

KARAKUL SHEPHERDS ALLIANCE ~ where the flocks gather
KARAKUL LAMB BARN WORKSHEET

RAM EWE WETHER Tag#/Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Birthweight _____

SINGLE TWIN TRIP Color(s) _____ Sire _____ Dam _____

Color(s) Nose & Eye Rims: _____ **Mouth-Tongue:** _____ **Mouth** normal **overbite** **underbite**

Horn nubs: none present **Wattles:** none 2 1 R L **Poll hair** straight wavy woolly
 (~to mouth) (half-way) (~past eyes) (1-2")

Ears: very long long medium short elf **Bone** fine average heavy **extra-heavy**
 (OK small ewes only)

Tail (Upper): U-shape V-shape / very large large medium **small** ↑ **Extra teats** no yes removed

Tail (Lower): docked / long short / straight flipped curved **Conformation** classic average **poor**

BIRTH COAT ASSESSMENT Age @ evaluation _____ days **CLTPD = CURLS, LUSTER, TEXTURE, PATTERN, DEVELOPMENT**
 3/16" 1/4" 5/16" 0 0 ∞ ~
CURL SIZE small medium large **CURL DEPTH** deep normal pressed

1. CURLS TYPE pipe walnut waves open flat corkscrew nappy (Multiple Types label 1st, 2nd, 3rd for coverage)
 ∞∞ ∞ξ∞ξ∞ ~≈ ΓΓ cccc

(Size of fibers, fine to thick)

2. LUSTER high good average low **3. TEXTURE** silky strong coarse harsh woolly
 (rare)

4. PATTERN geographic moiré ribbed corrugated horseshoe monotonous slight

5. #days curls to unravel Broadtail Persian-Broadtail Persian lamb Half-Persian Caracul
DEVELOPMENT (10 to 14+d) (Up to 8 days) (2 to 4 days) long very long

6. CARRY excellent good poor **7. DENSITY** high average low (#fibers per unit of coat surface)

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**Enter comments on the Lamb birth coat: line of the Registration Application**

# KARAKUL SHEPHERDS ALLIANCE ~ where the flocks gather

## KARAKUL LAMB BARN WORKSHEET LAMB BIRTH COAT ASSESSMENT (Abbreviated)

The categories below describe birth coats. The Alliance has chosen **5**, considered to be **the most important** Persian lamb categories: **CURLS, LUSTER, TEXTURE, PATTERN, DEVELOPMENT**, in order to place emphasis on retaining these genetics, the Karakul heritage.

These five attributes establish a **Star-quality rating**, with 5-Stars the highest possible. Top-quality sub-categories are in blue.

Submit photo(s) to [info@karakulshepherds.org](mailto:info@karakulshepherds.org) for evaluation by 3 Advisors and rating as a *Star-coat*. Ratings are voluntary, but highly encouraged. **Disqualifiers are in rust; they disqualify a sheep from registration.**

**AGE at assessment:** **Evaluations best made within 6 days of birth.** Most categories are not reliable after the lamb is 2 weeks old.

**1. CURLS TYPE:** There are seven types of curl. They may blend from one type to another, sometimes be inter-mixed, or occur in different parts of the birth coat. For multiple curl types label the three most prominent for coverage 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Pipe Curls:** Or pencil curls. The tip of the individual fiber points back down towards the surface of the birth coat. Collectively they form a circular pattern into a hollow tube or pipe. May be long (associated with ribbed patterns) or short pipes (corrugated patterns). Example: ∞∞

**Walnut Curls:** AKA pea or rose curls, are *very short* random pipes, mixed with other curl types. These twists and swirls create a general effect of shelled walnut halves placed side by side on a table, viewed from above. Many of the curls do not form a circle, but curve in many ways making beautiful patterns. Ex: ∞ξ∞ξ∞

**Waves:** Most often associated with moiré/watersilk patterns. Waves are shallow, pressed to the skin. Ex: ~≈

**Open Curl:** Does not mean loose curl. It is a *lack of curl in a group of fibers* showing *plateau-like formations*. These are essentially areas of no curl, but with some depth. Example: ∟∟

**Flat Curl:** This is a *lack of curl, flatter* than open curl. The fibers lie more or less parallel to the skin surface, with no depth. Seen frequently with waves when the lamb has a moiré pattern. Ex: CCCC

**Corkscrew:** These are overdeveloped curls, appearing as ringlets. The fiber emerges from the follicle forming a circle at right angles to the skin surface. Instead of pointing downward as in the pipe curl, the tip curves upward again and forms one or more circles that lie parallel to the surface.

