



Prized by hand spinners, Icelandic fleeces sell for as much as \$27 per lb., with pelts selling for \$90 to \$130. Breeding stock sells for \$700 to \$1,000.

### “THEY COME IN 17 DIFFERENT COLORS AND PATTERNS”

## Colorful Icelandic Sheep May Catch On Fast

“They have beautiful soft fleece that comes in 17 different patterns and colors,” says Susan Mongold, Miles City, Montana, who along with her husband Rex, has the largest flock of Icelandic sheep in the U.S.

Still rare in North America, Icelandic sheep were developed years ago in Iceland as a meat breed. They’re still the only breed in that country.

“Icelandic sheep are not a remnant of a once thriving breed, but a viable commercial breed that numbers 487,000 in Iceland and accounts for 50 percent of the total meat in the diet of the Icelandic people,” says Susan.

The 17 colors and patterns include snow white, inky black, cream, tans, and browns ranging from mocha to dark chocolate. They also come as pintos (black and white or brown and white).

The breed was brought to Iceland in the 9th and 10th century by early Viking settlers. The ancient ancestors of these naturally short-tailed animals dominated Scandinavia and the British Isles 1,200 to 1,300 years ago. Because Iceland was relatively isolated, the sheep that were originally brought there remained virtually unchanged.

The Mongolds say there are plenty of reasons to raise these medium sized sheep. “They have excellent meat conformation, produce colorful, lustrous, versatile fleece, have few lambing problems, mature early, and produce twins reliably. But best of all, they thrive on grass and hay alone,” says Susan. “This breed is ideal for pasture lambing, and the lambs finish on grass in 4 to 5 months so they don’t have to be castrated.

“Icelandic meat is fine grained, light flavored (not strong or muttony flavored), and known worldwide for its gourmet quality. They will reach their ideal slaughter weight of 90 to 100 lbs. in 4 to 5 months. The breed

is hardy and disease resistant. Because they have naturally short tails, their tails don’t have to be docked. The ewes lamb easily, are excellent mothers and heavy milkers. The lambs are vigorous and jump up quickly to nurse and make gains of 3/4 to 1 lb. day on mother’s milk and grass alone. No creep feed is necessary. Ewes are long lived and will produce into their 13th year.

“Both rams and ewes can be horned or polled. Horned rams grow outwardly curving horns that will make a double curl as they get older. Horned ewes have a simple backward sweeping 1/2 circle curl.”

Icelandic sheep are dual coated with a long outer coat called Tog that grows to 18 in. if left to grow for one year, providing wind and rain protection; and a fine, soft, downy undercoat called Thel that provides warmth. Today Icelandic yarn is a high priced luxury fiber sold in yarn shops for ski sweater yarn and other such uses. It’s also sold as expensive hand-knitted sweaters made in Iceland from an unspun roving called lopi. The fleece is prized by hand spinners and sells for as much as \$27 per pound.

The Icelandic breed also leads the world market in quality pelts. The pelts look and feel like fur and sell for \$90 to \$130 and are used by the garment industry and interior decorators. Their fleeces have fewer follicles which produces a stronger, more pliable pelt which looks more like fur than a sheepskin.

Breeding stock sells for \$700 to \$1,000. For fleece samples and more information, send a SASE with two stamps.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rex and Susan Mongold, HC 40 Broadus Stage, Miles City, Mont. 59301 (ph 406 232-2819). For color photos and more information check their Web site at <http://www.icelandic.com>

## “Heated” Tractor Seats

A “heated” tractor seat is one of the most prized possessions in the collection of more than 700 antique implement seats owned by Willmar Tiede, LeCenter, Minn.

The aluminum seat was manufactured in the 1930’s by the Tractor Warm Seat Co., Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It had a reservoir at the center to allow heated coolant and water to circulate through it via lines connected to the tractor’s radiator and block. The bottom of the seat was also fitted with a control valve to allow the driver to regulate flow. Because the seat was constructed of aluminum, it quickly dissipated heat over the entire surface of the seat to warm one’s derriere while harvesting corn with a mounted corn picker or spreading manure in winter. Production of the seats ended in the early 1940’s when aluminum was channeled into the war effort.

Tiede acquired the seat, which had never been installed on a tractor, from another collector in Stoughton, Wis. He paid \$50 for the rare piece.

“It’s probably worth 10 times that these days because so few were produced and because aluminum is valuable as a recyclable commodity,” he says.

He’d be pleased to hear from anyone else who knows more about these unique seats.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Willmar Tiede, Rt. 2, Box 229, Le Center, Minn. 56057 (ph 507 357-4815).



Willmar Tiede displays his rare heated tractor seat, a prized possession in his more-than-700 piece collection.

(If you’re interested in antique cast iron implement seats, there’s an organization just for you: Cast Iron Seat Collectors Association, Rt. 2, Box 38, Le Center, Minn. 56057-9610; ph 507 357-6142).



Model A car kept the original rear axle, 20-in. wheels, and frame. The whitewalls came off a Ford car, the radiator from a Model A, and the seat from a Ford 8N.

## Model “A” Truck Turned Into “Doodlebug”

There’s a bit of unusual history to this “Doodlebug” tractor, which actually started out as a Model A truck, says owner Harry Coldiron of Lucasville, Ohio.

It all started in 1937 when Fred Richards of Xenia, Ohio, converted a 1930 or 1931 Model A truck into a tractor. He replaced the front axle with one from a Model A car and kept the original rear axle, 20-in. wheels, and frame. The 16-in. white sidewall front tires came off a 1935 Ford car. The radiator came from a 1930 Ford Model A car and the seat from a Ford 8N tractor. The rig had the truck’s original 4-speed transmission in the rear, with a 3-speed car transmission in front of it.

Richards ended up trading the rig to someone for a horse. Later it was traded again for a mule. Finally, in 1969, Harry Coldiron obtained the tractor from a coin collector by trading some Mercury dimes and a 2-headed quarter. In 1990 the tractor was rebuilt. Harry

is a member of the Old Timers Club and has been bringing the tractor to the Xenia Antique Power Show for the past few years.

“A lot of older people still remember using these kinds of tractors in the 1940s, a time when horses were being phased out,” says Harry. “During World War II you could hardly get a tractor, and young men coming back from the war had no money or gas for cars because it was being rationed. However, they could buy gas for tractors. So they started building a lot of ‘Doodlebug’ tractors by cutting down old trucks or cars. The modified rigs could be used to pull a horse-drawn disk, mower, wagon, wheat drill, or corn planter – most anything you could do with two horses you could do with these tractors without having to give them a break.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Harry Coldiron, 3211 Houston Hollow Rd., Lucasville, Ohio 45648 (ph 740 456-4342).