

**Y**ou've probably been thinking about owning sheep for a while, about how nice it would be to have serene, fluffy, content, and colorful animals grazing in your pasture. Shetlands are the sheep you've been dreaming about!

If you're a hand spinner or knitter, Shetlands have wonderful wool. It's soft, fine, silky, and durable and a delight to spin and knit. Shetland wool can be made into a fine enough shawl to be drawn through a wedding ring!

Shetland sheep are considered a primitive or "unimproved" breed. This means that although they are small and relatively slow-growing, they maintain their natural hardiness, thriftiness, easy lambing, adaptability and longevity. Having retained most of their primitive survival instincts, they are easier to care for than many of today's "improved" breeds.



Rams have beautiful spiral horns, whereas ewes are typically polled (although there are polled rams and varieties of ewes that have horns). They are fine-boned and agile. Their short, fluke-shaped tails do not require docking. Ewes are excellent mothers and are very protective of their lambs.

**NASSA** Registry  
P.O. Box 51, 222 Main St.  
Milo, IA 50166  
shetland-sheep.org



**North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association**

**N**orth  
**A**merican  
**S**hetland  
**S**heepbreeders  
**A**ssociation



There are sheep,  
then there are  
**Shetland  
Sheep**



[shetland-sheep.org](http://shetland-sheep.org)

## North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association

The North American Shetland Sheepbreeders Association, or NASSA, assists breeders of Shetlands maintain the purity and quality of this unique and colorful breed. NASSA also provides accurate registration and pedigree records for informed breeding decisions and helping to exchange information between breeders.

NASSA coordinates with the Shetland Sheep Society of Great Britain to preserve and protect breed standards, particularly the rarer colors and markings.



## Benefits of membership

- Your flock registered in the NASSA Flock Book
- Pedigree going back four generations, registry certificate for each sheep registered
- Handbook on Shetlands describing characteristics and coloring, history, breed standards and more
- List of current NASSA members and breeders
- NASSA News, a quarterly newsletter with educational articles, news and upcoming events including sheep for sale and sheep wanted

for more information visit  
[shetland-sheep.org](http://shetland-sheep.org)  
[membership@shetland-sheep.org](mailto:membership@shetland-sheep.org)

## There are sheep, then there are Shetland Sheep

### Colorful

Shetland wool has the widest range of colors and varieties of any breed with 11 main colors ranging from white to gray to black and from light brown, reddish browns to dark brown and lots of different types of markings. White Shetland wool dyes well, too.



### Easy lambing

Because Shetlands are a primitive breed, they have successfully reproduced without any help for centuries. During lambing season you will sometimes find new lambs in your pasture nursing vigorously and wagging their tails. Even better, you don't need to dock their tails. Shetlands are born with short, fluke-shaped tails.

### Hardy and economical to feed

Shetland sheep need little care, unlike some sheep breeds. They have retained their ability to survive well without intervention. You can feed 10-12 sheep on a bale of hay per day. Shetlands are calm, docile, playful (especially at dusk), and easy to manage.

### Tasty meat

Although not typically raised for meat, lamb from Shetlands is great tasting and delicious.

### Beautiful wool

The wool from a Shetland is one of the finest and softest wools available. Many think that Shetland wool is not itchy against the skin like some other wool. And the wool comes in many natural colors. Average fleeces weigh between 2-6 pounds and have a staple length of 2-7".

### Small and manageable size

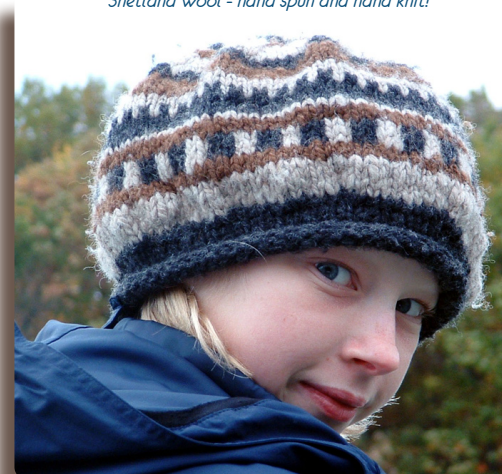
Shetland's smaller size make them very easy to handle. Ewes usually weigh about 75 to 100 pounds with rams weighing about 25 pounds more. They are an ideal animal for children since they are calm and docile. Some Shetlands wag their tails when petted!

## History of Shetland Sheep

Shetland sheep's roots go back more than 1,000 years, probably to sheep brought to the Shetland Islands by Viking settlers. They belong to the Northern European short-tailed group which also contains the Finnsheep, Norwegian Spaelsau, Icelandics, and others.

With the assistance of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST), G. D. "Colonel" Dailley from Ontario, Canada imported 27 ewes and 4 rams from the Shetland Islands in 1980 in order to help preserve this primitive and rare breed. This is the only importation of Shetlands into North America documented by the RBST. The first importation into the United States was in 1986. Shetlands have been increasing in popularity ever since.

*Hat made from soft, warm, naturally colored  
Shetland wool - hand spun and hand knit!*



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