



Raising sheep the EASY way!

Barbados Blackbelly Sheep Association International

# Blackbelly Banner

## Measuring American Blackbelly Horns

By Carol Elkins

The American Blackbelly breed came about by cross-breeding Barbados Blackbelly with Mouflon and Rambouillet to obtain a larger carcass and a rack of horns. This cross created a wide variety of color combinations, but the one popular with hunters was the "Corsican," which ultimately became the American Blackbelly. A game rancher by the name of Thompson Temple created the first record book in 1976 and the Corsican was the first category of sheep in the book. This article describes Temple's Records of Exotics scoring system to help you measure and score the horns on your trophy-quality rams.

To prepare, gather a cloth measuring tape (non-stretchable) or a length of baling twine and a yardstick; pencil; and paper. Secure the ram so that he can't thrash his head around too much; you need to keep him as still as possible to get accurate measurements.

You will measure each horn in **three** spots: the base circumference, the total length, and the circumference at half the horn's total length. Record each measurement to the nearest 1/8 in. Keep the tape taut at all times.

① To measure the base circumference, wrap the tape around the horn on the hairline. Pull the tape snug.

② To measure the total length of horn, place the end of the tape where the horn meets the skull on the top side of the horn. Hold the tape on the center ridge of the horn throughout the measurement. Wrap the tape snugly around the horn from the base to the top. Note that the horns will probably not be the same length.

③ To measure the circumference halfway along the horn, you first need to find the

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Member Gerry Krause recommends that one person hold the ram and another person do the measuring. Gerry had trouble doing both by himself.

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## 6 Cool Things You Can Do in BBSAI's Registry

By Carol Elkins, BBSAI Webmaster

Maybe you've explored the BBSAI's online registry and are wondering what you can do with it. Here are six fun things that you should try. You'll be surprised at how easy it is to make the registry an essential tool on your farm.

To access the BBSAI registry, go to [www.blackbellysheep.org](http://www.blackbellysheep.org) and select **About the Sheep->Book of Registry**.

### View Your Sheep's Family Tree

1. Enter your sheep's name in the top **Animal Name** field and click **Search**.

2. On the Animal Information screen, click the green "P" next to the sheep's name to display its pedigree.

3. In Firefox and Internet Explorer, select File->Print Preview and then look for a Scale or Shrink To Fit button in the top toolbar. The button will provide various shrink percentages that will help you fit the pedigree on one page.

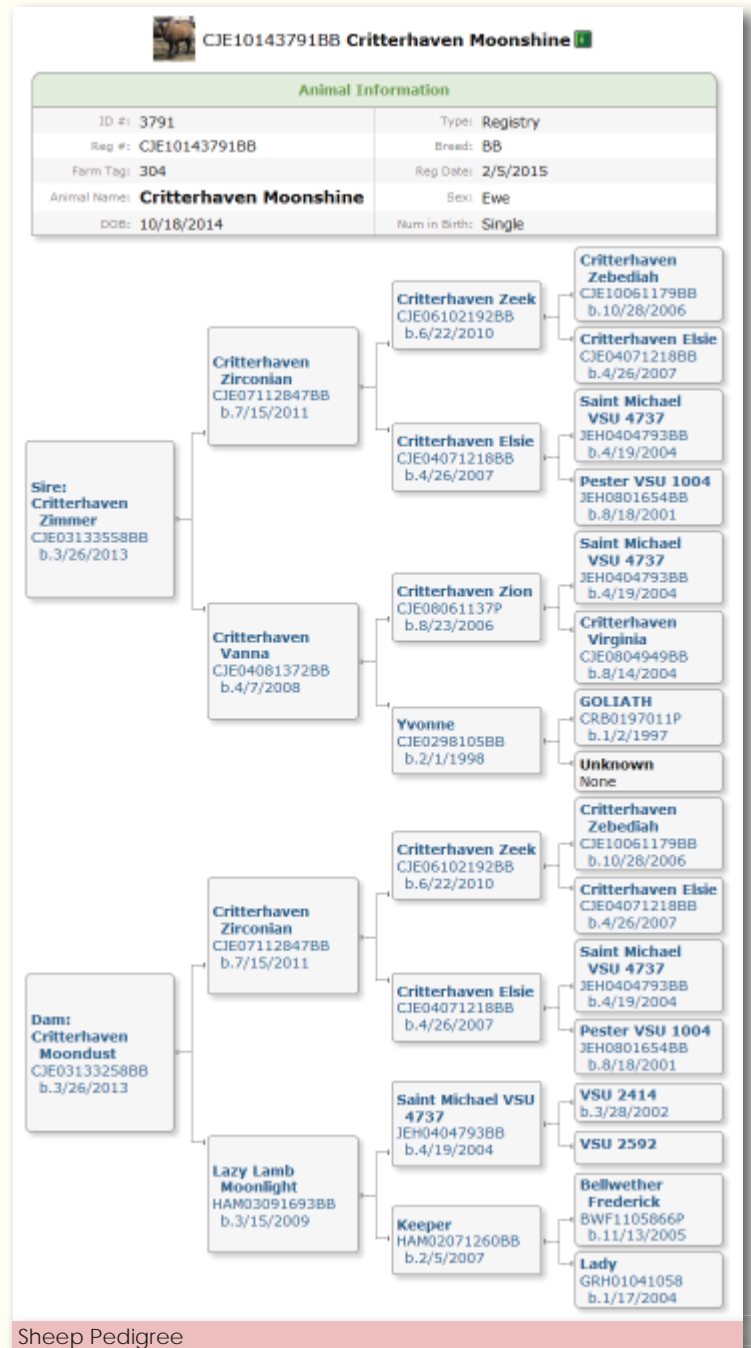
Note: Chrome browser users will probably end up with the pedigree splitting across two pages.