**Nappy:** These are small corkscrew curls that are tight and kinky.

**Also important, CURL SIZE:** The diameter of curl formations. **Small** - about 3/16", **Medium** - about 1/4", **Large** - about 5/16"

**And, CURL DEPTH:** Depth in a curl is the distance from the skin surface, giving any birth coat its third dimension.

**Deep** ∞∞ The curl is in the form of an oval with the long axis at right angles to the skin. **Normal** ∞∞ The depth of the curl is approximately the same as its width. **Pressed** ∞ ~ When the long axis of the curl is parallel to the surface, depth is subnormal.

**2. LUSTER:** Luster is a matter of light reflection of two kinds—one coming from the individual fiber and the other from the curl locks and pelt as a whole. High luster is apparent even away from sunlight.

Can be **High Good Average Low**

*Karakul fur fiber has smooth scalation, capable of reflecting much light. Woolly fiber has rough, uneven scales, does not reflect much light.*

**3. TEXTURE:** The effect caused by **size of the fibers, not density** (another category). Texture is due to fiber size, smaller being the most silky. Stroke the lamb's coat from the rump to head. If the feeling falls between two, adjoin terms, e.g. silky/strong

**Silky** - Fibers are small in diameter; very soft feel to the birth coat. Lambs can feel almost slippery.

**Strong-** Fibers are a bit larger in diameter; coat has a feel of strength and often lacks a metallic luster present in the silky/soft coat

**Coarse-** Fibers are large and the birth coat feels a bit rough, although it may have luster.

**Harsh** - Fibers are very large; the birth coat feels almost wiry and lacks pliability; it may or may not have luster and may have kemp

**Wooly** - Fibers are of small diameter, crimpy, and soft, but lack curl forming ability and have no luster.

**4. PATTERN:** This is the **arrangement of the curls** that gives the general style of the birth coat (not curl type).

**Geographic** - Pattern resembling a relief map of mountainous country with plateaus, valleys and hills.

**Moiré** - Or water silk; shallow, wavy pattern, often very lustrous. Curls become tighter, more distinct up to 10 days, rarely 2+weeks

**Ribbed** - Long pipe curls follow more or less parallel lines at right angles to the center line.

**Corrugated** - Shorter pipe curls that are quite uniform in length, frequently stacked along the spine

**Horseshoe** - Pipe curls formed in a semi-circle over the back with the open end towards neck or tail (rare)

**Monotonous** - Lacks any definite pattern, uninteresting. **Slight** - Small in amount or extent.

**5. DEVELOPMENT:** The number of **days it takes curls to unravel** is stage of development; defines birth coat maturity, fiber length

**Broadtail:** 10 days to 2+ weeks before curls open. *Very short* stage; curls and waves get more pronounced up to a week after birth, then remain for another 3-6 days. Very short fibers can take 10+ days before opening, sometimes longer; water silks/moirés

**Persian Broadtail:** 5-8 days before curls open; *Short or shallow* stage **Persian Lamb:** 2-4 days curls start to open; *Normal* stage

**Half Persian:** Fairly long fiber; over developed curls; curls are starting to or have already opened.

**Caracul:** *Very long stage*; usually continuous corkscrew curls unrelieved by secondary fiber; a term for crossbred lamb birth coats.

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Two other important birth coat attributes:

6. CARRY: This is the extent to which the main pattern covers the whole birth coat. Some birth coats 'run out', others will change in pattern and texture from place to place, usually indicative of fleece type changes on adults.

Excellent - The pattern covers the whole birth coat including the neck, down the thighs and the belly.

Good - The pattern covers much of the birth coat, but the thighs, neck and belly 'run out' or are different. **Poor** - The main pattern covers a portion of the lamb, then changes dramatically on thighs, neck, belly. Chances are the adult fleece type will not be uniform.

7. DENSITY: Density is the total number of fibers per unit of birth coat surface. The higher the count, the less space between fibers and (frequently, but not always) the finer the coat. Density is determined by feel and touch. **High (thick)** - The birth coat feels firm and springy. **Average** - Soft but springy. **Low (thin)** - Coat feels soft and shallow.

Discussions, photos in [The Karakul Handbook-Selecting and Breeding Karakuls for Fur Improvement](#), Lowry Hagerman 1951, available through the Alliance

Enter comments on the Lamb birth coat: line of the Registration Application

Drafted by KSAR Registrar Deborah

karakulshepherds.org

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Initially Designed by Deborah Y. Hunter-Simon, Shepherds of Goose Pass Farm, Springport, MI Feb 1997

Redesigned