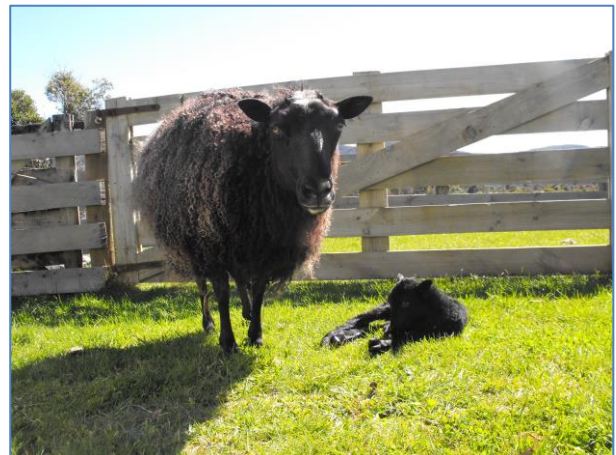


Gotland

Gotland Sheep originate from the island of Gotland in the Baltic sea, off the East Coast of Sweden. The 'modern' Gotland breed was developed in part from the gute, the horned native breed to Sweden. It is possible to get horns in 'modern' Gotlands, although it is very rare (due to selective breeding over a long time). In its native Sweden they are also called Pelt Sheep because their light and supple skin is a valued product there. They are a short tailed sheep, fine boned and of medium size. They have a black head, sometimes with white markings. Their head and legs are free from wool. Gotlands are considered a rare breed in New Zealand.

Their fleeces can range in colour from near white through to near black, most common though is varying shades of grey. The Gotland's fleece has a high luster and well-defined crimp. A fleece weighs between 2 – 3 kgs but as they are best shorn every 6 months expect half that weight at shearing. The array of silver and grey shades make the fleeces highly desirable to spinners, knitters, felters and weavers. Gotland wool ranges from 29 to 33 microns. The lamb fleeces can be as fine as 20 micron. The wool has become world renowned since Stansborough's Gotland wool was used to make the Magic Elvin Cloak in the movie "Lord of the Rings" and Gandalf's Magical Silver Scarf in the movie "The Hobbit".

Gotlands are known for being very hardy and prolific, twins are quite common and they are excellent mothers. They are a friendly and inquisitive breed and when handled well are easier than many other breeds to manage. The lambs are born black but normally turn various shades of grey/silver as they mature.



GOTLAND

