

**TOPOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISATION OF THE FLEECE  
FINENESS IN STAROPLANINSKI TSIGAI SHEEP**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of the study was to prepare a topographic description of the fleece fineness of Staroplaninski Tsigai sheep. Five trial groups of 60 animals each were formed on reproductive farms in several regions of northern Bulgaria where the breed was created. The control group included pedigree Tsigai, Priazovski type. The staple thickness was measured at four sites: the flank, the thigh, shoulder, back, neck and abdomen of sheep 2.5 and 4.5 years of age. From 40 animals, randomly chosen from all the groups, 200 fibres were measured for diameter per animal. In all the groups, the thickest fibres were measured on the thigh, and the finest ones on the neck. The mean values among the groups varied within 29 to 34  $\mu\text{m}$  and could be graded 48-50 according to the Bradford system, and that is the optimal staple quality for the Tsigai breed.

**Keywords:** *Staroplaninski Tsigai sheep breed, fleece, fibre, neck, shoulder.*