### Look at Photos of the Sire and Dam of a Sheep You Might Buy

1. Ask the seller for the names of the sire and dam of the sheep you are thinking about buying.

2. Enter one of the names in the bottom **Animal Name** field and click **Search**.

3. Select the animal from the resulting list to display that sheep's Animal Information. The animal's photo is at the top of the page.



### Find Out If a Sheep's Name Has Been Used

Enter a sheep name in the top **Animal Name** field to display a list of registered sheep with that name. If there are none, you're in luck! (**Note:** You can use an already-used sheep name. Your flock name is what makes your sheep name unique.)

### See a List of All Registered Sheep Bred by You

Enter your last name in the bottom **Breeder Name** field and click **Search**. If there is more than one breeder with your last name, the software will display all of them and you can choose.

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Blackbelly Banner

## Cool Registry Functions

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### View a List of Registered Offspring Sired by Your Sheep

1. Enter your sheep's name in the top **Animal Name** field and click **Search**.
2. On the Animal Information screen, click the green "O" next to the sheep's name to display its offspring.

### Learn Who Now Owns the Sheep That You've Sold

1. Enter your last name in the bottom **Breeder Name** field and click **Search**.
2. Click the column header of the Owner field to sort the resulting list by current owner.

Records 1 - 18 of 18 records found matching your criteria: Sire ID # = 0535  
Sort Order: ID #  
Page 1 of 1

