Corsicans slacked off. Mr. Temple was a marketing genius, however. To create new entries in the sheep category of the record book, he bestowed several of these other color combinations with exotic names such as “Hawaiian Black” and “Texas Dall.” The YO Ranch

**Second Edition of the BBSAI
Book of Registry**



The Second Edition of the BBSAI Book of Registry is available for sale now! This new February 2009 edition of our Book of Registry lists all 1,675 registered and recorded American Blackbelly and Barbados Blackbelly sheep together with sire and dam information, enabling breeders to cross-reference and track heritages of registered stock throughout the United States and surrounding countries.

As with the First Edition of the Book of Registry, this invaluable tool for serious breeders of AB and BB stock contains three sets of data: 1) the Registry sorted by registration number with subsections for the AB and BB breeds, 2) the Registry sorted by breeder name, and 3) the Breeder's Directory (containing names and contact information of all BBSAI member breeders who have authorized their names to appear in public on the BBSAI website.

Like the earlier edition, the new February 2009 BBSAI Book of Registry is a wire-bound 8.5" x 11" document of approximately 80 pages, and is available for \$20.00. Please send orders for the BBSAI Book of Registry to: BBSAI Registrar, 815 Bell Hill Road, Cobden, IL 62920. Please make checks payable to the BBSAI.

Order your very own copy today!

BBSAI Renewed Members

We Thank YOU for staying with our flock!

- ***Mohan Sawh***
- ***Marti Young***

BBSAI Board Votes Update	
2/2/10	Vote to approve the 4-H/FFA Grant and Mentor Agreements proposed by Joan Eubank (3 yes, 0 no) Passed.
2/10/2010	Vote to renew \$40 Association ad in Sheep! Magazine and to not advertise in Record Stockman. (3 yes, 0 no) Passed.
2/23/10	Vote to call a special meeting of members who raise Barbados Blackbelly sheep to vote on the proposed revisions to the breed standards (4 yes, 0 no) Passed.
2/23/10	Vote to change the First Year Membership Dues Pro-Rate System from a half-year to a non pro-rated system; new membership applications that arrive between 3-31-10 and 6-30-10 will be rolled into the next membership year at no additional charged. (4 yes, 0 no) Passed.
2/25/20	Vote to bypass a formal meeting and simply send ballot to eligible BBSAI members to vote on the proposed breed standard revisions. (5 yes, 0 no.) Passed.
2/25/10	Vote to create a temporary email address so members can communicate questions/comments to the board regarding the proposed BB breed standards. (4 yes, 0 no). Passed
2/28/10	Vote to no longer include a membership card or certificate in the new members packet, or to provide membership card to renewing members. (4 yes, 0 no) Passed.

In Memoriam



Our beloved Bianca passed away this Saturday. She made her 18th birthday, which was Wednesday the 24th. Here is a picture of her taken on the first of February.

**Barking Rock Bianca,
February 24, 1992 - February 27, 2010.**

Susan Napotnik
Millstone Farm
New Florence, Pennsylvania

All Members (Including Lifetime Members) Must Renew Membership by June 30, 2010

BBSAI annual memberships will expire on June 30, 2010. Please complete the Membership Renewal Form included with this newsletter and mail it back to the BBSAI to preserve your membership status for the coming year.

Lifetime members must also complete the Membership Renewal Form. Even though Lifetime members don't pay annual dues, they must keep their voting status active. Lifetime members who do not complete and return this form to the BBSAI once each year will have their status changed to "inactive lifetime" status, meaning that they will not be able to vote on issues brought before the membership and will not receive a newsletter.

If you complete the Membership Renewal Form now, we won't need to send you any more renewal notices in the mail. That saves on postage. The money we save on postage is spent on advertising to promote your sheep. Everyone wins if you return your Membership Renewal Form now instead of waiting until the last minute. Thanks, Everyone!

Membership Form is included in this newsletter!

BBSAI NEW Members

We Thank YOU for joining our flock!

-  **Cat Laxton**
-  **JoAnne Benjamin**
-  **Austin Benjamin**
-  **Denise & Erick Harlow**
-  **Nanci Loren**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Members Helping Members

(Editor's note: These questions are coming from our BBSAI Members Yahooogroup, reprinted with permission from the writers. You may also submit your questions and answers directly to the newsletter editor.)

