

## SHEEP UNIT

Nucleus flock of Mecheri is being maintained at this station to carryout various genetic improvement programmes and to supply of superior germplasm to the farmers.

Mecheri sheep are distributed in Salem, Namakkal, Erode, Karur and parts of Dindigul and Dharmapuri districts of Tamil Nadu. The name Mecheri has been derived from its place of origin i.e., Mecheri block in Mettur taluk of Salem District. Mecheri sheep with typical morphological features are seen in Tharamangalam, Omalur, Kolathur and Mecheri blocks of Salem district.

Mecheri sheep are medium sized animals with compact body and covered with short hairs, which are not shorn. They are light brown in colour. The profile is slightly Roman nose. Mecheri sheep is classified under polled breeds of sheep. Both males and females are polled. The legs are medium sized, straight and medium in length, squarely set under the body. The hooves are brown or black in colour. Udder is not well developed. It is small and round, tightly attached to the belly with small conical teats placed laterally. The teats are directed slightly outward. **The special features of this breed are early sexual maturity, superior skin quality and high dressing percentage.**



Body weight (kg) of Mecheri Sheep				
Sex	Birth weight	Weaning weight	6- months weight	12 months weight
Male	2.35 ± 0.36	11.13 ± 0.20	15.67 ± 0.27	19.56 ± 0.66
Female	2.38 ± 0.22	10.10 ± 0.12	13.31 ± 0.25	15.13 ± 0.59
Overall mean	2.36 ± 0.21	10.60 ± 0.11	14.45 ± 0.19	17.21 ± 0.44