

Vereeniging van
Speciale
Schapenrassen



Secretariat **VSS** (Association of Special Sheep Breeds)

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**The internationally
recognized studbooks:**
Cambridge
Castlemilk Moorit
Coburger Fuchs
Devon&Cornwall Longwool
Herdwick
Leicester Longwool
Norfolk Horn
Portland
Ryeland
Scottish Blackface
Shetland
Solognote
Walliser Schwarznase
Wiltshire Horn

Jacobschaap
Karakul
Kreiner Steinschat
Leicester Longwool
Leyn
Manx Loaghtan
Oxford Down
Persian Blackhead
Poll Dorset
Racka
Romney
Rouge d'Ouest
Shropshire
South Down
Wensleydale Longwool
Wolmerino

Balwen Welsh Mountain
Barbados Black Belly
Bentheimer Landschaap
Black Welsh Mountain
Blue Faced Leicester
Border Leicester
Britschaaap
British Texel
Bruiene Bergschaap
Charmoise
Dorper
Dorset Horn
Duitse witkop
Duitse zwartkop
Hebridean
Heideschnucke



There are 45 varieties registered with the VSS.
And 14 of these have an official recognition (reference date June 2019)

The VSS (Association of Special Sheep Breeds) Unity in Diversity

The VSS is a national association. Around 600 members own 45 varieties. Some breeds are special, but not endangered, other breeds rare even in the country of origin, e.g. the Devon and Cornwall Longwool and the Manx Loaghtan. The size of the breed groups is also running from 110 holders/breeders of Walliser Schwarznase to 1 breeder from, for example, the Shropshire or 1 holder of the Heideschnucke.



The VSS presents itself with its own sheep collection at various events, where sheep from individual members and breed groups can also be found. The diversity between the sheep breeds can then be clearly observed, from small to large, from thick-in-the-wool to self-moulting, from curl to style, from rough to fine wool, from unhorned to multi-horned and in every conceivable sheep color. The VSS is an association where every member has its own reason for keeping sheep: professional or hobby, production animal for the wool, meat or milk, as a lawn mower, landscape manager, as a pet or companion animal for a horse or simply to breed a beautiful (studbook) sheep.

The objective of the VSS

Maintaining and improving special sheep breeds and looking after the interests of breeders and holders of sheep breeds affiliated with the association.

Maintaining and improvement

As a breeder you need an organization that manages the studbook. Managing is done, among other things, by the user-friendly registration program FALCOO. Certainly for smaller breed groups, cooperation between breeders is very important to prevent inbreeding. The program helps in finding breeders and animals, to calculate inbreeding percentages and to register all animals, including pedigree, offspring and results. All animals can be registered in the system, but studbook breeding is only



possible with officially approved animals.

That's is how the studbook keeps its value.

The following applies to all breeds affiliated with the VSS: if you want to breed studbook animals, the VSS is the only association in the Netherlands where that is possible.

To inform members, the VSS provides at least 4 times a year the digital magazine De Ruif (in Dutch) with information, news, stories, tips, recipes, etc. The VSS website is also in Dutch. You can find there de VSS web shop, information, links and download forms, supply and demand and more.

Representation of interests

The VSS has good contacts in all sheep sectors. This is very valuable with the current complex laws and regulations. The VSS therefore ensures at various levels that the special varieties are not overlooked and, where necessary, exception rules are made. International recognition for varieties is important for exchange. The VSS has ensured that several studbooks have received recognition and there are more on the wish list.

The VSS is an active association with one administrative assistant for the studbook administration. And just like its 5-person board and 5 judges, there are many volunteers active. The activities are, just like the sheep and the members, very diverse: from taking care of the coffee at an event or doing annual cash check to running of the web shop, organizing events, or arranging and maintaining the traveling VSS information booth.

And within the VSS, people agree; once breeders start talking about sheep
..... then the annual meeting is the place to be!

