

IS HIGHER OR WIDER BETTER?

I call it the big butt and/or skyscraper contest. It seems more and more rabbits are being shown that have one or two distinctive traits and in the end lack overall balance. From my perspective, rabbits do not have near the depth of body for their extreme width of body. Juniors are expected to have and look like their senior body counterparts.

The standard was written to describe a senior age New Zealand. This specimen shall display an image of balance from front to rear and side to side. I do not believe the pioneers of our breed intended for our junior age New Zealands to look like senior age rabbits.

Junior age rabbits are under developed or should be under developed versions of our senior age rabbits. Yet, many juniors exhibited to date already possess senior body conformation at a young age (5-6 months). If a junior looks that mature as a baby, it will surely have shoulders wider than it's hindquarters as a mature 6-8 and senior. Where is the balance?

We forget about the natural development of a rabbit. There is not an animal on earth that develops its' body parts at the same time or rate. In fact, the shoulder region of an animal is the last area of the body to develop. So why is it that we mistake the underdeveloped region (shoulders) in juniors for weak shoulders? We should recognize that our juniors should not look like a block but more like a wedge as juniors, with our goal of a slightly tapered rabbit from front to rear as a senior.

Our goal as stated in our standard is for balance. Greater emphasis for shoulder development should be in our 6-8's and seniors where maturity is expected. If we truly believe and breed rabbits to meet our standard, rarely should a true junior win Best or Best Opposite of Breed.

Is higher or wider better? In my opinion a balance