Links	Picture	Reg #	Breed	Farm Tag	Name	Sex	DOB	Num in Birth	Dam Reg #	Dam Name	Breeder	Owner
		<a href="#">KHF0203756P</a>	BB		<a href="#">Ramses</a>	R	2/28/2003	Single	<a href="#">KHF0202539</a>	<a href="#">#17</a>	Hatley	Mike and Becky Lannon
		<a href="#">KHF0203757P</a>	BB	TX16241-0058 / 0015	<a href="#">Amram</a>	R	2/26/2003	Single	<a href="#">KHF0202538</a>	<a href="#">Hope</a>	Hatley	Mary Swindell
		<a href="#">SSF03061106P</a>	BB	3	<a href="#">Bailey</a>	R	3/1/2006	unknown	<a href="#">LAN03051056</a>	<a href="#">Carbe VSU</a>	Joshua Brett Weimer	Elaine Haas
		<a href="#">SSF04071297BB</a>	BB	10	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Moose</a>	R	4/17/2007	Twin	<a href="#">KHF0302537</a>	<a href="#">#20 Gloria</a>	Elaine Haas	Mary Swindell
		<a href="#">SSF03071432BB</a>	BB	9 / 0001	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Zookie</a>	R	3/29/2007	Twin	<a href="#">KHF0302537</a>	<a href="#">#20 Gloria</a>	Elaine Haas	Uta Hazlett
		<a href="#">SSF03061618BBx</a>	BB	007	<a href="#">Stella</a>	E	3/1/2006	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Elaine Haas	Elaine Haas
		<a href="#">SSF03133791BB</a>	BB	187	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Caesar Augustus</a>	R	3/24/2013	unknown	<a href="#">KHF0302537</a>	<a href="#">#20 Gloria</a>	Elaine Haas	James Orr
		<a href="#">SSF03133852BB</a>	BB	179	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Carter</a>	R	3/21/2013	Twin	<a href="#">SSF04102336BB</a>	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Winona</a>	Elaine Haas	Stan and Elaine Haas
		<a href="#">SSF09143860BB</a>	BB	254	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Calista</a>	E	9/14/2014	Twin	<a href="#">SSF04102337BB</a>	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Winona</a>	Elaine Haas	Elaine Haas
		<a href="#">SSF09143861BB</a>	BB	255	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Caitlyn</a>	E	9/10/2014	Triplet	<a href="#">SSF04102336BB</a>	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Willow</a>	Elaine Haas	Elaine Haas
		<a href="#">SSF09143862BB</a>	BB	256	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Cecilia</a>	E	9/10/2014	Triplet	<a href="#">SSF04102336BB</a>	<a href="#">Sunny Slope Willow</a>	Elaine Haas	Elaine Haas

List of Registered Offspring Sired by a Selected Sheep

If you are still listed as owner of sheep that you've sold, the new owners haven't transferred ownership of the sheep to their names yet.

It is fun learning where your sheep ended up. You might be surprised at how far your sheep have traveled since you last saw them!

## Cyber Sheep Show Coming Your Way!

The BBSAI is planning a Cyber Sheep Show -- a sheep show where the sheep compete via their photographs. The show will be open to all BBSAI members and their registered stock. Here are the categories that you can enter your sheep in:

1. ewe lamb: conformation, up to 6 months
2. ram lamb: conformation, up to 6 months
3. ewe lamb: conformation, 6-12 months
4. ram lamb: conformation, 6-12 months
5. ewes: conformation
6. rams: conformation
7. ewes: most flashy
8. rams: most flashy
9. best horns
10. candid: your favorite photo—unposed
11. best trio: in one photo, but not taken too far away



We'll keep you posted on the details as we organize the event and let you know how to enter your sheep photos. Right now, we just want you to know that we're planning the show so that you can start taking photos.

Judges will be selected outside of the BBSAI and there will be an array of prizes for the winning sheep.

So get out there and start snapping your best photos!

### New BBSAI Members

Arvin Chaudhary	Vacaville, CA
Ronald Dumay	Leawood, KS
Joanna Layrock	Searcy, AR
Tom Mawson	Ailsa Craig, ON
Tasha Mesina	Minnemucca, NV
PJ Mraz	White Mills, KY
Nick Osborne	Casa Grande, AZ
Michael & Vicki Reid	Solvang, CA
Edwin Shaw	Emmett, ID
Daniel Wadsworth	Amite, LA
Ken & Karen Wilson	Imperial, MO



## Sore Mouth (Orf) in Our Flock

By Pam Hand, Free Union, VA

Sore mouth in sheep is also known as contagious ecthyma or orf. This article describes our recent experience with sore mouth.

In 2013, we purchased sheep from the disbursement of Mary Swindell's flock. Since then, we have continued to purchase a few sheep from other breeders in order to set up our three bloodlines to follow the ABC conservation breeding model. There were no sheep on our land for at least 10 years before we brought the first sheep here. We try to follow proper hygiene, including quarantine of new stock, in order to prevent the introduction of sheep diseases. Nevertheless, we ended up with sore mouth in our flock.

In December 2014, we noticed an 8 month old ram with some odd scabs around his nose, which we now believe to have been our first case of sore mouth. This ram never seemed to be in pain. He ate well, and the lesions cleared up within 3 weeks, leaving no scars. We were never quite sure if it was trauma or sore mouth. I examined all of the other rams, and none had noticeable lesions.

