

Dorper & White Dorper

in Australia



ABOUT THE DORPER

The Dorper is a fast growing meat producing sheep that is particularly known for its ability to adapt and survive in a variety of climatic and grazing conditions.

The Dorper was originally bred from the more arid regions of South Africa in the 1930's. Initially imported into Australia in the mid 1990's, its suitability to most climate conditions has seen the Dorper develop into one of the largest meat sheep breeds in Australia today.

Characteristics of the Dorper include:

- Adaptability to and hardiness for a variety of climatic and grazing conditions
- High fertility and reproduction rates
- High growth rates with the ability to achieve maximum growth from little feed
- Good muscling and low fat scores - excellent for the domestic and export trade
- Thick quality skin for protection in harsh climate conditions
- Shedding of wool and hair according to seasonal conditions
- Excellent mothering qualities and milk production
- Low maintenance - minimal shearing required if any, flystrike resistant, no mulesing required at all

The only difference between the Dorper and White Dorper is in the colouring of the head. The Dorper has short dullish-black hair whilst White Dorpers have dull white coloured hair. Despite this difference, the term "Dorper" is often used to describe both breed types.





FAST FACT

The name “Dorper” comes from the first syllables of the parent breeds: Dorset and Persian

A LOW MAINTENANCE BREED

Dorpers are known as a low maintenance, easy care breed which can adapt easily to a variety of conditions, are non-selective graziers and are one of the only breeds that thrive in harsh conditions.

The Dorper is known to be resistant to parasites and diseases which also reduces the need to drench and use treatments for protection.

The Dorper sheds its fleece during the warmer months – late Spring/Summer. The wool simply falls off the skin and onto the ground where it breaks down into the soil over time. The fleece regrows in Autumn when the temperature becomes cooler. As they shed their wool, they are a favourable breed in pastoral areas as they do not require shearing and are less susceptible to flystrike, eliminating the need for mulesing or fly treatments.

BASIC BREED AIMS

The Dorper Sheep Society of Australia Inc recognise that the breed is in the development stage in Australia and therefore present the following standards as guidelines to stud breeders and growers interested in the breed. The breed standard is adapted from the South African Standard of Excellence.

It is generally agreed that the main aim for the Dorper and White Dorper is to propagate the breed to a level of quality and critical mass to be able to provide sires for stud breeding, upgrading other breeds, and terminal prime lamb sires. The direction of the breed to the foreseeable future should be to increase numbers or pure stock primarily concentrating on conformation of the animal without losing the qualities of early growth weight and hardiness that have been inherent in the breed for 50 years or more.



1. Conformation

Head to be a strong triangular shape with large widely spaced eyes. Preferably polled although some horn growth allowable. Neck should be of a medium length with well fleshed, broad and well coupled forequarters. Shoulders should be firm, broad and strong. Forelegs must be strong, straight and well placed, with strong pasterns and hoofs not widely split. Long, deep, wide body, ribs well sprung with the loin broad and full. Long straight back. The hindquarter should have a long, wide rump and the inner and outer twist is to be well fleshed and deep in adult animals. Hind legs must be strong and well-placed, with sturdy feet and strong

pasterns. A well developed udder and sex organs are essential in a ewe. The scrotum of the ram should not be too long and the testicles should be of equal size and not too small. In general, the sheep should be symmetrical and well proportioned.

2. Size or growth rate.

A sheep with a good weight for its age is the ideal. Discrimination against extremely small or extremely big animals must be exercised. It is recognised that the large animals are not as able to produce during extreme conditions due to the stress of maintaining body mass. The Dorper is a medium-size sheep and very productive for its size.



BASIC BREED AIMS (CONTINUED)

3. Distribution of Fat

Too much localisation of fat on any part of the body is undesirable. An even distribution of a thin layer of fat over the carcass and between the muscle-fibres is the ideal. The sheep must be firm and muscular when handled.