First Time Mothers

Question: Hello all, yesterday we had an interesting/scary incident. A first-time mother had a very difficult time lambing. Ken had to assist after a while. Turns out there were triplets! Two didn't make it. :(Is this normal for a first-time mother? I thought they were only supposed to have one lamb the first time. We have had other first-time mothers have twins without incident, but three just seems crazy! Also, who is at "fault" here? Is the ram the deciding factor of sex and quantity of lambs? --

Answer: In our experience I would have to say it doesn't happen often, but sometimes you will get triplets with a first time mom. We often get twins from first timers, which I prefer, because twins are usually smaller than a single birth and easier for the ewe to deliver. When we have had triplets with first timers, we have not had all three survive, mostly because of a lack of experience on the part of the ewe. She either is overwhelmed and doesn't get one out of the sack, or as in your case, the first one is large and seems to hold up the works, thus resulting in deal lambs to follow because it took too long to have them. That doesn't always happen, but I would say that a first time mom that has triplets usually does not raise all three.

The ewe is the deciding factor, as she is the one who produces the number of eggs to be fertilized. Actually, you are fortunate to have a ewe that has that many lambs the first time. However, just because she had triplets this time, doesn't mean that she will ever have triplets again. Plus, now that she will be experienced and the fact that the birth canal has been stretched from the triplets, you shouldn't have anything to worry about with this ewe in the future.

Southeastern Youth Fair and Exhibit
Marion County, Florida
February 21 – 28, 2010
By Joan Eubank

It was the 70th Anniversary of the Southeastern Youth Fair held in Marion County, Florida. This fair is for FFA and 4-H students only. There are no rides or game booths or midway to distract you from the hard work these students put into their animals.

The fair starts with the students and their dogs in obedience and agility competition. The week goes on with the poultry and rabbit showmanship and show, the heifer and steer showmanship, show and auction, the breeding and market sheep show and auction, the pig showmanship, show and auction, ending with the horseback riding competition. It is a very busy and full week of work for the students.

For me, this fair started the year before at the 2009 fair. I wanted to see how the sheep were shown and what breeds of sheep were being shown. I found out that neither American Blackbellies nor Barbados Blackbellies had ever been shown before at this fair. I knew at that moment my work was cut out for me. I continued on to the Agricultural exhibits to see the displays. I saw eggs being hatched and the baby chicks. I saw Miniature Zebu Cattle on display, a peanut farming display, a dairy cattle display, and more.

I found and spoke to the coordinator of the exhibits and asked if the fair would be interested in letting me set up a display in 2010 of the American Blackbelly and Barbados Blackbelly sheep. The coordinator was elated to be able to display a new breed of hair sheep to this fair ... My work began.

In September of 2009, I contacted the FFA advisors for the local high school and middle school to ask them if I might attend their first parent and student meeting with a proposal. At the meeting I told everyone about the breed I raise and offered my lambs to the students for showing. The proposal was that I would sponsor these students and provide all the feed and grooming supplies needed for the five months the students would have the lambs. The agreement was that I would get my lambs back at the end of the show. Two students and their parents were willing to accept my proposal. I delivered a Barbados Blackbelly lamb to the middle school and another Barbados Blackbelly lamb to a high school student's home. I would bring feed when needed and check on their progress. I also accompanied the students to a mandatory meeting and I paid their entry fees.

February 2010 - it was fair time. My employer at Tractor Supply Company loaned me a 5' X 10' X 6' dog run in which to display my sheep. The fair

opened at 10 AM Sunday morning, so my husband Jack and I got there at 8:30 AM to get an American Blackbelly ewe and her twin month-old lambs set up for the exhibit. I also set up a display table filled with information. I had BBSAI newsletters, breed history, meat analysis, Lamb Lovers Cookbook and lots of photos of my sheep.

A number of preschools and elementary schools came on field trips throughout the week, visiting the exhibits and animals. There must have been nearly 300 students, parents and teachers. Each time a group came through I explained that these were not goats but hair sheep. I told them the difference between the two breeds of sheep that I raised and I held a lamb for the students to pet.

