



How do sheep support the UK countryside?

The UK is made up of a huge range of terrains and landscapes, playing host to over 90 different sheep breeds and crosses.



The design of our countryside naturally supports sheep

The UK sheep industry is set out in a 'stratified system'. This system is unique to the UK, and perfectly designed to play on the strengths of different breeds, and the environments and habitats of our hill, upland and lowland terrain.

Sheep support wildlife and plant biodiversity

As well as creating beautiful landscapes, sheep also support wildlife and plant biodiversity. Without sheep, our grassland, and upland land in particular, would become overtaken by scrub and coarse vegetation, becoming less valuable to many types of plants, small mammals and ground nesting birds, and at risk of environmental damage by wildfires.



Sheep maintain our countryside and landscapes

More than 40% of our breeding flock is based in the uplands of the UK - and it is no accident that our strong sheep areas are also our biggest tourism areas, as sheep have created and continue to maintain our iconic landscapes.

40%

Sheep grazing improves soil quality

Around 60% of UK farmland is only suitable to grow grass. Sheep and cattle farming is the most suitable way to convert this land into healthy food that our growing population can eat. In lowland areas sheep put lots of natural nutrients back into the ground that the growing of cereals and vegetables takes out.

