

SHEEP CONFORMATION



WHAT IS CONFORMATION?

- ✘ Conformation is the anatomy and skeletal function and how it impacts the animal's health, adaptability, longevity, and productivity.
- ✘ Made up of Structure, Balance, and Soundness, plus breed traits.
- ✘ Visual confirmation scores run from 1-5. 1=best
5=worst



SOUNDNESS

- ✘ Animal should be able to move and subsist painlessly, efficiently, and productively throughout its life.
 - 1.) Should be in good condition and healthy
 - 2.) Should have a firm foundation
 - 3.) Sound feet
 - 4.) Stand squarely
 - 5.) Should have all body parts in correct position, number, and condition especially: teats, testicles, and teeth.

STRUCTURE

- ✘ The way a sheep's body parts are put together or arranged to form the whole animal.
- ✘ Structural correctness is important: it includes:
 - 1.) Growth Potential
 - ✘ 2.) Volume/Capacity or depth of body
 - ✘ 3.) Condition
 - ✘ 4.) Legs
 - ✘ 5.) Back
 - ✘ 6.) Neck
 - ✘ 7.) The eye socket

BACK

- ✘ Back should be level and strong with no dip behind shoulders
- ✘ No weak or splayed backs

Score 1= Very good, shoulder blades sit squarely on either side of the spine with no ridge between the shoulders, back straight between shoulders and hips.

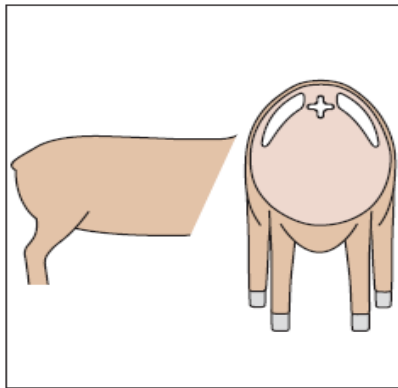
Score 2= good

Score 3= Average, shoulders positioned below the spine to create a ridge.

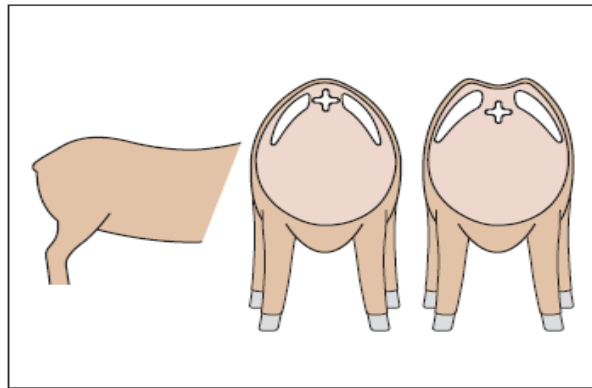
Score 4= poor

Score 5= Extremely high and wide shoulders that create trough above the spine or extremely low and narrow shoulder blades that create a sharp ridge, back dips severely behind the shoulders.

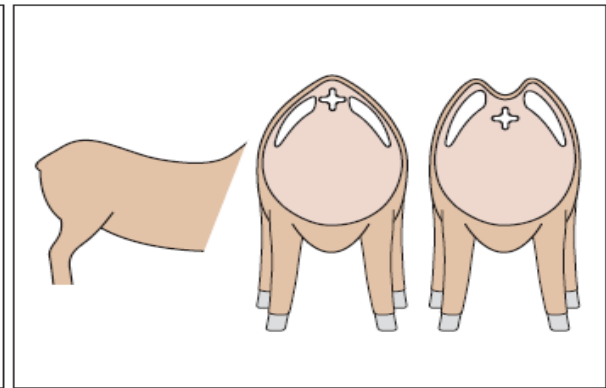
Shoulder/Back



Score 1



Score 3



Score 5

GROWTH POTENTIAL

- ✘ Growth can be estimated in lambs by comparing the cannon bones.
- ✘ Through comparison it can be estimated the size of the lamb at maturity.