In April 2015 after lambing, we noticed first one lamb and then gradually several others develop lesions around their nose and lips.

We spotted the lesions because we can easily pick up and observe our sheep close up. (If your flock is flighty and you can view them only from a distance, you might easily mistake the lesions for a little dirt on the face.) Not all lambs were affected. I observed no ewe preventing her lamb(s) from nursing, which indicated that the ewes did not have any lesions on their udders. (An infected udder can lead to mastitis.) None of the affected lambs lost weight or stopped nursing or eating. The lesions disappeared about a month later.

I have read and been told by my sheep veterinarian that this disease is (1) not uncommon, (2) can recur in a flock, (3) can be transmitted to another flock by a carrier animal who does not show signs of the condition (which must be where my flock got it), and (4) is not usually a big deal. We were careful to wear gloves (especially if we had cuts on our hands), to wash well after handling the lamb flock, and to always tend to the infected flock last when doing chores to reduce the risk of contaminating the rest of the flock.


If I noticed a lamb not eating or a ewe not letting a lamb nurse, I would have separated the affected animals from the flock, given them more time to eat, offered bottle feeding to the lambs, and perhaps if there were

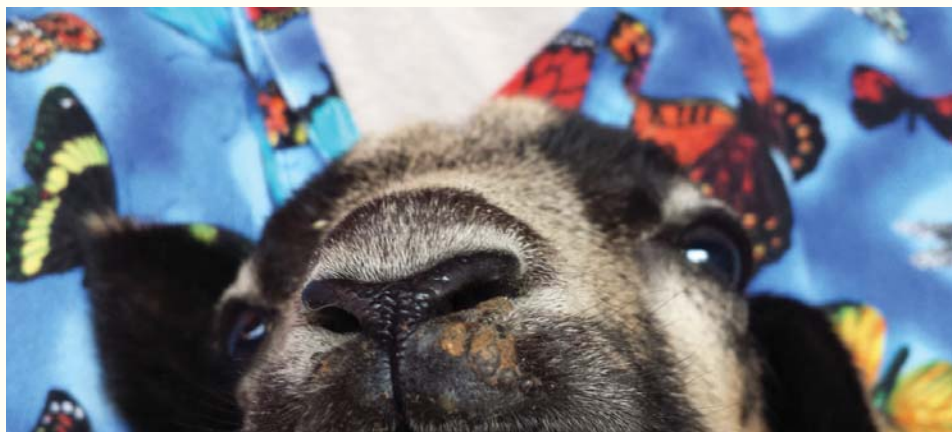


Orf at its worst in my flock

secondary infections related to the orf, put the animal on antibiotics. There is a vaccine for sore mouth but its use is controversial.

Orf is a zoonotic disease, meaning humans can get it through direct contact with infected sheep or from hide/wool from an infected sheep. It causes a pus-filled lesion on the finger, hand, arm, face, or penis. My husband had orf on one finger years ago because at that time he was milking different flocks of sheep for a research project. The risk of catching orf is higher if you have cuts or abrasions that come into contact with the scabs. That's why it is so important to wear gloves when treating infected animals. However, serious problems usually occur only if you are immunocompromised due to medications or illness.

You can read more about orf on the CDC Fact Sheet at <http://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/orf-virus/animals.html> 



Lamb with early signs of orf



## Beat the Summer Heat with These Pics

It's July. You're hot. You need a cold refreshing drink and something to take your mind off the heat. Remember the winter of 2014 (that didn't end until April 2015)? Here are some photos to remind you that a few short months ago, you were begging for the snow to stop and the sun to come out.



