



Why I raise Katahdins

Katahdins are an American breed of hair sheep: the best "all-around" hair sheep in terms of fitness, growth, and carcass. Development of the breed began in the late 1950's when Michael Piel began crossing sheep he imported from the Caribbean with various British breeds, especially the Suffolk. His goal was to combine the hair coat, prolificacy, and hardiness of the Virgin Island sheep with the conformation and growth of wool sheep. He succeeded. He named his new breed Katahdin after Mt. Katahdin in Maine.



Today, Katahdins are one of the most popular breeds of sheep in the US, both commercially and in terms of purebred registrations and transfers. They are especially popular in the eastern half of the US. Half the lambs sold at New Holland Sales Stables (in PA) are now hair sheep.

Katahdins excel in maternal traits: early puberty, prolificacy, mothering ability, milk production, and lamb vigor.



Compared to wool sheep, Katahdins are more resistant and resilient to worm parasites.



Different colored lambs are fun.



No shearing
No docking

Katahdins cross well with other breeds to produce terminal market lambs or composite ewes.



The Katahdin breed is a leader in the use of estimated breeding values, including genomic-enhanced EBVs. It is the first breed with EBVs for parasite resistance (FEC).