



# Walachian sheep in the Czech Republic

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## HISTORY

Origin of the walachian sheep is closely connected with Walachs (Romanian) colonization of the Carpathian Mountains.

Westward migration of the Walachs ended in the 16th century in the Silesian and Moravian Beskids Mountains – northwestern rim of the Carpathians.

Walachian shepherds brought along their typical habits, architecture, sheep production system and sheep population, which remained in this mountain range and developed under local conditions into an independent breed.



migration



Wlachian sheep, year 1955,  
live-weight 38,5 kg



Bohm, J. Die Schafzucht, Berlin 1883

### Walachian sheep history milestones

13th-16th century – walachian colonization

2nd half of the 20th century – program of massive crossing of walachian sheep population in former Czechoslovakia with foreign sheep breeds.

1982 – Improved Walachian was certified as new sheep breed

1980s – two enthusiasts, **Doc. Bora Čumilvski** and **Ing. Petr Šimeček**, collected few remnant original walachian sheep

1990s – Swiss foundation **Pro Specie Rara** realized the preservation program for walachian sheep in the Czech Republic, gene reserve of the walachian sheep was established in Germany

2000 – Walachian sheep was included into national animal genetic resource conservation programme, breeding book was established

2004 – Club of Walachian Sheep Breeders was instituted

## CHARACTERISTICS

Walachian sheep is multiple purpose breed. Traditionally the main product was milk for production of cheese (eg. bunc, bryndza, oštěpek, parenica).

Sheep manifest vivid temperament. They are shy, alert, nearly exhibiting the character of wild animals.

They are well adapted to wet mountain climate.

Fleece structure makes them very resistant against cold and high precipitation.

Walachian sheep are good walkers and they are able to utilize poor mountain pastures.



### Appearance

**Body size** - low to medium sized, ram weight: 55-70 kg, ewe weight: 40-55 kg

**Head** – noble, with narrow jaws, short ears situated horizontally, straight nose in ewes and roman nose in rams.

**Horns** – rams: well developed spiral horns, ewes: hornless or with fine corkscrew-like horns

**Neck** – long and making the head very movable during grazing of hardly accessible terrains

**Legs** – slim with small but very hard hoofs

**Wool** – double coated, with long coarse hairs (up to 250 µm) and short (15-25% of hair length) very fine underhair (12-38 µm)

**Color** – mostly white with black or brown spots on non-woolly parts of head and legs, animals with black or gray coat color were less numerous



Table 1:

Average performances of walachian sheep in recorded flocks

Trait	Units	year				
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Daily gains	g/day	149	174	149	192	199
Litter size	lambs	1.48	1.33	1.42	1.51	1.55



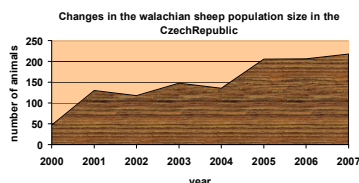
## PRESERVATION

### IN SITU programme

Since the year 2000 the walachian sheep in the Czech Republic are supported by the national budget.

The number of supported animals in the year 2007 was 208 ewes and 10 rams in 16 flocks.

Selection and exchange of breeding animals are coordinated.



### Regeneration of black variety of walachian sheep



1920s



2007



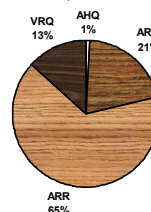
### EX SITU programme

Semen doses of 18 walachian rams are conserved.

Additionally DNA samples of 165 animals are stored.



### Relative allelic frequencies of the PrP gene



### Presentation of the walachian sheep breed and old walachian traditions