Lita Hazlett—Cohocton, NY



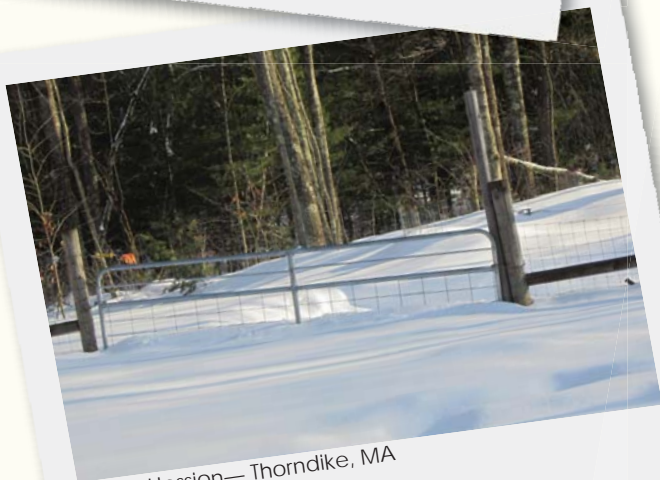
Joanne Vaughn—Rochester, NY



Lita Hazlett—Cohocton, NY



Nancy Johnson—West Friendship, MD



Sandy Hession—Thorndike, MA



Joanne Vaughn—Rochester, NY

## Ask the BBSAI

**Q:** I am still confused about the difference between Barbados Blackbelly and American Blackbelly sheep. On your website it says Barbados are polled, but on your logo they have horns. Therefore do Barbados have horns or not? There is SO MUCH confusion on the Web about what sheep is called by what name.



**A:** The BBSAI logo shows both an American Blackbelly ram (horned) and a Barbados Blackbelly ram (polled) to ensure that both breeds are represented in the logo. The BBSAI is the registry for both breeds of blackbelly sheep. There is no way to indicate on the logo that both sheep are rams except by showing the chest mane; polled ewes look the same but have no chest mane. So you are correct that the logo is confusing if one thinks it contains a horned ram and a polled ewe.

You are also correct that there is a LOT of confusing and flat-out wrong information about the breed names on the Web. That is one of the reasons that the Barbados Blackbelly breed almost became extinct in the U.S. Breeders were crossing purebred Barbados Blackbelly with Rambouillet and Mouflon to create horned crossbreeds, but they persisted in calling the crossbreed by the purebreed name. When we learned in 2004 that there were only about 100 Barbados Blackbelly sheep in the U.S., the BBSAI created a separate breed for the horned animal and has attempted to educate the public about the difference ever since.

We now have over 1700 registered Barbados Blackbelly sheep.

We appreciate your being sensitive to instances in which you feel the breed names are being confused. I hope you can help our efforts to educate the public about the difference between the breeds. If you purchase sheep of either breed, I encourage you to buy only from reputable breeders who have taken the time to register their sheep. That is the only way that you can be certain that you are getting the genetics of the breed you desire.

**Q:** When you speak of increasing the Barbados Blackbelly's gene pool do you mean more blackbelly in the U.S.? What does that have to do with protecting bloodlines?

BBSAI members' role in conservation is twofold:

1. We need to make more sheep to increase the overall population.
2. We need to protect the bloodlines that we have to ensure that we retain them and to prevent homogenizing the gene pool.

Both of these things need to happen concurrently. If we all only work at maintaining bloodlines,

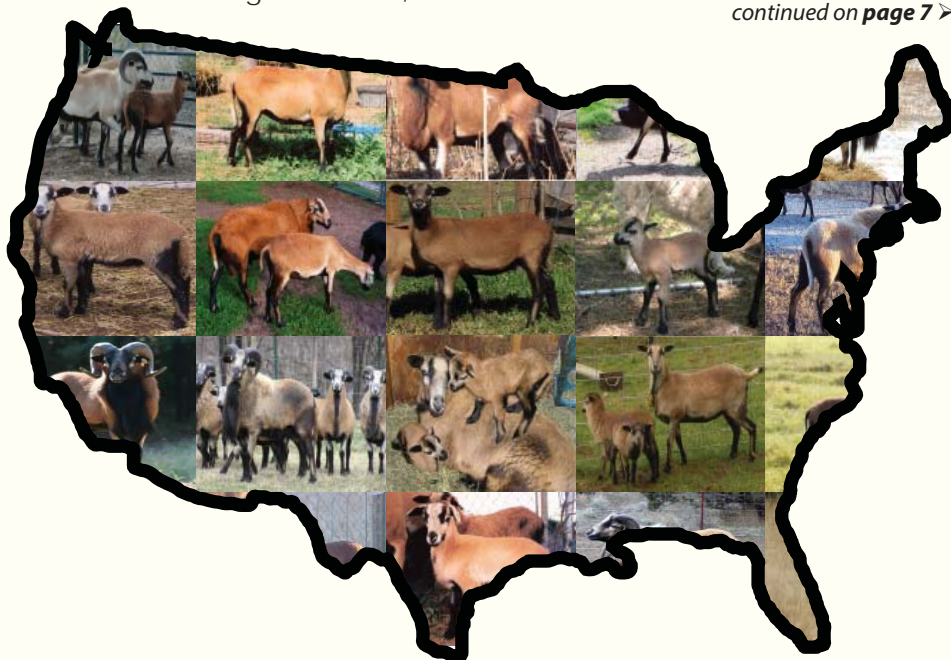
then we are all inbreeding our flocks too much. If we all breed everything we have without respect to bloodlines, then we homogenize our flocks and lose the bloodlines altogether. Each of these things by itself is not good.

