

Flock Management

A fully mature Barbados Blackbelly ram should only be allowed to run with a maximum of 30 ewes at a time per breeding season. This will allow for increase efficiency of the ram. Rams should only be introduced to the females when its time for mating. This practices allows for better record keeping and good management. After lambing the ewe should be identified with lamb and separated. Data collection should be taken at this time e.i birth weight, number of lambs etc..



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Telephone: (+501) 824-3032
Email: sheepprojectbelize@gmail.com

Ministry of
Agriculture

Livestock Unit,
Central Farm,
Cayo District.

Barbados Black Belly



Tel: 832-8187

Barbados Black Belly

Introduction

The Barbados Blackbelly is a breed of domestic sheep from the Caribbean island of Barbados.

Blackbelly sheep are able to tolerate heat and exhibit more stamina than most breeds of sheep. They will breed all year round because they are smaller and slower growing than most woolled sheep. However, there is a strong market for their lean and mild-flavoured meat.

They are very disease resistant and parasite tolerant, and these genetic traits have created a demand for Blackbelly sheep in crossbreeding operations. These sheep can be raised with very little grain, and do not require intensive management.

Blackbelly sheep range in colour from light tan to a dark mahogany red, with black stripes on the face and black legs, belly, inguinal region, chin, and chest, which gives this herbivore its name.

Characteristics

Coat: Complete covering of medium to thick-hair (no wool) that sheds in the spring. Barbados Blackbelly in the colder U.S. climates often develop protective wool undercoats during the fall and winter that also sheds in the spring.

Color: All shades of brown, tan or yellow, all are highlighted with contrasting black under parts extending down the inside of the legs. Black points on the nose, forehead, and inside of the ears are black.

Head: Medium in size and well in conformation to the neck and body. There is a slight tendency to a roman nose, especially in the ram. Ears point forward from the side, they should not droop.

Legs: "Leggy", and generally are quite well set.

Characteristics

Horns: Both sexes of the Barbados Blackbelly are polled.

Neck: Medium in length, slender in conformation to body size. Rams are heavier and well set to the shoulder.

Body: Fairly deep with well-sprung ribs. There is a fair width of back and loin, but a very deficient hindquarter (similar to a goat's). The rump is quite steep from the hips to the pin bones and the tail is set very low.

In general appearance (at a distance) these sheep resemble small deer or antelope. They are very active and lively. They are alert at all times. Compared to the more recognized "mutton type", Barbados Blackbelly sheep are less "squatty" and are slower growing.