

JSBA INSPECTION COMMITTEE

PRACTICES TO ADDRESS DIFFICULT REGISTRATION DECISIONS

10/26/2022

Background

Registration of most Jacobs through the Jacob Sheep Breeders Association (JSBA) is routine and non-controversial. However, occasional atypical situations can be problematic both for the inspection committee, and for members of the Association.

Registration can be more difficult when members do not have full background information for their animal; for example, where a sire is unknown or unregistered. Likewise, where a sheep from a registered flock does not clearly meet the requirements of the Breed Standard, both the inspectors and the owner often struggle to reach the correct decision. The inspection committee, reluctantly, must fail some animals which do not meet the Standard and we understand that this situation is difficult for the owner, particularly where the failure of a ram prohibits registration of his progeny under our current procedures.

JSBA has always encouraged diversity within the breed, and among flocks. The Breed Standard is very broad and supports a wide variety of animals. However, we know that various traits - such as percentage of color and wool texture among others - can drift over time beyond the endpoints set by the Breed Standard, resulting in gradual modification of the historic Jacob breed. This has happened intentionally in British Jacobs, where size and structure to support a meat market have been encouraged. American Jacobs are currently the best representative of the historic Jacob breed.

Dealing with atypical registration issues is challenging in part given two goals of the Association that can pull in opposite directions: (1) encouraging genetic diversity to the extent possible; and (2) conserving the heritage of the Jacob breed - excluding known crossbred individuals (i.e. "non-Jacob genetics") from the flock

book. JSBA maintains an open flock book with the full support of the membership; yet we know that sheep from an unknown background can introduce non-Jacob genetics. We are also aware that non-Jacob traits may be less apparent to less-experienced owners.

The purposes of this document are to support consistent and transparent decision making; to clearly outline current procedures and practices for current and future inspectors; and to assist members in completing the registration process. We also wish to explain the basis for these procedures, as we continue to balance the heritage goals of JSBA, while maintaining flexibility in supporting the goals and decisions of flock owners.

Practices for inspectors and Jacob owners for various situations

The JSBA application for registration requests the information needed by the inspectors to reach a decision regarding the registration of each animal. This includes names of the owner and breeder, birth date, and name/registration number/breeder of sire and dam, grandsires and granddams. This basic information along with photos – and for rams, wool samples - is submitted by the owner/breeder. Where any of this information is unavailable, the owner should include additional supporting information depending on the situation as noted below to support evaluation of the sheep.

Registration will be more timely if the owner anticipates the needs of the inspection committee and submits needed supporting materials together with regular registration form. The inspectors may contact the owner directly to request additional information – e.g. photos of the sire and/or dam if they are unregistered—but it may not be obvious to the inspector what is available. If an animal is failed and the owner believes that a case may be made for registration, additional information may still be submitted through an appeal of the failure. However, an appeal process will by necessity prolong the registration process, and thus is to be avoided.

I. When the owner has no background information on the animal (e.g. as when purchased at auction, through Craigslist, or similar sources):

The owner should provide: Multiple good clear photos of the animal as needed to show horn position, markings, and other Jacob characteristics with at least some in full fleece. Extra photos should be included as needed to fully document the individual animal.

An estimate of age, based on teeth or other factors.

Any other evidence that supports the purebred character of the sheep.

Inspectors will: Evaluate the animal against the standard based solely on its own merits. If passed, the animal will be recorded in the FF generation.

II. When the sire of a sheep submitted for registration is unknown; or where the sheep being registered was obtained from another breeder who did not register that sire – that is, where the owner of the Jacob submitted for registration was not responsible for registration of its sire:

a. Breeding mistakes - ewe was exposed to multiple rams.

Owner should: Describe the situation, and provide information on possible sires, e.g. registration status. If potential sires are not yet registered (e.g. young ram lambs) owner should provide photos of potential sires if available.

Inspectors will: Request additional information from the owner as needed to complete evaluation of the animal.

Complete evaluation of the animal against the JSBA Breed Standard, taking into account information regarding the possible sires. If passed, these sheep will be entered in the FF generation.