It takes both breeding strategies working together to help rescue a breed. Those of us with large flocks can probably do both at the same time. Those of us with small flocks may have to choose. But once you've homogenized your flock, it would be very difficult to retrieve an individual bloodline.

You can think of this in terms of immigration in America. Individual groups immigrated to the U.S. from all over the world. They tended to settle in tight-knit communities where they were able to preserve their culture, and in doing so also retained their ethnic origins. Italians married Italians; Irish married Irish, etc.

When some folks left their ethnic communities and travelled outward, they created new ethnic combinations. Eventually, as all of the nationalities commingled, our American population became homogenized. It now is difficult to find purebred Italians or Irish

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## Ask the BBSAI

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in American culture except for old folks who immigrated here as children and newly-arrived immigrants.

The individual bloodlines that we can identify in our sheep -- Zane, Teddy, Ulysses, St. Michael, etc., are like ethnic communities. We are trying to keep those bloodlines going, and to do so, we need to linebreed. Too much linebreeding weakens our breed and intensifies what started out as small faults. So we also absolutely **MUST** push our genetics outward to mingle with the genetics of other people's flocks. This creates new bloodlines, new combinations of genetics that build strength in our breed. That is why it is imperative that we create as many starter flocks as possible.

**Q:** I'm considering butchering some of my sheep for both our own use and for sale. I can't figure out what live weight, hanging weight, dressed weight, and a zillion other terms mean. If live weight is 100 lb, does that translate to 50 lb of wrapped meat or 50 lb of hanging carcass?

**A:** Be prepared to eat the finest meat you've ever tasted! Here are some definitions to help you out:

**Live weight** is just that. The weight of the sheep when he is alive or just recently killed.

**Hanging weight** is taken when the carcass has been skinned, gutted, and the head and feet removed. Since most butchers base the processing fees on the hanging weight, it is the most widely used measurement by direct-to-market farmers.

**Dressed percentage** refers to the hanging weight of the carcass as a percentage of the live weight. The dressed percentage ranges between 45% and 50% of the live weight.

**Cut and wrap yield** (or package weight) refers to the actual weight of all the packages of individual cuts of meat that you will put in your freezer. When the carcass is broken down into recognizable cuts, there is some loss when cuts are deboned and fat is trimmed away. The carcass yield will also depend on the types of cuts you selected (especially the amount of boneless cuts you choose).

**Q:** I'm beginning to shop around for some American Blackbelly sheep and was wondering what to look for to make sure the sheep can be registered.

**A:** The BBSAI closed the American Blackbelly registry, effective December 31, 2012. This means that to register American Blackbelly sheep, they must come from two registered American Blackbelly parents. If you want to raise registered American Blackbelly sheep, then be sure to purchase American Blackbelly sheep or lambs that are either 1) already registered with the BBSAI, or 2) are registerable because both their sire and dam are already registered with the BBSAI.

Beware that there are many horned barbado sheep out there that look like American Blackbelly but that are from unknown background and are not registered. Some sheep advertised

on our "Buy/Sell" list may not be registered, so you should be sure to ask the seller to provide proof of registerability with the BBSAI.

