

WEIGHTS OF SHEEP AND FLEECES.

Medium-quality Short-wool Breeds.	Mature Ram.	Mature Ewe.	Fleeces, Rams.	Fleeces, Ewes.
	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Lb.
Southdown	170-190	125-130	10-12	6-8
Shropshire	175-250	140-180	10-14	8-11
Oxford	250-350	180-275	12-16	12
Hampshire	225-275	175-200	8-12	6-8
Dorset Horn	200-225	150-175	8-10	6-8
Suffolk Down	200-240	150-200	8-10	7-9
Cheviot	175-200	140-160	7-11	6-9
Tunis	150	120	8-10	7-9
Ryeland	200-225	160-175	12-14	10-12
<i>Fine-wool Breeds.</i>				
Merino	150-175	100-125	{ A, 30 B, 25 C, 18	{ A, 20 B, 15 C, 11
Rambouillet	175-225	130-160	15-20	10-12
<i>Coarse-quality Long-wool Breeds.</i>				
Leicester	225-275	175-225	12-14	10-12
Cotswold	300-350	200-250	12-15	11-12
Lincoln	250-375	225-275	15-18	12-15
Romney Marsh	200-225	175-200	15-18	12-16
Wensleydale	200-250	175-225	12-14	10-12
Black-faced Highland	150	125

CLASSIFICATION BASED ON ALTITUDE.

Lowland Breeds—Cotswold, Leicester, Lincoln, and Romney Marsh.

Upland Breeds—Merino, Rambouillet, Southdown, Suffolk, Hampshire, Shropshire, Oxford Down, Ryeland, Tunis, Dorset, and Wensleydale.

Mountain Breeds—Black-faced Highland and Cheviot.

THE SOUTHDOWN.

This being probably the oldest breed of sheep in existence, it seems fitting that it should be dealt with first. The breed originated in a low range of hills in South-eastern England, known as the South Downs. The ancestors of the Southdown sheep of to-day were small, ill-shaped, horned sheep with light fleeces, but with an extra well-developed leg of mutton. Constant selection and breeding from only the best rams has made this breed what it is to-day—namely, the mutton sheep par excellence. The Southdown, moreover, has been widely used in the development of nearly all the other medium-wool breeds.

The Southdown is the smallest of the mutton breeds, but remarkably compact. In type and quality they are the mutton ideal. They are called "the big little sheep" on account of their deceptive weights. This breed has captured the majority of the prizes in the annual carcass competitions at Chicago.

The breed is noted for its early-maturing and easy-keeping qualities. These small sheep will thrive on pasture that would be insufficient for larger breeds. They are a short-pasture sheep. Hence if given very liberal feeding there is danger of them getting too fat to breed. The ewes are fairly prolific, but not equal to the best. The faults of the breed are that they are small and the fleeces light. However, the wool is of extra-good quality for a medium-wool breed.

The colour of the face may be brown or grey or mouse colour. The forehead and cheeks should be well woolled.