Tuesday, I watched the two students who were showing my sheep get them checked in and settled down. Wednesday morning I watched the last minute grooming. At 1 PM they showed. To my surprise, my sheep walked beautifully with a halter and lead. The two girls really did a good job working with the sheep over the last five months. The girls and their sheep took a 4th and 6th place. We were all thrilled. Thursday evening, the ewe at the middle school gave birth to a ewe lamb. The students were thrilled to have a baby at the school. The teacher asked if they could keep them at the school for a couple more weeks. Of course I said yes and have even allowed the students to name the new lamb. The students also said they have dibs on showing the baby next year.

The whole experience has been so gratifying and successful. I had three other schools and FFA advisors sign up for lambs for next year and eight individual students and their parents sign up too. I talked to people who owned American Blackbellies but didn't know what they were. They thanked me for being there with information. I have already sold some adult sheep as a result of the exhibit.

I want to thank Mrs. Newman at the Dunnellon Middle School and Mrs. Bellamy at the Dunnellon High School for allowing me to participate in their FFA program. A big "THANK YOU" goes out to Kylie Chapman from Dunnellon Middle School and Chelsea Dominey from Dunnellon High School for all their hard work and care they gave my sheep. Thank you so much.

I do have to admit; my favorite part of being at the fair was talking to the preschoolers and reciting this poem.

**Ba Ba Black Sheep Have You Any Wool?
Yes Sir! Yes Sir! Three Bags Full.
Ba Ba Blackbelly Sheep Have You Any Wool?
NO SIR! NO SIR!
I'm A HAIR Sheep, I Have No Wool.
I'M COOL!**

Sumter County Fair

Bushnell, Florida
February 26, 2010
By Joan Eubank

It was the opening day at the Sumter County Fair and the lines were just starting to form. My husband Jack and I arrived at 4 PM to meet with Susan Swartzfager, Agriculture Teacher at Wildwood Middle High School, and her FFA students. They were checking in her American Blackbelly Sheep for the judging at 6 PM.

We bought our tickets and made our way through the buildings where the art and craft exhibits were housed. Both Youth and Adult "Best in Show" entries were displayed at the entrance of course, followed by the "Best in Category" winners and the "First Place" winners. The talents of both the youth and the adults at the Sumter County Fair were outstanding, but we came for the sheep!

We continued through the buildings seeing all of the local businesses in their display booths filled with free pens and literature but we wanted the sheep!

We finally made it out of the buildings and onto the midway with all the rides and food vendors. The smells of popcorn and cotton candy filled the air. We could see people in lines for the rides and for the funnel cakes ... oh those funnel cakes with all that powder sugar! But where were the barns for the animals - especially the sheep?

We saw a grounds worker and asked directions. Upon entering the barn we came upon several empty stalls and as we continued further into the barn and we could hear the bleating of sheep and the buzzing of clippers. Finally, we found the sheep. We could see students and adults scurrying around with their prized wool sheep, giving them baths, brushings and clippings. They hardly noticed people going by as they continued their grooming.

We kept looking for the American Blackbellies and Susan. There! Along the back wall we could see 13 small stalls with 13 calm and quiet sheep with their lambs. Above each stall was an entry form stating the breed, American Blackbelly, the school, Wildwood Middle High School, and the student's name. Most of the sheep were lying down chewing their cud or standing nursing their babies. Yes! All had lambs. We could see Susan giving her students

their final instructions. I offered to help her but she had things well in hand.

Most of Susan's students had never even been around sheep before let alone handled one, nor did they have the means to own one. Susan made her entire flock of ewes available to the students to give them the only opportunity that they might have to be part of FFA.

"ShowTime" Susan's sheep were in the last category to be shown and were broken into five groups. I could see that the students were nervous. They only had two weeks before the show to prepare. Could the students keep the sheep from going out of control? Could the students hang onto them? Could they make them stand and walk properly for the judge?

YES!

All went well. Each student took their turn walking around the ring, following the judge's directions. Unfortunately, none of the American Blackbelly Sheep placed high enough to receive a ribbon. The judge was very considerate to the breed explaining to the audience that this breed of sheep was smaller boned and shorter in length than the other sheep in the ring making it harder for them to compete.

All in all, the students need to be congratulated on their efforts.

I want to say
"JOB WELL DONE"
to the following students:

Kimberly King	Garth Edwards
Brittney Smith	Barbara Findley
Bonita Orozlo	Katelyn Mitchell
Ashley Sesler	Joshua Tielmmons
Wyatt Bernstein	Palmer Chase
Ryan Hill	Rachel Rockey
Franklin Lee	Summer Burnstein

A special
Congratulations and Thank You
go out to
Susan Swartzfager
for all of her hard work and efforts!



