

Dutch Texel breed

Dutch Texel sheep:

- The world's most meaty mutton breed
- Rapid growth
- Excellent lean/bone ratio
- Does turn food to lean and not to fat
- Excellent mothering qualities
- Produces predominately twin lambs



NTS
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SCHAPENSTAMBOEK



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For high-quality lamb production

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For high-quality lamb production



The Texel breed was created at the beginning of the last century by crossbreeding native polder sheep with various English breeds, such as Leicester, Wensleydale and Lincoln. This resulted in a large, rapidly growing and wool-rich sheep. As a result of effective selection, the new breed of sheep became the most meaty mutton breed in the world, with an excellent carcass quality.

Used both for pure breeding and in crossbreeding systems

The Texel breed is used a great deal for pure breeding but also in a range of crossbreeding systems. The Texel breed is excellently suited as a terminal sire, due to its superior carcass quality. This results in the progeny in a significant improvement in meatiness and reduction in subcutaneous fat cover.

Breeding goal

The main objective of the Texel flock books is to improve the quality of the purebred Texel sheep as much as possible. To achieve this goal the following requirements have to be met:

- Two weaned lambs per litter
- Rapid growth of young lambs
- Maintaining good maternal characteristics
- Further improvement of the carcass qualities

Fecundity

The Texel sheep are early maturing. The ewe lambs come already in heat at an age of about 7 month. The breeding season of the mature Texel is nearly 5 month. The average litter size of the mature Texel ewe is about 1.85 lambs at birth.

Maternal characteristics

The Texel ewe is a good mother. The milk yield of a Texel ewe is large enough for raising 2 lambs. The Texel sheep are excellent graziers and therefore easy to manage. This is also due to the good resistance to internal parasites.

Good growth

Due to the ewes' good milk production and the lambs' excellent growth potential, an average growth of 275 grams per day is attained during the suckling

period. During the grazing period of the lambs the growth is about 225 grams per day. If slaughtered at the age of 24 weeks, the lambs' average live weight is 44 kg.

Excellent carcass quality

The Texel breed is known for its excellent carcass composition. The carcasses on average consist of 60 percent lean meat. Due to their extremely low fat covering, lambs of the Texel breed can be sold over a long period of time with different end-weights, without any loss of carcass quality. Because of the breed's extremely high degree of meatiness, the carcass has a killing-out percentage of 55 - 60%.

Beautiful and functional sheep

Over the past few years, breeders of the Dutch Texel sheep have, in addition to further improving the breed's meatiness, worked intensively on its growth, fertility and functionality. The development of breeding indices for both fertility and growth has been a valuable contribution to this process. These efforts have resulted in larger, longer animals (see Table 1) that can easily carry and raise two lambs.

The Texel sires have an advantage over other terminal sire breeds in transmitting a comparatively low fat cover and high muscularity to their progeny which leads to a clear improvement in financial returns.



Table 1:

	0.5-year-old rams		1.5-year-old rams	
	height	length	height	length
1997	57,6 cm		64,9 cm	
2001	59,1 cm	64,8 cm	65,7 cm	73,0 cm
2004	60,9 cm	68,6 cm	67,0 cm	75,6 cm