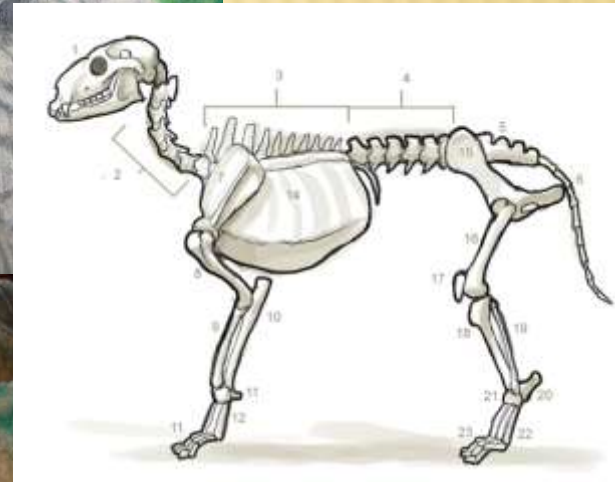
VOLUME/CAPACITY OR DEPTH OF BODY

- ✘ Basically means that the animal has room inside for heart, lungs, rumen, etc.
- ✘ Ewes should have a broad and wide stance in the rear. (close-set rear legs can rub against udder and teats when full of milk.)



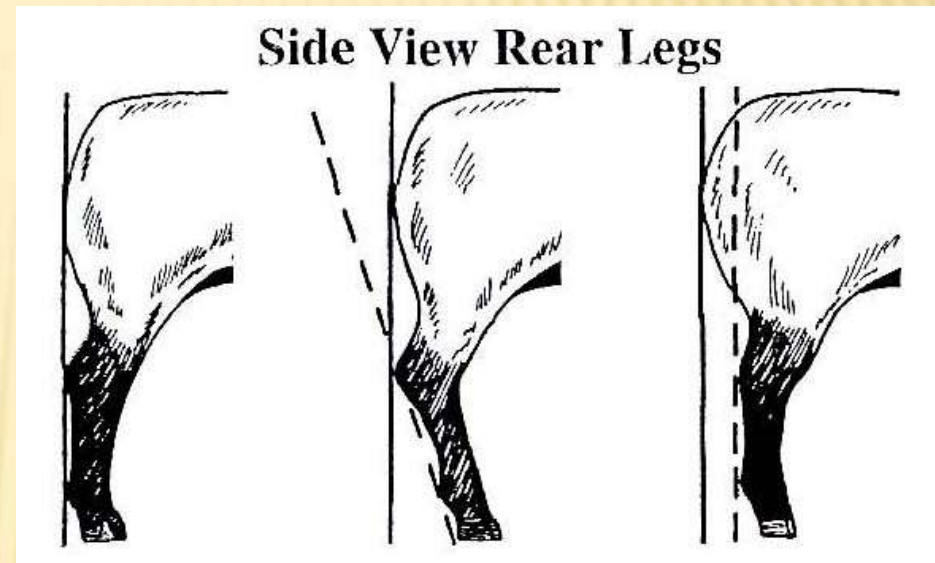
CONDITION

- ✘ Whether a sheep is overly-fat, overly-finished, or thin.
- ✘ Body condition scoring can be assessed through the fat and muscle over and around the first lumbar vertebra.
- ✘ System uses the six point system-
0= emaciation
5=extreme obesity
- ✘ Ewes should have a body condition score of 2.5-3.5 during breeding.

