



Dorper news.

Judge: Mr. John Dell, South Africa

Message from Mr. John Dell.
"I raise Dorpers on our family farm, Hounslow, near the town of Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape province of Southern Africa. My stud was established by my late father in 1958 and I took over in 1978.
My farm is 3500ha and I run 800-1000 type 4 and 5 Dorper ewes.

In addition to my Dorper Stud, I also raise Savanna



Mr. John Dell (left) with Graff Reinet his top selling ram in 2009.

All photographs of dorpers reproduced by kind permission of John Dell Stud

Goats, an indigenous species of white goat. Our annual rainfall is an unreliable 400mm and temperatures vary from 4° C to 40° C creating hardy and very diverse vegetation, from Valley Bushveld to open Karoo and Grassveld.

I have been an inspector since 1983 and have judged all the National Shows since 1986.

I served as a member of the Dorper Council, from 1986 till 2007 - 21 years.

John Dell Dorpers stud.



2008 marked the 50th anniversary of the John Dell Dorpers stud.

This Stud has been in existence since 1958 and meticulous records have been kept for each of the 9300 type 4 and 5 Ewes since the inception of the Stud.

My Stud is one of the largest and oldest in the world and proudly takes an active part in all Dorper activities. John Dell Dorpers are known for their excellent size and good bone formation. Our Dorpers are extensively bred, hardy and adapt well to all conditions. As there are no pastures on Hounslow, all our sheep are reared and grazed extensively.

I mate all my ewes at 10 months and thereafter try to lamb all ewes 3 times in 2 years.

The ewes will be re-mated when their lambs are about 2 months old. My lambing percentage is 150 and all lambs are raised extensively. Ewe lambs are weaned at 4 months. Ram lambs are weaned at 3 months, and in an average year weigh approximately 38kg's.

At weaning all ram lambs are feed-lotted until they weigh approximately 40 kg's. At this stage they are screened. The culls are then sold and the remaining rams are raised extensively until they are 12 months old.



John Dell Dorpers stud cont.

Three mating practices are used on Hounslow, natural mating being the most popular. I have a portion of the ewes artificially inseminated yearly and similarly make use of frozen semen. To keep a thorough record for each ewe, each one is mated individually.

The Dorper is a very fertile sheep and can be mated at any time of the year.

They have a long breeding season and have excellent mothering qualities.



Magic, a fantastic young breeding ram with strong legs and excellent muscling

Dorpers for Kenya by Sebastian Kariuki

The sheep industry in Kenya cannot be contemplated and be complete without the role of the Dorper. Other sheep breeds in Kenya are Corriedale, Romneys, Hampshire Downs and Merino. It must be noted that all these breeds are exotic and except for the Dorpers, the rest are reared in the high potential high rainfall areas of Kenya. Also unlike the Dorper, the rest are reared for both wool and mutton production with the Merino producing the best wool quality while the Hampshire Down are best adapted for mutton and lamb production. Their wool is of secondary importance.

The Dorper breed, characterized by a white body and black head was developed in the Republic of South Africa. The process of developing and stabilizing the breed was by intensive selection within a succession of first crosses between the Dorset horn rams and Blackhead Persian ewe and hence a billiungal coupling of the first syllable of the names of the parents thus DORSET HORN RAM + PERSIAN EWES = DORPER.

The breed has now been in existence for 60 years. The Dorper was developed to adapt and thus perform under different conditions from

drought to cold and wet conditions. With our vast areas of our country lying within the arid and semi arid lands the Dorper is the breed of choice to convert the little vegetation therein into meat and reduce the regular shortage of food in these areas.

Mr & Mrs. John Dell the owners of John Dell Dorpers in South Africa have kindly accepted to judge Dorpers, during the Brookside Livestock Breeders Show & Sale 2009. What a wonderful opportunity to hear what such an outstanding Dorper breeder and judge will say about Dorpers. The Dorper breeders/farmers of Kenya should not forego this opportunity and come and see the Dorpers at their best.

