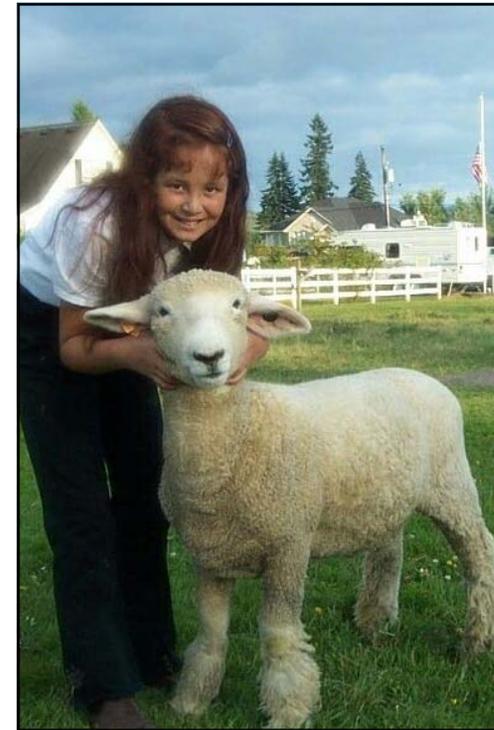




ROMNEYS



FOR YOUTH



AMERICAN ROMNEY BREEDERS

744 Riverbanks Road
Grants Pass, Oregon 97527

American Romney Breeders Youth Mission Statement

To encourage youth to care and maintain Romney sheep as a way of learning responsibility. To encourage youth to join with other Romney youth to learn sportsmanship, enhance social skills, ethical behavior, leadership traits and a better understanding of success and failure.



The History of the Romney Breed

Our American Romney has its beginnings in Great Britain as do many sheep breeds. It is an old established dual purpose breed of Flemish origin with Leicester blood. There has been a breed society for over 100 years with accurate record keeping. These early beginnings center around the reclaimed marshy area of Kent. This geographic area is lush with abundant forage. The landscape is often swept with harsh winds and heavy rainfall. Due to these geographic and climatic conditions, the Romney sheep has developed some specific breed characteristics. These traits include hooves resistant to foot rot and fleeces that remain healthy in harsh weather. Due to similar land topography, the Romney Marsh breed made an easy transition to the Southern Island of New Zealand and the Falklands where they quickly established themselves as the most predominant breed.

In 1904 William Riddell and Sons of Monmouth, Oregon brought the first Romneys to America. The American Romney Breeders Association was founded in 1912 by the late Joe Wing. Mr. Wing was a world traveler and a great judge of sheep. His expertise was instrumental in the development of Romneys in America as were many other early breeders.



Dual Products

Romney sheep produce two products, lambs and wool. When a Romney ewe has twins, she can produce 120 pounds of cut and wrapped meat in 170 days. Romney meat is noted for its delicate taste, even in older animals. The carcasses generally grade out prime or choice. When handled properly, the small farm shepherd will find these lambs can be creep fed until weaning (approximately 90 days) and then turned out on grass until market weight.

Whether shorn once or twice a year, the wool clip from the purebred Romney flock is sought by commercial wool buyers and craftspeople. Its broad range of acceptable spinning counts enables Romney wool to be used for many products, ranging from sweaters to outerwear to carpets. For the commercial producer, incorporation of the heavy-shearing white Romney can add significantly to overall farm income.

Romney wool is much in demand by handspinners. As this ancient art gains popularity, so does the interest in the Romney's long, lustrous fleece to meet the spinners' needs. Romney wool is $\frac{1}{4}$ to low quarter blood. One fleece will produce enough yarn for two or



The Romney fleece is unique and distinctive.

more sweaters. The fleece is easily spun and handcraft wool consumers seek out Romney wool by name. A handspinning quality Romney fleece sells for at least three times what the local wool pool pays.

Sire Breed

A Romney ram may have what you are looking for in a sire. Ram lambs reach sexual maturity at about 6-7 months and they grow into medium to large sized sheep weighing 175-275 lbs. or more as yearlings. A Romney ram can add extra fleece weight to lambs of black faced ewes, and will help correct dark fiber in the next generation.

The offspring of Romney rams are suited to the dual purposes of lamb and wool production. The ram and wether lambs grow well from heavy-milking ewes, where weights of 50-to-70 pounds at 60 days of age are common. Ewes sired by Romney rams make excellent replacements for the commercial flock. They tend to lamb easily, and their higher quality, heavier fleeces are a bonus.



A superior ram is necessary for flock improvement.

Mother Breed

As a mother breed, Romneys are a good investment. Ewes shear heavy, 10 - 15 lbs. in 12 months. Romney wool is high yielding with only a 1/3 or less weight loss after scouring. Romney ewes are prolific; a desirable ewe consistently produces twins and feeds them well. Some ewes are producing triplets and raising all three by themselves with proper nutrition. A Romney ewe is a good mother and her mild temperament makes her easy to handle even for the youngest of shepherds. Ewe lambs begin to cycle at 8-to-10 months of age, and mature ewes typically breed from September through January. The most common breeding months are September, October and November.

This breed's quiet disposition, unique fleece characteristics, the flavor and quality of its meat and its lambing percentage make it an excellent choice for purebred, commercial, crossbred programs or spinners flock.



Romneys are prolific and excellent mothers.

