

The North American Suffolk Sheep Society was established as a registry to advance and promote the Suffolk breed, providing breeders with the tools to breed the Suffolk's sheep they feel best work in their programs. Suffolk sheep are useful in a wide variety of applications from large commercial seed stock operations to the smaller farm flocks. Suffolks can be exhibited in many manors from slick sheared and fitted breeding sheep to club lambs and wether sires and dams. A breeder can find an array of ways to present their animals.

Suffolk Breed Standards

The Suffolk sheep are well known for their rapid early growth rate, heavy muscling, and being a favorite terminal sire for range sheep operations. They have prominent eye appeal in breed character and unrivaled in beauty. Suffolk's have jet black, wool-free heads and legs that sharply contrast their clean white fleeces and pink skin. Suffolk's are valued by commercial sheep breeders as they are fast growing and provide a quality carcass trait to their lamb crops.

The mature weights of Suffolk sheep may vary, bodies must be proportionate, as breed character should be similar across the breed. Appropriate frame size and growth curve should be chosen to match the specific environment of your program and your customers. All Suffolk sheep should be structurally and reproductively sound.

Rams should be massive bodied with and masculine black head, significant muscling down the top and into the leg, as well as ample fertility and libido.

Ewes should have a capacity for breeding, feminine yet heavy-muscled, with wide pelvic for easy lambing, strong mothering instinct, and milking ability to parent multiple lambs.

The Suffolk breed standards provide a benchmark for all Suffolk breeders. The breed standards outline a baseline, of how a Suffolk sheep is to be evaluated.

Head, Mouth, & Ears: 20 points

Head: Jet Black from poll forward with a wide skull, long muzzle, and deep jaw.

Mouth: Sound, with incisor teeth meeting the pad.

Ears: Long, black, bell-shaped, pointing down.

General Body Shape and Capacity: 20 points

Chest: Should be wide and deep, with these dimensions carrying back into the lower rib. Side

Profile: Depth of body that carries through middle rib and rear flank.

Muscularity: Roundness of shape in muscle patterns throughout the body.

Legs, Feet, & Gait: 20 points

Legs: Black with smooth heavy bones, front and rear legs should be well placed under the corners of the body set wide enough to exhibit body width

Feet: Short pasterns with toes pointing straight forward.

Gait: Long smooth strides, tracking as wide in rear as in front.

Back, Rack, & Loin: 20 points

Back: Level from base of neck to tail head.

Rack: Blends smoothly from the apex of the shoulder and flairs to express muscling.

Loin: Three dimensional and blends smoothly to the hip.

Rump and Twist: 15 points

Rump: Long and wide, level from hooks to pins, with width at tail head carrying down through a wide stifle.

Twist: Should be full, broad and deep.

Neck & Shoulders: 5 points

Neck: Moderate length, set smoothly on top of the shoulders.

Shoulder: Smooth with adequate width to enhance functionality and longevity.

Discriminate Against:

- Excessive black fiber in woolled areas
- Uprturned vulva
- Wild or uncontrollable dispositions
- Inverted eyelids
- Prolapsed uterus or rectum
- Horns
- Extreme width at shoulder
- Flat or weak pasterns
- Unsound movement or gait
- Post or straight legged, or sickle hocked, or crooked, bowed, or bent legs
- White speckling or splotching on bellies, inner legs, neck or jaw
- Asymmetrical or split testes
- Inadequate scrotal circumference (yearling ram < 35 cm.) *Pendulous udders, low capacity udders, balloon teats

Disqualifications:

- Over-shot or under-shot jaw
- Hermaphrodite (animals having both male and female organs)
- Inguinal hernia
- Shag or wool on head and legs
- Ram with very small testicles or single testicle.

