






Grand champion Chester County 4-H market lamb, left photo, shown by Donna MacCauley, Atglen, was purchased by Mrs. Cloud, of the Southeast National Bank of Atglen, for \$2.06 a pound. In the photo at the right are the Reserve Grand Champion lamb, shown by Bill MacCauley, and the purchaser, Bob Frame, of Vintage Sales Stables, at \$1.05 a pound.





**Ask the  
VMD**

Leon Riegel

Tim Trayer    Edgar Sheaffer

If you have a question you would like answered by Dr. Leon Riegel and Dr. Edgar Sheaffer of Valley Animal Hospital, Palmyra and Dr. Tim Trayer, Denver, send it to Ask the VMD, Box 366, Lititz, PA 17543. Questions will be kept anonymous on request.

**A reader asks:**  
Could you explain what is meant by a gray factor in breeding horses? What color or breed combination will give the most possibilities of

having a gray foal?

**P. Kauffman,**  
Pequea

**Dr. Sheaffer comments:**  
The gray factor is present in most breeds of horses and very prominent in two breeds - the Arabian and the Percheron.

The color is due to the presence of a genetic trait for gray coat color. For example, a gray horse must have at least one dominant gene for the gray color. Gray color is recessive to both bay

and chestnut coat color. It may also be recessive to brown and black.

A homozygous gray will carry two dominant genes for the coat color. Certain outstanding Arabian stallions are homozygous grays. Most of the foals born to homozygous gray parents are gray at birth or will turn gray sometime during life.

However, many Arabian horses are heterozygous for coat color. For example, a bay colored horse has a bay

phenotype (visible color) but may carry genes for both bay and gray coat color (genotype).

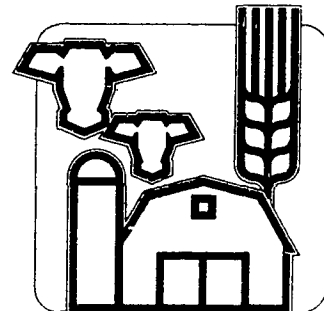
If you breed two parents with a heterozygous genotype, you have a 25 percent chance of getting the recessive color (gray) and at least a 50 percent chance of the first generation foal carrying the recessive color regardless of his phenotype.

The best parental cross for gray phenotype would be to use two gray horses especially if one parent is known to be homozygous in genotype.

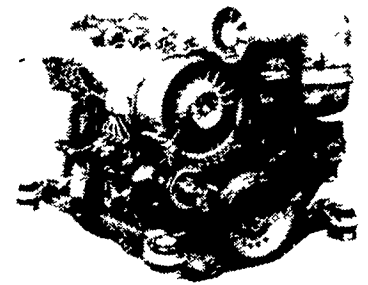
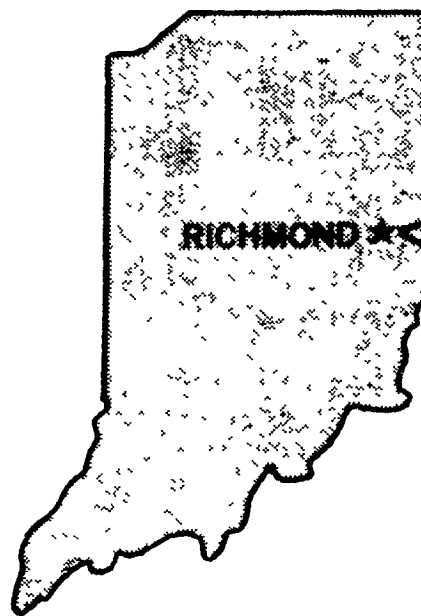
A second best cross would

be two parents, regardless of phenotype, which both had parents that were gray. In other words, all four grandparents of the foal you

are breeding for would have had gray coats. Then, at least 50 percent of the second generation foals should be gray.



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