808 30th Lane
Pueblo, Colorado 81006
Email: secretary@blackbellysheep.org
Web Site: <http://www.blackbellysheep.org>

April 1, 2010

NOTICE OF SPECIAL VOTE REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BARBADOS BLACKBELLY BREED STANDARD

Dear BBSAI Member,

On May 1, 2010, the BBSAI will mail to all members who raise Barbados Blackbelly sheep a ballot with which they can vote to accept or reject the proposed changes to the Barbados Blackbelly Breed Standard. A copy of the proposed changes is included in this newsletter.

The BBSAI Board created a special committee in 2009 to review the existing breed standard and to develop a more useful and descriptive document without changing the intent of the standard established by the Barbados Ministry of Agriculture. The Committee recognized that the endangered status of the U.S. Barbados Blackbelly population necessitated a more liberal interpretation of some standards to ensure the population can maintain its genetic viability, while not compromising the breed's integrity. At the same time, the Committee strove to clearly define separate tiers of acceptability in each of the attributes that make up the overall standard.

The BBSAI Board of Directors endorses the proposed changes.

What You Need to Do

- 1. Verify your primary breed designation.** Next to your name on the address label or your name in the email's To: line, you will see one of the following designations:

AB=American Blackbelly BB=Barbados Blackbelly Both=Both Breeds None=None

If the designation fails to describe the makeup of your current flock of sheep, notify the Secretary immediately by email to secretary@blackbellysheep.org. This designation determines your eligibility to vote on this matter. In accordance with bylaws Article IV.D, only BBSAI members who raise Barbados Blackbelly sheep will be sent a ballot and allowed to vote on this matter.

- 2. Review the proposed changes.** For each attribute, the current standard is displayed in red strike-out text and the proposed changes are displayed directly below.
- 3. If you have questions or comments,** send an email to special_vote@blackbellysheep.org. Emails sent to this address will be read by the entire Board of Directors and, when requested, responded to in a timely manner.
- 4. Mark your ballot** by either accepting all of the proposed changes or rejecting all of the proposed changes. No line-item veto is provided.
- 5. Sign, date, and return your ballot by June 1, 2010.** The Board of Directors will tally the votes and announce the results in the July 2010 BBSAI Newsletter.

Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International



THE BARBADOS BLACKBELLY BREED STANDARD {PROPOSED CHANGES}

The attributes listed below describe the Barbados Blackbelly breed and should be used to evaluate sheep considered for registration with the Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International (BBSAI). Although this standard describes the phenotypic attributes of the breed, there are other attributes that are not easily defined but that are most valued about the Barbados Blackbelly breed. Attributes such as prolificacy, disease resistance, parasite tolerance, non-seasonal breeding, and mothering ability contribute to the *integrity* of the breed. The BBSAI encourages breeders to include these non-phenotypic attributes when evaluating and selecting stock to include in their breeding programs.

The BBSAI does not guarantee the quality of a registered sheep. The purpose of the BBSAI registry is to enable breeders to track the pedigrees of their animals. It is the breeder's responsibility to ensure that only sheep meeting these breed standards are submitted for registration. It is also the breeder's responsibility to cull any sheep that are Not to Standard and to prevent their genetics from contaminating the general population of Barbados Blackbelly sheep.

These are the tiers used to describe each attribute:

- **Ideal:** The perfect sheep. This is the sheep we all want, the sheep we all strive to breed.
- **Acceptable:** These flaws are generally cosmetic and rarely are genetically fixed across generations. If the flaw does persist across generations, the breeder should work to eliminate it.
- **Discouraged:** These are serious flaws. The breeder should recognize that these flaws, if allowed to pervade the flock, will compromise the flock's integrity. Elimination of these flaws should be a priority.
- **Not to Standard:** Sheep with these flaws should be culled from a breeding program. These flaws are detrimental to the future of the breed.

Head

~~The head is noble with a typical "roman" nose. The head of the ram is distinctly masculine and that of the ewe feminine. The muzzle is wide and strong with firm lips. The lower jaw is colored black. Incisor teeth must meet the dental pad.~~

IDEAL:

- The shape of the head is oval to triangular with a typical "roman" nose.
- The head of the ram is distinctly masculine, and that of the ewe is feminine.
- The muzzle is wide and strong with firm lips. Incisor teeth must meet the dental pad.