- b. Sheep purchased from an established but unregistered Jacob flock (i.e. owner of the animal submitted for registration was not responsible for registration of the sire).

Owner should: Identify the source of the sheep (flock name, location, breeder's name), and provide other pertinent information.

If the animal's birthdate is not known, provide an estimate of age based on teeth or other information.

Provide photographs of the sire and dam if available.

If multiple animals from the same source are submitted for registration, provide the registrar with a list of animals by age, so that the oldest (and sire/dam of others) will be evaluated first.

Inspectors will: If necessary, contact the owner, to answer questions or to request additional information needed to complete evaluation of the animal, e. g. extra photographs.

Complete evaluation of the animal(s) against the JSBA Breed Standard, taking into account information regarding the flock of origin, and photos of the sire and dam as available. If passed, these sheep will be entered in the FF generation.

III. When the breeder of an animal submitted for registration also bred and owns (or owned) the sire, and that sire was not registered:

Generally speaking, lambs from failed sires are not registered. This is based on the assumption that unacceptable faults of the sire would likely be passed on to the sire's offspring. The statement on the registration

application that “*Progeny from failed rams cannot be registered*” was also added in part to clarify that “upbreeding” – which would allow introduction of sheep that are known not to be purebred Jacobs - is not allowed.¹

This practice is in the interest of all owners, who naturally seek the best bloodlines for their flocks. If the owner submits an application for a lamb sired by an unregistered ram from his or her flock:

The owner should: Provide photographs and a wool sample (if available) for the sire and explain why the sire was not registered.

Inspectors will: Evaluate the *sire* against the Breed Standard, taking into account the reasons that the sire was not registered. Determine through conversations with the owner whether registration of the sire should be pursued.

If the sire clearly *would have failed* registration if submitted, then progeny may not be registered unless an exception is made (see following section).

IV. Exceptions.

a. When a ram used for breeding dies prior to registration.

Owner should: Provide all information on the regular registration application form, including photos and wool sample if available. Note with application that

¹ Upbreeding is a recognized practice associated with the establishment of some new breeds in the U.S. through the importation of ram semen and artificial insemination of another breed, followed by crossing of offspring until a high percentage of the genetics of the new breed is achieved. This practice is not considered necessary or desirable for American Jacobs, which are already a well-established breed.

ram is deceased.

Include reference to this sire in future applications for registration of progeny.

Inspectors will: Determine whether the ram meets the requirements of the Breed Standard, and whether the ram should be registered posthumously.

b. When an owner uses a ram for breeding, and the ram subsequently fails the registration procedure.

Experienced breeders are aware that it may be difficult to determine whether a young ram will meet the standard at maturity, and should be able to evaluate whether it is wise to use a particular young ram for this purpose. However, the Committee recognizes that inexperienced breeders may use a ram lamb for breeding before becoming knowledgeable in this regard.

Owner should: Discuss the failure with the Inspector Chair and/or the Registrar.

Indicate how many potentially registerable ewe lambs resulted from this breeding.

Inspectors should: Evaluate the severity of the faults that resulted in a

failure of the ram. If **EWE** lambs submitted for registration do not exhibit the same fault, and the ram was generally typical of the Jacob breed without signs of cross breeding, the inspectors may allow registration **ONLY of the ewe lamb progeny of this ram** for this first breeding only.

The sire will not be registered, and future progeny may not be registered.

Ewes registered under this provision will be qualified in the FF category.

- c. Other unusual circumstances where the owner feels that registration of a ram is merited.

The Inspection Committee cannot anticipate every atypical situation, and recognizes the need for flexibility in unique circumstances. If an owner believes that a ram merits registration in spite of one or more unacceptable traits, the owner may submit additional supporting information with the original application for registration, or appeal a failure. In either event, the owner is encouraged to contact the Inspector Chair or the Registrar in advance to discuss the situation.

Exceptions should be considered only for otherwise outstanding individuals, not simply to reflect owner preferences. Exceptions will not be made for known or visibly crossbred animals, or for rams having genetic traits that may clearly be deleterious to progeny.

