

Why Register and a bit on How

The foundation of the American Karakul is grounded in the lack of uniformity in the original Karakul importations, 1908 to 1929. Introductions of other breeds, followed by significant linebreeding for Persian lamb birth coat traits, have made American Karakul sheep unique in the world.

Following the fur industry collapse, remaining Karakul stock moved into types of *Traditional Flock* management systems. Some were totally self-contained, others brought in outside rams every few years. Many became long-term isolated flocks during this period of separation and re-purposing. Later, some flocks were defined as sub-populations that had been isolated from one another for several generations and had become more genetically distinct. Designated as a Bloodline, these unique flocks are usually named for the shepherd or farm in which they are, or were, located. (see **Bloodlines** page)

Traditional management systems have characterized Karakul breeding for centuries. Still practiced today, they are almost always defined by periods of multi-sire mating. Within these flocks the Alliance encourages true-to-type *selective* breeding for four Karakul traits that define the breed—Persian lamb birth coat, a broadtail, refined head, and a sloped-rump topline as described in the *Breed Standard*.

Even if sire and dam are unknown, Karakuls *intended as breeding stock* should be considered for registration so they may genetically contribute to the breed through the KSAR Flock book. For individual sheep, new to the Registry, a brief history of the originating flock is shared with the Registrar. The history is written and kept in Alliance records, including original sources of stock acquisition. Sheep should present the Karakul *Standard* of characteristics that is bolstered by records and oral histories of sheep trades. Through recorded registrations a history of ancestors will develop.

With enough known ancestors, registrations will contain pedigrees, a written history of the sheep's background. Vigilant breeders will study these pedigrees when making breeding decisions, striving to carefully select the best Karakuls to reproduce specific qualities and characteristics suited to their operation and location. Over a period of time individual registrations with their photos capture the history of a flock, visually guiding breeders on evaluation of breeding goals.

By registering high-quality individuals, their genetics remain within the breed, reinforcing specific traits that could provide a lasting legacy to influence Karakul sheep for generations.

Other thoughts on the importance of registering

Why Registration Matters, Alison Martin, PhD, Livestock Conservancy News, Autumn 2013
<https://livestockconservancy.org/index.php/heritage/internal/breed-registration>

Why Buy and Keep Registered Cattle? Pat White Courtesy of the American Highland Cattle Assn.
<https://www.highlandcattleusa.org/content/Why%20Buy%20and%20Keep%20Registered%20Cattle.pdf>

Another great read:

Managing Breeds for a Secure Future: Strategies for Breeders and Breed Associations. By Phillip Spontenberg and Donald E. Bixby 2007. Pittsboro, North Carolina: American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (2013 named The Livestock Conservancy, TLC)