

# Southdown Sheep

**Scientific Name:** *Ovis aries aries southdown*

**Class:** Mammalia

**Order:** Artiodactyla

**Family:** Bovidae



The body of the Southdown is compactly made, very wide and deep with short legs. Mature rams' weight between 190 to 230 lbs. and mature ewes weigh between 130 to 180 lbs. Coloration varies from gray to mousy brown. The nose is narrow, and the ears pointed. Females have two mammae and are generally somewhat smaller than males. Southdown sheep are bred primarily for wool and meat. They are the oldest of the "down" sheep. They are active sheep but are calm indisposition. They are economical to feed and maintain.

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## Range

World-wide: originally from Sussex, England

## Habitat

Extremely hardy and can adapt to most areas of pastureland.

## Gestation

144-152 days

## Litter

1 to 4

## Behavior

Docile and easy to manage

## Reproduction

Reproduce easily. Lambing in the early spring. Though the sheep are hardy, lambing is done in barns to protect the lambs from the weather and getting lost in the pastures. Most breeding results in twins or triplets.

## Wild Diet

Grasses, sedge, forbs