

UPGRADING GUIDELINES.

The Board may at its discretion also institute additional policy guidance as appropriate to implement specific elements of the Guidelines. If changes to the Guidelines are deemed appropriate by the Board or petition of more than 25% of the membership, proposed changes may be put to a vote of the membership at any time by posting notice 30 days prior to the date of the vote.

OBJECT.

The VBSS is committed to firmly establishing a sustainable breeding flock of Valais Blacknose sheep in North America. The VBSS supports the establishment and development of Valais Blacknose sheep using purebred Valais Blacknose semen in an upgrading program initially instituted by using Foundation ewes of non-Valais Blacknose descent with the eventual goal of attaining F-5 or American Purebred Valais Blacknose sheep.

The VBSS also acknowledges and supports the use of imported purebred embryos and purebred live animal imports to further establish a sustainable breeding flock.

In order to achieve the ultimate goal of a uniform, phenotypically correct purebred breeding flock using an upgrading system, the VBSS has instituted a structured Registry database utilizing Foundation Ewes, Recorded Stock, and Registered Stock. Upgraded animals must meet the VBSS Standard of Type to be entered into the database as Registered Stock.

STANDARD OF TYPE.

The Board of Directors shall establish a Standard of Type which shall be accepted by the Society as a general description and model for Valais Blacknose sheep. Such Standard shall not be considered absolute. Individual breeders and members must consider their own purposes and needs in evaluation of sheep by the Standard, and judges should be encouraged to use the Standard on the same basis.

STRUCTURE OF UPGRADING SYSTEM.

All subsequent Valais Blacknose progeny produced using the upgrading system, must be of a higher blood percentage than the ewes blood percentage and meet all other requirements for inclusion in the database.

PUREBRED VALAIS BLACKNOSE Sires.

It is understood that the upgrading system is best used in conjunction with purebred Valais Blacknose sires, either by natural cover or thru the use of artificial insemination. Purebred sires whose semen is imported for use in US breeding programs will be registered with VBSS at no charge. These rams will have the suffix "AI." When requesting VBSS registration for an AI ram, a three-generation pedigree, proof of registration with the appropriate breeders' association in the ram's country of origin, and the ram's Codon 171 DNA. (QQ, QR, and RR are acceptable, but must be known.) need to be submitted. DNA sample must also be submitted to establish sire lineage.

FOUNDATION EWE.

Recognizing that breeders have made their own choices regarding Foundation ewe breeds to institute their upgrading programs using purebred Valais Blacknose semen, there are no restrictions placed on the breed type of the Foundation Ewe by the VBSS. These ewes will have to be submitted for entry into the VBSS database and the ewe will be issued a Foundation Ewe Certificate containing her lineage information and her registration in any other breed Registry. The required VBSS form is provided on the website and is also available from the Registrar.

FOUNDATION EWE PROGENY.

In order to be included into the VBSS database, all first cross (F-1) (50%) lambs must be sired by use of purebred Valais Blacknose semen from registered rams.

Regarding the use of Valais Blacknose semen on Foundation ewes, the first-generation ewe progeny (F-1) bred back to a purebred Valais Blacknose sire produces second generation ewe progeny (F-2). The second-generation ewe progeny (F-2) bred to a purebred Valais Blacknose sire produces third generation ewe progeny (F-3). The third-generation ewe progeny (F-3) bred to a purebred Valais Blacknose sire produces fourth generation ewe progeny (F-4). The fourth-generation ewe progeny (F-4) bred to a purebred Valais Blacknose sire produces fifth generation ewe progeny (F-5).

Most animal geneticists classify an animal that is 96.25% (F-5) as a purebred. They are generally referred to as "American Purebreds" and will be considered purebred Valais Blacknose and will have the value of 100% assigned to all future offspring calculations.

RECORDED STOCK.

All Valais Blacknose progeny produced by utilizing the upgrading system as described above shall be entered into the database as "Recorded Stock" and will receive a Certificate of Recording. Subsequent offspring of "Recorded Stock" may be considered for entry into the database as "Registered Stock" provided all other requirements are met and the offspring exhibit the VBSS Standard of Type. Otherwise worthy sheep who do not meet the VBSS Standard of Type may continue to be entered into the database as "Recorded Stock" and used in breeding programs.

Recorded Stock needs to reach the level of F-3, attained thru the consistent use of purebred VBS semen, or have an accumulated blood percentage of 87.5% before being considered for inclusion as Registered Stock.

Sheep produced as a result of the crossing of AI progeny will be entered into the database with their blood percentage calculated from the use of two recorded parents. *i.e. 50% (F-1) dam crossed with a 75% (F-2) sire results in a 62.5% lamb.* These animals shall be included in the "Recorded Stock" database. These animals can be considered for inclusion in the "Registered Stock" database when their blood percentage reaches a minimum of 87.5% and they display the VBSS Standard of Type.

REGISTERED STOCK.

All upgraded VBS sheep in the Recorded Stock database that have reached a minimum of F-3, attained thru the consistent use of purebred VBS semen, or have reached 87.5% blood and meet or exceed the Standard of Type set by the Board of Directors shall be considered for inclusion in the database as "Registered Stock." Each animal entered into the "Registered Stock" database must submit a DNA sample for parentage verification.

Animals being upgraded that have consistently used purebred VBS semen throughout each generation of advancement and attained "Registered Stock" status shall be issued a "Registered Stock of Merit" certificate.

REGISTERED "AMERICAN PUREBREDS"

Most animal geneticists classify an animal that is 96.25% (F-5) as a purebred. They are generally referred to as "American Purebreds" and will be considered purebred Valais Blacknose and will have the value of 100% assigned to all future offspring calculations.

REGISTERED "PUREBREDS"

Members registering imported purebred Valais Blacknose sheep in the VBSS should provide proof of registration in the country of origin. At a minimum, a three-generation pedigree must also be provided. A DNA sample should be submitted for future lineage verification of offspring. All such animals shall be recognized as Purebred and issued an "Purebred" Certificate.

Members registering purebred Valais Blacknose progeny born in the US should also provide proof of dam and sire's registration in their respective countries of origin if not already registered in the VBSS. In such case, three-generation pedigrees would also be required. A DNA sample should be submitted for lineage verification of offspring. All such animals shall be recognized as Purebred and issued a "Purebred" Certificate.

Members registering purebred animals born in the US of imported purebred embryos must provide proof of registration of the sire and donor dam in the country of the embryo's origin. A three-generation pedigree must also be provided. A DNA sample should be submitted for lineage verification of offspring. All such animals shall be recognized as Purebred and issued an "Purebred" Certificate.