ACCEPTABLE: A ewe's head may exhibit some less feminine coarseness, but it must still be decidedly distinct from the ram's head.

DISCOURAGED: Muzzle more narrow than ideal

NOT TO STANDARD: Overshot or undershot jaw

Poll

~~Barbados Blackbelly rams are polled or may have small, loose scurs. Ewes are polled.~~

IDEAL: Sheep of both sexes are smooth-headed with no sign of any outgrowth of the horn plate.

ACCEPTABLE: Loose scurs or scurs affixed to a ram's horn plate no longer than 3/4 in. at maturity

DISCOURAGED: Loose scurs or scurs affixed to a ram's horn plate between 3/4 in. to 1 1/2 in. at maturity

NOT TO STANDARD: Ewes with horns or scurs; rams with horns or with scurs longer than 1 1/2 in.

Ears

~~The ears are pointed and when alert stick out from the side of the head parallel to the ground. The inside of the ears is black. Some variation in the size of the ears is permitted. Floppy ears and half ears or less ("elf" ears) are discriminated against.~~

IDEAL:

- The ears are pointed and when alert stick out from the side of the head parallel to the ground.
- The ear length should be approximately one-half the width of the animal's skull at the widest point of the skull.
- Some variation in the size of the ears is permitted.

ACCEPTABLE: Ears pointing forward or not parallel to the ground

DISCOURAGED: Floppy adult ears, half ears or less ("elf" ears)

Eyes

~~The eyes are brown in color and almond shaped. A wide black mark runs from the base of the nose on each side to the crown of the head. Inverted eyelids are discriminated against.~~

IDEAL:

- The eyes are almond shaped.
- The irises can be any shade of brown or golden brown.

DISCOURAGED: Eyes of a color other than brown or golden brown

NOT TO STANDARD: Inverted eyelids, blindness

Neck

~~The neck is strong and muscular, clean cut without loose folds of skin. Occasionally wattles are found, but are discriminated against. In the case of an adult ram, a mane is present covering the neck right down to the chest. An armor of coarse hair covers the entire neck.~~

IDEAL: The neck is strong and muscular, clean cut, and without loose folds of skin.

ACCEPTABLE: Occasionally, wattles are found, but are not discriminated against.

DISCOURAGED: A thin, scrawny neck

Body Capacity

~~Body capacity should be relatively large in relation to the size of the animal. The body should be deep and wide with well-sprung ribs.~~

IDEAL:

- Body capacity should be relatively large in relation to the size of the animal.
- The body should be deep and wide with well-sprung ribs.
- A mature ram's testicles should be well developed.

NOT TO STANDARD: Cryptorchidism (a condition in which one or both testes fail to descend normally) in a ram

Topline

~~The withers are higher than and sloping into a level back. The loin viewed from the top should be broad and strong. The croup (rump) should be long and gradually sloping. Short steep croups are to be discriminated against.~~

IDEAL:

- The withers are higher than and sloping into a level back.
- The loin viewed from the top should be broad and strong.
- The croup (rump) should be long and gradually sloping.

DISCOURAGED: "Saddle back" or "sway back"; short, steep croup

Tail

~~The tail should be long, reaching to the top of the hocks as the sheep is walking. The tail should not be docked. The color should blend in, with the exception of a distinct white tip of no more than 1 ½ in. being permissible.~~

IDEAL:

- The tail is long, and reaches to the top of the hocks.
- It is not docked.
- It follows a continuous line down from the croup without any crookedness.

ACCEPTABLE: A short tip of white on the tail is permissible

DISCOURAGED: Short tails, crooked tails

Coat

~~The ideal BB sheep has a coarse hair coat. There should be lanolin to repel ticks and other ectoparasites. Some wooliness is tolerated. A wooly coat that is not shed is a disqualifying trait. The sheep should not be shorn.~~

IDEAL:

- The coat consists of coarse hair that lies flat against the skin.
- An adult ram has a mane of coarse hair that covers the neck and downward to the chest.
- The hair coat contains sufficient lanolin to help shed water and repel ticks and other ectoparasites.
- If the sheep grows a winter undercoat of fine wool, that undercoat is completely shed every year.

