

Description of a Wiltipoll Sheep

Background

Wiltipoll sheep are a polled large framed lean and well-muscled cleanskin meat sheep developed in Australia in the early 1990s using reliable wool shedding and polled genetics. The Wiltipoll breed has a fleece similar to other short wool meat breeds that fully sheds in spring. Key characteristics of the Wiltipoll that make it a first choice for purchasers looking for an easy care large meat sheep are:

- An established breed with reliable meat sheep performance.
- Complete wool shedding.
- Strong maternal instincts and high lambing percentages.
- Wiltipoll ewes are seasonal breeders which allows rams to run with ewes at other times.
- High growth rates for lambs including multiple births.
- Calm, intelligent disposition and easy to muster.
- Easy to retain with basic sheep fences.
- Rams are virile, alert and active performers.
- Hardy sheep that thrive in a wide range of Australian climates.
- Excellent feet suitable for all paddock conditions.
- Fully polled (no horns).
- Suitable for organic style operations.

Appearance:

Head

- **Horn sites**
 - **Male** has depressions in the bone of the skull at the horn sites. One or both depressions may contain a keratin scur or bony horn knob not to protrude more than 5mm above the skull profile.
 - **Female** – similar to male but with a narrower skull profile.
- **Eyes** bright and full with dark pigmentation around the outer edge.
- **Nose** slight Roman profile with dark pigmentation.
- **Ears** long and broad and not carried erect. May have some minor black spotting.

Neck and Shoulders

- **Neck** - medium length, strong and well set.
- **Shoulders** – well set and oblique. Width of sheep at shoulders to be less than width at rear.

Body

- **Chest** - deep and wide with well sprung ribs.
- **Back & Loin** – Level back. Well filled and muscled loin.
- **Hindquarter** – Well muscled large hindquarter with a wide pelvic area consistent with easy lambing.

Legs, Pasterns and Feet

- **Legs** – Strong and set well apart with an alert well balanced stance.
- **Pasterns** – well angled hock and strong pasterns.
- **Feet** – Dark pigmentation preferred but older sheep will lose some pigmentation from their feet without detriment.

Skin and Wool

- **Skin** – Pink with no black ticking in lambs and two-tooth sheep. Increased black ticking in the skin is normal in older sheep.
- **Wool** – Wiltipoll sheep do not require shearing. They shed their fleece during the spring of their first adult year.

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