Romney's As Project Animals

The Romney deserves serious consideration from young sheep raisers selecting a breed to raise for project lambs. With some grain and good management, the lambs will reach ideal market weight in 4 to 6 months and grade prime or choice. Excellent market lambs can be produced by crossing Romneys with any traditional meat breed. For success with project lambs, whether you select Romney or Romney crosses, the main ingredient is attention. Watch your lamb grow. Check his weight. Your lamb will need a balanced diet, exercise, clean water at all times, access to trace mineral salt and regular worming.

Another consideration for young people is raising Romneys for sale as breeding stock and the Romney is an ideal breed for showing. The breed's expanding popularity provides opportunities to sell to other youth or adults.

Romney fleeces offer youth a second opportunity to participate in fairs or shows because they often place very high in shows and frequently sell to handspinners directly from shows. Since Romney wool is one of the easiest to spin by hand, many younger shepherds learn to spin and may participate in spinning contests. Some create garments from their Romney wool and participate in lead line classes or make-it-yourself wool events.

Whether you choose Romneys for market lambs or breeding, they can grow to be fine sheep that will be a credit to the breed and your ability as a shepherd.



Showing Romneys is fun and you make great friends.

Preparation For Showing

Feeding - An adequate food supply is necessary for proper muscle and fleece development. Romney sheep grow well on good pasture, supplemented with grain and hay when necessary. Lush green pasture, when available, or grass and legume hay in winter will provide the bulk of needed feed.

Foot Trimming - As with all sheep, feet should be kept trimmed to the pad in order to keep the foot healthy and keep the sheep walking properly. All dirt and manure should be cleaned away before showing. This adds to the overall appearance of the animal.

Fleece Preparation - Romneys may be lightly rinsed with plain water within six weeks of showing. Washing with soap removes the lanolin, may alter the crimp, and detracts from the normal fleece formation. For a clean appearance, dung tags should be removed and the wool on the belly shorn. The tips of individual locks should be trimmed to improve general appearance. Carding, if done at all, should be done carefully to avoid damaging the crimp. Blanketing, should be minimized and done with loose-fitting blankets to prevent packing the wool.

Showing Romney Sheep - Romneys should be handled in the show ring the same as other breeds of sheep. Setting the feet, holding the head and positioning yourself relative to the judge are all important. Refer to your local youth publications for area standards and rules. They will apply to Romney sheep also. A properly fed and fitted Romney is very attractive in the ring and should be shown with pride.



Fitting Romneys for show is a skill easily learned.

ROMNEY BREED STANDARD

APPEARANCE AND BODY CONDITION

1. General. Romney sheep should exhibit the essential qualities found in all good meat sheep. They should be sturdy animals with a strong bone structure, and balanced, capacious bodies. Romneys should have a strong constitution, the ability to adapt to varying environments, and a uniform fleece characteristic of the breed. Emphasis should be on an animal of large capacity, exhibiting strong breed type, perfect balance and alertness. The Association insists that the improvement of the breed come from within the purebred confines of the breed itself.

2. Head and Neck. A desirable animal has a relatively broad face, large clear eyes, and alert, thick felted ears. White ears are desirable but minor black spots are acceptable. The head should be carried high and be level between the ears. Nostrils should be black or dark, mottled grey. Solid pink noses should be discriminated against. The neck should join smoothly with the shoulders. The poll should be free of horns and hair.

3. Top Line. The back should be straight with smooth blending from the neck and ending at a square rump.

4. Legs. Front legs shall have a slight curvature above the knee, shall be straight from that point down and shall be wide set. Rear legs should have a slight natural curve from a side view, and be straight and widespread from a rear view. Pasterns should be strong and upright. An otherwise good sheep should not be disqualified if the hooves exhibit some light color, although black is desirable.

5. Udder or Scrotum. Ewes should have well-formed, even udders with two good teats. Rams should have two large, even, well-developed testicles.



Fleece

1. General. The character and architecture of a Romney fleece is unique in the way it combines several important traits. The fleece should be dense and free-opening, with well-defined crimp and a yearly staple length of five inches or more.

2. Character. Romney wool is well crimped from butt to tip. Uniformity over the entire body, length, and spinning count are most important. The fleece is lustrous; it hangs in separate locks, with minimal cross fibers between the locks. It is also high yielding and easily spun. The fleece should be clean, and must be free of kemp and hair.

3. Color. White Romney fleeces must be free of black or brown fiber. Small black spots on the ears are acceptable. For Natural Colored Romney fleeces, fibers must be pigmented. Colors range from very light (almost cream) to gray to very dark (black) with variation or variegation of the shades of color within the fleece.

4. Luster. The fleece should exhibit a bright, shiny, healthy appearance.

5. Quantity. Annual fleece production should be eight pounds or more for ewes, and 12 pounds or more for rams.

6. Grade. Wool with a spinning count of 50 to 44 inclusive (equivalent to a fiber diameter of about 29-36 microns) is within the breed standard.

SCORECARD.

Due to the different emphasis on wool, different scorecards have been developed for white and natural colored Romneys.

	WHITE	NATURAL COLORED
General Appearance	10%	5%
Condition	10%	5%
Head and Neck	5%	5%
Forequarters	5%	5%
Body	15%	10%
Hindquarters	15%	10%
Wool	40%	60%



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