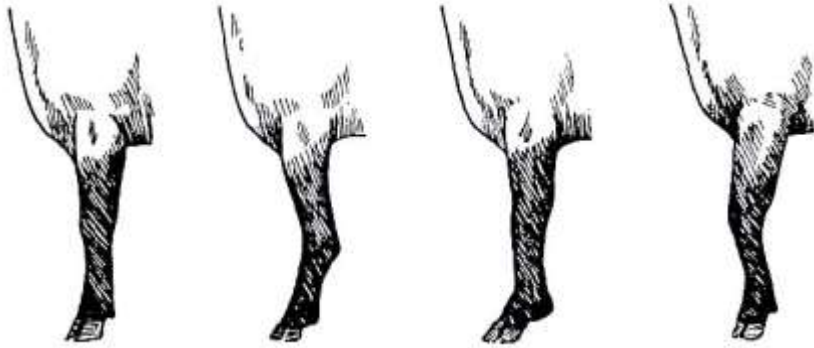


LEGS

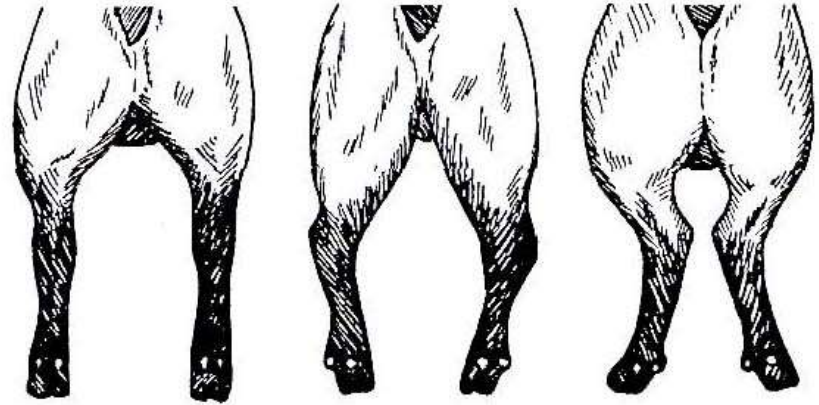
- ✘ Should be straight
- ✘ Come out of each corner of the body squarely and end in strong pasterns for fleetness and agility.
- ✘ Below knee should be slight and slender from absence of muscles.
- ✘ Upper leg should be larger.
- ✘ Leg/feet are a combined trait.



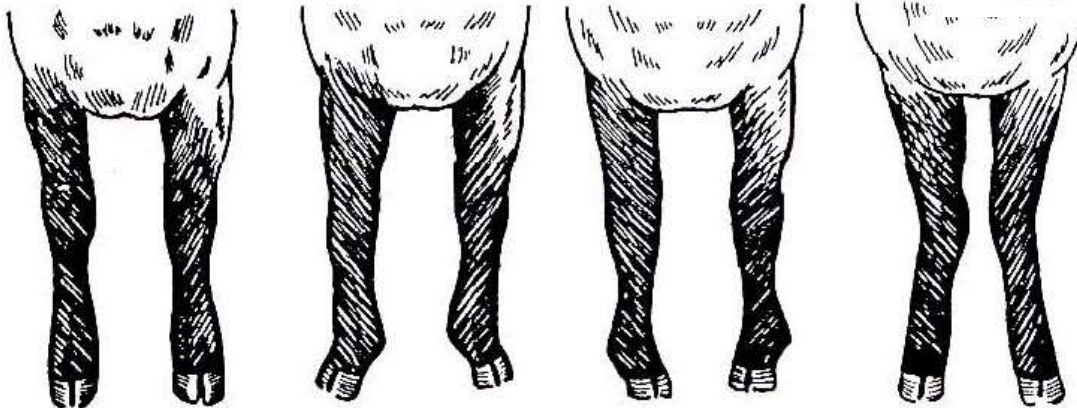
Side View Front Legs



Rear View



Front View



NECK AND EYE SOCKET

- ✘ Neck should be full and entering the shoulders high up
- ✘ “ewe-necked” appearance= where neck enters the shoulders low and there is a dip between the neck and the shoulders.
- ✘ Eye socket-should be prominent giving the animal all around vision.

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