



Terminal Sire Breed Comparison

This document provides a comprehensive performance comparison of key terminal sire sheep breeds. It outlines commercial strengths and weaknesses, helping guide decision-making based on production system, land type, and market requirements. All scores reflect typical breed performance.

Summary

Hampshire Down – With maximum scores for growth rate and eating quality, the Hampshire Down stands out as one of the strongest all-round terminal sires. Exceptional lamb vigour, hardiness, and rapid finishing make it ideal for grass-based, low-input systems. Carcasses are consistent with excellent flavour, suitable for both commercial and direct meat sales.

Texel – Industry leader for carcass conformation and lean yield. Performs well in systems with moderate to high input levels and markets targeting top-grade carcasses. Modern genetics continue to improve lambing ease.

Suffolk – Known for high growth rates and strong maternal value in crossbred daughters, making it attractive for flocks retaining replacements. Larger birthweights require moderate lambing supervision.

Charollais – One of the easiest-lambing terminal sires due to fine bone structure. Lambs finish quickly on good-quality grass with excellent feed efficiency. Best suited for kinder, drier land.

Beltex – Exceptional carcass shape and conformation, ideal for premium markets and butcher trade. Growth is slower and lambing requires more attention, making it better for intensive finishing systems.

Breed Comparison Table

Trait / Breed	Hampshire Down	Texel	Suffolk	Charollais	Beltex
Growth Rate	10	9	9	8	6
Finishing Off Grass	9	7	7	8	5
Carcass Conformation	8	10	8	8	10
Carcass Fat Control	8	9	8	8	7
Eating Quality	10	8	8	8	9
Lambing Ease	9	7	7	9	5
Lamb Vigour	10	8	8	9	7
Hardiness / Outdoor Performance	9	7	7	6	6
Low-Input System Suitability	9	6	7	7	5
Maternal Value of Crossbred Daughters	8	7	9	6	4
Overall Score	9/10	8.5/10	8.5/10	8/10	7/10