ACCEPTABLE:

- A woolly "baby coat" often seen in lambs that does not shed the first summer but does shed thereafter
- A hair/wool mixture on the back of the rear legs that does not fully shed from year to year

DISCOURAGED: Small patches of wool along the topline that do not shed from year to year.

NOT TO STANDARD: A woolly coat that is not shed and that requires shearing

Color and Marking

~~The color is typical of the breed with a black belly. The color on top of the back can vary from light fawn through brown to red-dish brown.~~

IDEAL:

- Body color can vary from light fawn to brown to dark red.
- Points can vary but should include a contrasting black belly extending down the back side of the rear legs and including the underside of the tail.
- The top of the nose and the lower jaw are black and may include a continuing black stripe down the front of the neck that connects with the belly.
- A wide black mark runs from the inside corner of each eye to the crown of the head and may continue downward to the mouth. These markings are called facial bars. They are sometimes more pronounced in the ram.
- There may be an additional black mark from the outside corner of the eye to the corner of the mouth.
- There is a crown of black hair at the top of the head.
- The inside of the ears is black.
- The forelegs and hind legs are black downward from the knee or hock; often the outside edge of the leg is not black.
- A ram may have a light tan "saddle" above and including the ribs

DISCOURAGED:

- Black or white markings found anywhere on the body other than those listed
- A dark facial color that obscures the black facial bars
- A coat color that is so extremely dark that a clear delineation cannot be seen between the dark body color and the black belly color

NOT TO STANDARD: Absence of a black belly or black facial bars

Forequarters

The shoulders are laid on flat and both the upper arm and shoulder blade are well muscled. The forelegs viewed from the side are straight. The pasterns are strong and springy; these sheep are known for their jumping ability. The forelegs are black on the front from the knees down.

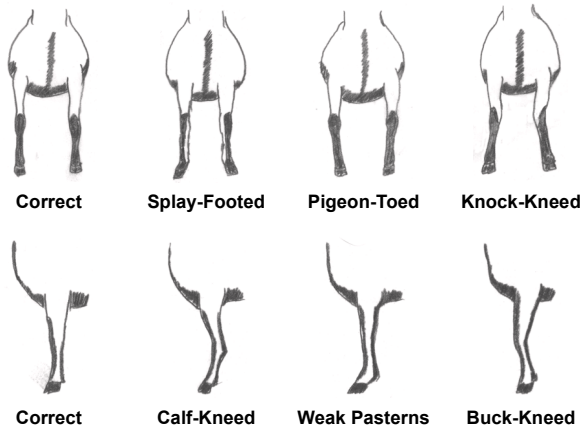
IDEAL:

- The arm and the shoulder blade are well muscled.
- The forelegs appear straight when viewed from the front and side.
- A slight tendency toward splay-footedness (toes that point outward) is not uncommon.
- The pasterns are strong and springy.

DISCOURAGED:

- Weak, bony shoulder blades that protrude from the body.
- Any minor deviations from straight legs, including such things as weak pasterns, feet that are pigeon-toed, and knees that are knock-kneed, calf-kneed, or buck-kneed.

NOT TO STANDARD: Marked deviations from ideal, including but not limited to deviations that interfere with the sheep's ability to walk normally.



Feet

The hooves should be well formed and kept trimmed and should show no signs of foot rot.

IDEAL: The hooves are cloven, black, and clean-edged with shiny smooth surfaces.

DISCOURAGED: White hooves or hooves with white marks

NOT TO STANDARD: Marked deviations from ideal, including but not limited to deviations that interfere with the sheep's ability to walk normally.

Hindquarters

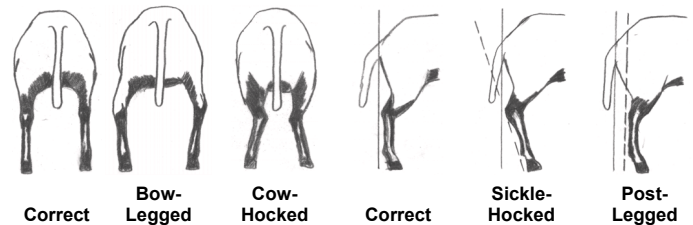
The hindquarters should be muscular with a long sloping croup (rump). The hind legs viewed from behind should be straight. Any tendency to cow-hock or bandiness (pulled together as tied together) is discriminated against.

