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## Evaluation of Kendrapada sheep: Champion prolific meat type sheep in India

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Data on phenotypic characters, production and reproduction performance of 1332 numbers of Kendrapada sheep, recently registered as the 42<sup>nd</sup> sheep breed in India, were collected through an in-depth monitoring survey conducted in the native tract in Odisha, India. The area is situated between 19° 87' N to 20° 96' N latitude and between 85° 79' E to 86° 76' E longitude. The climate is hot and moist sub-humid to hot and humid in nature. The average annual rainfall is around 1500 mm. Odisha is gifted with sizable population of small ruminants distributed all over the state. Kendrapada sheep has been identified as second prolific sheep breed in India, which carries *FecB* mutation, responsible for prolificacy and found in eastern coast of Bay of Bengal in Odisha, India. More than 75% of Kendrapada sheep owners possess less than half hectare of cultivable land. Only 3.31% of the farmers rearing this sheep own more than a hectare land, reflecting poor resource profiling of Kendrapada sheep farmers in the native tract. The flock size ranges from 5 to 27. Predominantly deep brown, coat color ranges from light grey to blackish grey. Both the sexes are polled. Ears are medium and little drooping. The ewe of this sheep comes to heat at around 10 to 11 months and drops its first lamb at around 15 to 16 months of age. The average lambing interval in these sheep is 8 months with gestation period of 150 days. The reproductive performance of these sheep is the uniqueness of this sheep population with more than 80% multiple births; 71% twinning, 9% triplet and 1% quadruplets. The present study reveals that the mean body weight at birth, weaning/3 months, 6 month and 12 month were 1.70±0.03, 6.76±0.04, 11.18±0.07 and 16.98±0.10 kg, respectively in males and the corresponding values for females were 1.57±0.02, 6.42±0.04, 10.84±0.06 and 16.54±0.09 kg, respectively. Adult weights were recorded as 27.33±0.12 kg and 27.19±0.11 kg, respectively in male and female sheep. Endowed with the resistance to tropical diseases, these sheep have been proving their worth under extensive system of management under hot and humid climatic conditions, contributing to the livelihood of resource poor farmers.

### Biography

Susanta Kumar Dash has completed his PhD in 2007 and presently serving as a Professor at the Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics, Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, Odisha, India. He has registered 4 cattle, 2 buffalo and one sheep breed at national level, published more than 30 papers in reputed journals and completed 14 projects on animal genetic resources of the country and serving as a Member in livestock breeding policy of Government of Odisha.

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