



#### NUMBERS

650 ewes and a great number of F1 Romanov

#### MATERNAL QUALITIES

Prolificacy: 2.830 lambing in Sept/October; rising up to 3.50 lambing in March.

Average weight at 30 days of male lamb, born a twin : 9.5 kg

#### MEAT QUALITIES

Average weight of rams: 85 kg

Average weight of ewes : 60 to 70 kg

# Romanov

## ORIGINS AND NATURAL APTITUDES

The Romanov possesses **one of the highest rates of prolificacy** of any breed. But this hardy sheep boasts other breeding qualities too, such as: all year round **good fertility, a highly developed maternal instinct, hardiness, lambs that are vigorous** as soon as they are born and **good milk production**, easily rearing two lambs. All its qualities as a purebred can be found in females crossed with Romanov blood.

The **Romanov ewe** is fertile in all seasons and **can go to the ram from the age of 7 months onwards** provided that a rigorous production strategy is adopted with, very importantly, **feed management adapted to its needs**.

The **Romanov males** are fertile very young and can serve their mothers from 70 days so it is important to wean them early and castrate the males. Because of this early sexual keenness the

**Romanov ram** is often used as 'a **teaser**' ram, a ram which has been vasectomized, in order to **synchronise flocks in a traditional system**. In meat breeds the presence of the teaser ram induces ovulation in the **ewes extending the natural breeding cycle** and producing fat lambs all year round.

## BREEDING PROGRAMME

The **top 30% ewes**, the most prolific and with the highest milk production, are used for **breeding purebred** replacement stock. The aim is for a ewe to produce twin lambs at the first lambing and regularly produce triplets subsequently. The top males are brought into the ram **evaluation centre** to select the best genetic potential. They are sold on reservation.

## CROSSBREEDING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

**Large scale crossbreeding** : The organisation of the crossbreeding of the ROMANOV breed has much in common with the FINN. The females of these two breeds are served by a ram from a meat breed and the progeny are all fattened for the meat trade. This technique **means that lambs of a reasonable conformation can be produced and at the same time retain a profitable level of productivity**. The resulting meat weight produced per ewe per year is high.

In a large flock the 3rd lamb is often reared artificially.

**Crossbreeding in two stages**: The first stage is to produce a **crossbred female « F1 »** with better conformation than the purebred ROMANOV (or FINN) and **more prolific than the local breed**. This half bred female F1 can be obtained :

- either by crossing the ROMANOV (or FINN) ewe with a local breed of ram ; this way the « F1 » can be produced quicker.

- or from the male ROMANOV (or FINN) with a ewe of a local breed.

At the second stage, the « F1 » females produced, are put to a ram of a meat breed with the aim of producing fat lambs « F2 » for the meat trade. The **carcass weight of « F2 » lambs** is generally between **17 and 19 kg**, graded U and R on the EUROP grid table. This two staged cross breeding is the system used most widely with prolific breeds.

It is the **diffusion of the F1 females, ROMANOV – ILE DE FRANCE** cross, which is the most popular. Purebred male and female ROMANOVs are only produced to order, with reservations being made before the females are served. If there is no reservation of purebreds, the breeder produces F1 which are in great demand on the national market. .



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