IDEAL:

- The hindquarters should be muscular with a long, gradually sloping croup (rump).
- The hind legs viewed from behind should be straight.
- From the side view, a vertical line dropped from the posterior of the buttocks should hit the point of the hock and the back of the ankle and contact the ground 1 in. to 2 in. behind the heel.
- A slight tendency toward cow-hockedness is not uncommon (when viewed from behind, the 'back knee' or hock is set inward, resulting in a splayed look in the back legs).

DISCOURAGED: Bowed legs; sickle-hocked legs; and post-leggedness.

NOT TO STANDARD: Marked deviations from ideal, including but not limited to deviations that interfere with the sheep's ability to walk normally.



Size

Rams usually weigh between 90 to 140 lbs with 100–125 lbs. being a rough average. Ewes generally weigh between 70 and 120 lbs. with 85 to 90 lbs. being about average. It needs to be noted here that this is a slow maturing breed and does not reach its ideal weight until about the age of two years.

IDEAL: Barbados Blackbelly is a slow maturing breed, and sheep do not reach ideal weight until about 2 years of age. At that time,

- rams weigh between 90 to 150 lb, with 100 to 130 lb being the average.
- ewes weigh between 70 and 120 lb, with 85 to 100 lb being the average.

ACCEPTABLE: Sheep older than 2 years who weigh more than the maximum ideal weight, providing that their weight is proportionate to the size of their body frame and they are not obese

DISCOURAGED: Sheep older than 2 years who weigh less than the minimum ideal weight

Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International



BALLOT

2010 Special Vote Regarding Proposed Changes to the Barbados Blackbelly Breed Standard

To be counted, this ballot must be postmarked by June 1, 2010.

It is proposed to revise the Barbados Blackbelly breed standard as indicated on the draft of changes that accompanies this ballot.

These proposed changes were approved by the BBSAI Board of Directors on January 19, 2010 and are submitted for approval to BBSAI members eligible to vote on matters concerning Barbados Blackbelly sheep. A majority (that is, 50% plus 1) of those voting is required to approve these changes to the Barbados Blackbelly breed standard.

Please vote to approve or reject the proposed changes to the Barbados Blackbelly breed standard by checking one of the following boxes:

Approve Reject

Signature of Member _____ Date _____

Return ballot to: BBSAI
808 30th Lane
Pueblo, CO 81006

BBSAI Annual Membership Renewal

All BBSAI memberships expire on June 30. To maintain your active membership status, please complete this form and return it as soon as possible.

Annual Membership Renewal

- I wish to renew my annual membership in the Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International (BBSAI) and am enclosing my check for the annual membership indicated below:
- Regular membership with one vote—\$30.00
 - Family membership—\$45.00 (two people that join as a team with two votes)
 - Associate membership non-voting—\$25.00
 - Junior Membership non-voting—\$15.00 upon verification of active Club membership:
 - 4-H Club members Age: _____
 - FFA Club members Age: _____

Lifetime Membership Renewal

- I have a Lifetime BBSAI membership and wish to keep my active voting status. I understand that I do not need to enclose any payment; I only need to return this form to the BBSAI to keep my voting status activated for the coming year.

Declaration of Primary Breed

- I raise American Blackbelly sheep (rams have horns).
- I raise Barbados Blackbelly sheep (rams are polled, no horns).
- I raise both American Blackbelly and Barbados Blackbelly sheep.
- I do not raise either breed of sheep.

Breeder Directory

- I want to be listed in the online Breeder Directory.
- I DO NOT want to be listed in the online Breeder Directory.

Newsletter Delivery

- Please send me BBSAI's quarterly newsletter via
- Email (helps save paper and postage)
 - U.S. Mail (primarily for members without email access)

Name _____

Farm Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip, Country _____

Phone1 _____ Phone 2 (optional) _____

E-mail _____ Web Site (optional) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian signature (if under 18) _____

If funds are enclosed, please make checks payable to BBSAI. Personal checks must be in U.S. dollars and drawn on a U.S. bank. Please mail application with payment (if required) to

BBSAI
808 30th Lane
Pueblo, CO 81006

Where Have All the Purebreds Gone?