4. Colour Pattern

Dorpers - White sheep with short, dullish black hair confined to the head and neck. Black spots to a limited extent on the body and legs are permissible. Brown hair around the eyes, white teats, white under the tail and white hoofs are undesirable.

White Dorpers - White sheep with dull, white haired head and fully pigmented around the eyes, under the tail, on the udder and the teats. Limited number of other coloured spots.

5. Cover or Fleece

Short, loose light covering of hair and wool, with wool predominating on forequarter and with a natural clean kemp underline. A clean shedding sheep is most desirable for economical management and to prevent carcass downgrading due to grass seed penetration.



An ORGANIC Dorper?

The Dorper is fast becoming a favourable breed in areas of organic production (pastoral areas) as they have characteristics that result in no need for drenching or other treatments.

As the organic lamb market increases, so to is the demand for organic Dorpers.

DORPER SOCIETY REGIONS OF MEMBERSHIP THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA

The Dorper Sheep Society is divided into a number of different membership regions throughout Australia.

Each region has a Committee run by elected members that meets several times each year to discuss issues and concerns relevant to the Dorper breed and the specific region.

Two delegates from each committee form the Federal Board and represent their corresponding region in a number of meetings throughout the year. The delegates volunteer a large amount of time to ensure issues are addressed at a National level and ultimately be the "decision makers" of the Society.

WHICH REGION DO YOU BELONG IN?

WESTERN	(WA)
CENTRAL	(SA & NT)
SOUTHERN	(VIC & TAS)
EASTERN	(NSW)
NORTH EASTERN	(QLD)



THE DORPER SHEEP SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC

As the "centre point" of communication between Dorper and White Dorper members, the Society's main aim is to increase the ability of members to develop, produce and market world leading Dorper and White Dorper genetics.

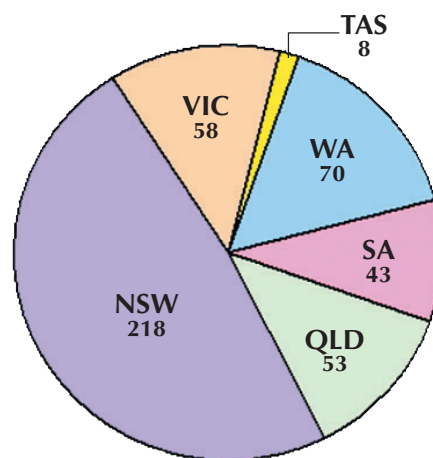
DORPER SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

The Dorper is one of the fastest growing meat sheep breeds in Australia with membership numbers at **450** in March 2008.

Membership entitles breeders to a range of facilities and tools that benefit stud management and breeding.

Benefits include:

- Access to the ABRI sheep registration facility.
- Access to the Society website and online service centre.
- Relevant and up-to-date guidance and information
- Contact with a National network of proactive breeders.
- Promotional opportunities through Society publications and representation on the Society website.
- Reduced fee rate for Ovine Dermatoparaxis testing.



Graph of current State Membership numbers (as at 14 March 2008)

HOW DO I JOIN?

If you are interested in becoming a member of The Dorper Sheep Society Australia Inc, fill out the below enquiry form to receive more information and an application form.

Or, simply visit the Society website www.dorper.com.au and download Membership Application Form.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Dorper Sheep Society of Australia Inc

Adelaide Showground, Wayville
 PO Box 108 GOODWOOD SA 5034
www.dorper.com.au



Secretary: Rob Martin
 P (08) 8210 5229
 F (08) 8231 4173
 E rmartin@adelaideshowground.com.au

Lou Mawson
 P (08) 8210 5235
 F (08) 8231 4173
 E lmawson@adelaideshowground.com.au

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ENQUIRY FORM

*Complete the below form to receive more information on applying for membership and send to
 The Dorper Sheep Society of Australia, PO Box 108 GOODWOOD SA 5034*

Name:

Address:

Contact Phone Number:

I am interested in: FULL MEMBERSHIP COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP

Any other comments?:.....

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