

VALLEY FIBER ARTS GUILD

WORKSHOP SERIES 2024-2025 SHEEP BREED STUDY

Breed: Jacob

The Jacob is a British breed of domestic sheep bred in the British Isles for hundreds of years. Tradition is the sheep are from Spain and were introduced to Ireland from a wrecked ship of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and then later brought to England.



Picture credit: Edfords Care Farm UK

The sheep resemble a story in the Book of *Genesis* and due to this the Jacob sheep was named for the Biblical figure of Jacob in the 20th century according to historical data.

Jacob sheep are described as a small, horned, piebald sheep that looks much like a goat in its confirmation. Piebald refers to the spotted nature of its wool, dark colored spots and areas of white. The skin beneath the white fleece is pink, while the skin beneath the dark colored spots is darkly pigmented. These markings are found in both breed sexes.



Picture credit: agronomag.com

Jacob sheep are often polycerate or multi horned, often having either two or four horns as shown in these pictures.

Jacob sheep are considered an heirloom breed, meaning a breed that has survived with little human selection in the breeding process. Although there are differences between the British breeds and American breeds. They do well in hot or cold extremes and have good foraging capabilities, needing minimal supplementation in their diet.

The fleece we are working with was sourced from a farm in Oxford, United Kingdom.