By Gary E Ricketts

*Sheep Extension Specialist & Show Judge
University of Illinois*

The pure-bred sheep industry has flourished in recent years. Registrations are increasing and sales have been very strong. However, in the midst of this bright picture, there is a dark cloud, one that threatens all breeds (some more than others) and the purebred industry as a whole. The dark cloud I speak of is the increasing number of crossbred sheep that are being promoted as purebreds. Where have all the **purebreds** gone? Has **winning** and the dollar become so important to us that we will go to any end to win?

Honesty and integrity must be the backbone of the purebred industry, not cheating and deception. Some breeders are currently making a farce out of the show ring, the purebred industry and the registration certificate. What kind of an example are we setting for the next generation to follow? IN expressing my concerns in this article, I am speaking not only as a Sheep Extension Specialist, but also as one who has been a purebred breeder for 25 years.

In the move toward larger sheep, some purebred breeders have felt that selection within their respective breeds didn't allow them to change their sheep fast enough, and that crossbreeding was the answer. There is really nothing wrong with this concept, except when the crossbreds are not merchandized for what they are, **but in fact, are sold as purebreds.**

There is a different between extreme and ideal, and many people forget this fact. In many cases, the extremes have been put to the top of the class instead of those animals which are really more ideal representatives of the breed. There are honest extremes in most animal populations, and they can be used a constructive breeding program. Breeders should always be looking for replacement rams and ewes that will help them improve their flocks. However, we should never forget that "extreme" and ideal do not mean the same thing.

In the past 18 years, I have had the opportunity to judge many sheep shows and, in general, I enjoy judging. However, the increasing prevalence of crossbreeding in the purebred industry has taken much of the enjoyment out of judging breeding shows. Some sheepmen say that the judges should clean up this mess, but why drop all of the responsibility on the shoulders of the judges? Particularly in light of the

fact that in some breeds, there is no common agreement as to what the breed standard should be.

I have had some sheepmen tell me that it is easy to spot all the crossbreds. However, my experience would indicate that this isn't a simple task, because I have seen some crossbreds that looked more legitimate than some I knew were honest purebreds.

Perhaps we have lost sight of the primary purpose of the purebred industry. This purpose has been, is, and will always be, to produce seed stock for commercial producers. Many commercial sheepmen follow a crossbreeding program, but they want it to be the one that they put together using outstanding purebreds as the base. The breeds in which crossbreeding is most prevalent may well be losing their value to the commercial industry. I for one don't believe there should be just one white-faced breed and one black-faced breed.

I believe that all breed associations should hold breed evaluation workshops, at which they strive to answer at least three important questions. 1) How does our breed fit into the commercial sheep industry? 2) What production traits should receive major emphasis in our breed? 3) What is acceptable breed type in our breed?

The breeds should be easily distinguished one from another, but today they are not. Gluing a little wool on the head of a Suffolk doesn't make it a Hampshire, and if a Columbia has a black nose, that doesn't make it a Corriedale, and so on. Perhaps sifting committees should be used at national shows and sales to eliminate any animals that don't conform to breed standards. I don't have all of the answers, but something needs to be done. The purebred industry didn't get into this mess overnight, and the problem will not be solved overnight. Perhaps it is time for the silent majority in the purebred industry to stand and be counted. Corrective measures must be initiated so the character of our industry will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

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The BBSAI Newsletter is a benefit of membership in the BBSAI and is published quarterly. The BBSAI Newsletter welcomes articles, photographs and classified ads that relate to American Blackbelly and Barbados Blackbelly sheep. Publication of articles or advertisements does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by BBSAI. No part of the BBSAI Newsletter (including photographs) can be reprinted, put on websites, or used in any manner without written permission of the BBSAI President or Secretary.

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The Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International is a non-profit organization registered in the State of Missouri.

BBSAI T-SHIRTS FOR SALE



GET ONE WHILE THEY LAST!

These are top quality, 100% cotton shirts, the kind you love to live in. The T-Shirts are white, with a large, full color BBSAI logo on the back, and a small one on the front. T-shirts are available in the following sizes: 2XL.

Available to members for \$10.00 each + \$2.55 1st class postage per shirt. You may order by e-mail to secretary@blackbellysheep.org. Mail your payment, making checks payable to: BBSAI, 4756 County Road 2656, Royse City, TX 75189.

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