

COLORS and MARKINGS of NORTH AMERICAN FINNSHEEP

In determining the color of a lamb it is important to examine pigmentation of the skin and tongue as well as wool color. Since the appearance of wool color may also change with age, length of fleece, and sun exposure it is best to record color at birth and again at several weeks of age.

WHITE: Actually white is a dominant genetic pattern which prevents the expression of all other colors and patterns. The lamb will display white wool, pink tongue, pink skin, and hooves which are white, black, or streaked.

SOLID COLORS: All sheep are either genetically black or brown. Modifying genes can cause the wool to grey or become light brown with age.

Black is dominant to brown. Black lambs display black wool, black hair on legs and face, black tongue and skin.

Brown is recessive to black. Brown lambs display brown wool (light, medium, or dark hues), brown hair on legs and face, liver colored tongue and reddish skin.

DILUTE PATTERNS: Dilution in Finns is a controlled loss of pigmentation in the fiber shaft and skin. Fiber tips retain the birth color as the new wool growth becomes paler in color until the process is complete, usually after the 6th to 8th month of age.

Grey lambs are born with black wool. Fawn lambs are brown at birth.

BADGERFACE PATTERN: The badgerface pattern is visible at birth. In Black Badgerface lambs the underside of the jaw, the throat, brisket, belly, legs, and under the tail are all black. Upper parts of the body (fleece areas) are light to medium grey. Ears are black inside and badger stripes are visible along the sides of the face. At birth there may be tan spots in the fleece area resulting from pheomelanin which disappear as the lamb gets older.

Brown Badgerface lambs are marked in the same way, but with the darker pigmentation showing as brown and the lighter fleece area showing as a paler fawn color.

The Badgerface pattern is recessive to White, dominant to Solid Color, and co-dominant with the Dilute pattern.

COLORS and MARKINGS in NORTH AMERICAN FINNSHEEP.....continued

PIEBALD MARKINGS: Piebald is a recessive marking which results in irregular white spots on the fleece portion of a colored sheep. The appearance can vary between large areas of color and small dotted areas of ticking (referred to as Dalmation spotting), or a combination of both types. It can exist in common with any other color or pattern except white. Areas of pink skin produce the white wool while the darker fleece grows from either grey skin (black/white piebald) or liver colored skin (brown/white piebald). Tongues generally are pink if the face displays a white blaze. If the face is spotted the tongue often will reflect the color of the sheep with spots as well. Since Piebald is not an actual pattern, the markings on each sheep may vary considerably.

HST or HEAD, SOCKS, & TAIL: This more recently defined marking is commonly found in North American Finnsheep (although not so in Finland's Landrace sheep). It is represented by white markings on the head, legs, and /or tail of an otherwise solid colored Finnsheep. Facial blazes, crowns, and panda eye spots are typical of this marking. It should not be confused with Piebald (which displays patches of white and color in the fleece areas as well).

WHITE FINNS

VELIRAF FINNSHEEP





GREY LIGHTHOUSE FARM



BLACK LITTLE RED OAK FARM



FAWN- 8 wks (CTR) TRIMBURFIELD FARM



BROWN STILLMEADOW FINNSHEEP



HST- LITTLE RED OAK FARM



HST



BLACK BADGERFACE - STILLMEADOW FINNSHEEP



PIEBALD-LITTLE RED OAK FARM



PIEBALD



BROWN PIEBALD – STILLMEADOW FINNSHEEP