Preferably, you should ask the seller to register the sheep or lambs *before* you pay for them. If you purchase unregistered sheep whose sire and dam are registered, then ask the seller to give you a signed statement, stating the sheep's name and BBSAI registration number of his sire and dam. This will save you a lot of trouble and headache in the future, as you will need these documents in order to register your new American Blackbelly sheep or lambs.

If the sheep that you buy are already registered American Blackbelly sheep, the seller should give you their registration certificates when you pick up your sheep. The Transfer of Ownership form on the back of the registration certificate should be signed over to you by the seller, showing date of sale.

To transfer these registrations into your own name, you simply send the original certificates in to the BBSAI Registrar, along with a \$5.00 transfer fee per sheep. The Registrar will transfer the registrations to your name and send you a new certificate showing you as owner. 🦅



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



#### Raising sheep the EASY way!

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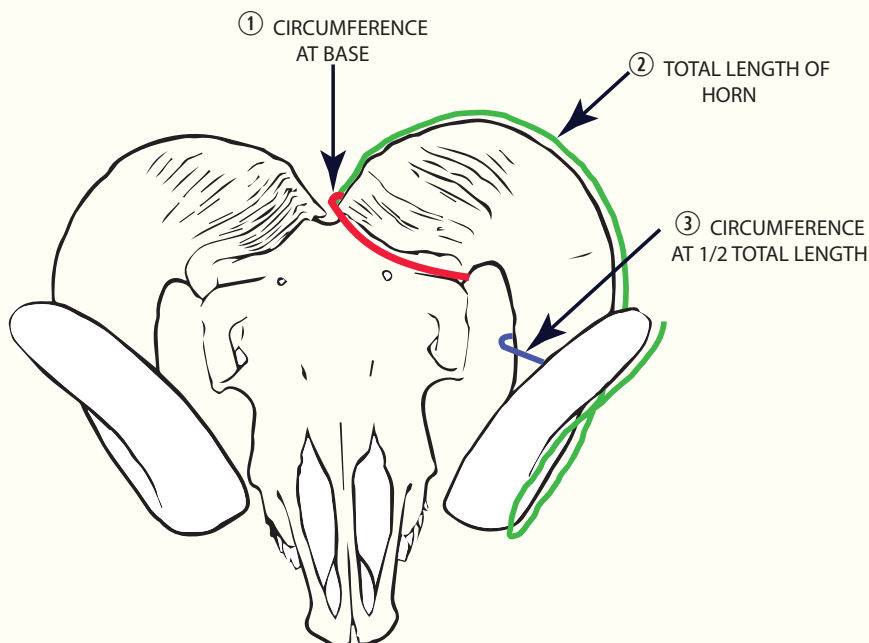
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## Measuring Ram Horns

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centerpoint of the **longest** horn that you measured in Step 2. To do this, divide the length of the longest horn by 2. That is your midpoint spot to measure. Draw a mark on the horn so you don't lose the spot. Measure the circumference (the distance around) at that mark like you did in Step 1. Example: If the longest horn is 28 2/8 in., divide that by 2 = 14 1/8 in. Measure out 14 1/8 in. from the base of the horn and make a mark there on the horn. Take the circumference at that mark. Mark and measure the other horn at the **same** 14 1/8 in. from the horn base.

If you don't have a cloth measuring tape, use a length of baling twine to measure the length and circumferences. Then use a yardstick to measure the distance that you noted on the baling twine.



Use the following form to record your measurements on. Then add up the six measurements to learn what trophy classification your ram belongs in.

Left horn	Circumference at base	
	Total length of horn	
	Circumference at 1/2 total horn length	
Right horn	Circumference at base	
	Total length of horn	
	Circumference at 1/2 total horn length	
<b>TOTAL LENGTH</b>		

If you have a Gold Class ram, you might want to spend \$20 to enter him into the Records of Exotics record book and receive a certificate to acknowledge your accomplishment. You can learn more about how to do this at <http://www.recordsofexotics.info/scorer-information.html>. You would enter your American Blackbelly ram in the Corsican category. 🌿

Classification	Total Measurement
Bronze Class	80 in. to 85 7/8 in.
Silver Class	86 in. to 93 7/8 in.
Gold Class	94 in. and over