

SH 408  
Rev. '99

# 4-H Rabbit Production and Showmanship

A Guide to South Dakota 4-H  
Rabbit Production Showmanship

(Information from ARBA Guide Book and Standard)



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

College of Agricultural & Biological Sciences / U.S. Department of Agriculture

# SOUTH DAKOTA 4-H RABBIT SHOWMANSHIP GUIDELINES

## Introduction:

Youth should use their best rabbit for showmanship. Be sure the rabbit is in good show condition and in good fur condition. Toe nails should be trimmed. Your rabbit should have been worked/practiced with, so it is used to being handled. As you are doing showmanship, describe in detail the steps you are performing, using correct terms for rabbits in general and for the breed you are using.

Use a small carrier to bring rabbit to showmanship area and leave rabbit in carrier until called to bring rabbit to the table. (Judge or show official should make arrangements for a carrier.) Stop in front of the judge's table and wait until you are told to begin. Don't forget to SMILE! Be sure to tell the judge what you are doing with your rabbit while you are doing it.

1. Carry to Table      When called, bring carrier with rabbit to the table. Lift rabbit out of carrier with hand supporting rump. The opposite hand can be used to control rabbit.
2. Posing Rabbit  
(First Pose)      When you are told to begin, carefully set your rabbit down on the table. POSE your rabbit on table with LEFT ear facing judge, so judge can see ear tattoo. Describe rabbit including breed, age, variety and sex (Example: Dutch Junior Blue Doe). Using thumbs, open ear, show and read ear tattoo to the judge.
3. Show Ears      Open ears using your index and second fingers with thumb for support behind ears so that judge can see inside each ear. (You may use one finger.) Do left ear first then right ear using a 1/2 turn so right ear faces the judge. (Do not drag rabbit. Lift rabbit when turning.) Seniors should explain what markings go in right ear.
4. Top Body  
Check      PLACE your rabbit facing you and smooth its fur. Check body area with both hands for bare spots, spots in fur color, abscesses, scratches. Start at the tail and work towards neck. Feel back and both sides. Repeat, starting at neck and work toward tail. (Don't just tickle rabbit, feel it). Check back of neck for mites and scratches. Hold up ears with one hand and feel behind neck for scaly patches or scratches with the other hand. Explain body type.
5. Check Fur and  
Cleanliness  
Of Rabbit      Check for flyback or roll back fur for density and texture. Commercial fur — starting at rump area, slowly run one hand toward rabbit's head. Smooth fur back after each pass over the animal. Start back at the tail

and go all the way up to neck. Begin with judge's side first, then do top of rabbit and finally side of rabbit nearest you (same procedure for satin fur). Rex fur — do not smooth back but let fur stand upright. Angora — fluff up wool, pull out strand of wool and twist and pull until it breaks then pull out second strand and blow in air. To check for density in commercial and satin fur, blow into fur; Rex - pat fur. Check for true color and/or ring colors when it is needed.

5. Check Tail                      Check for lazy or wry tail. Hold tail straight out and let go. Pull to one side, let go and pull to other side, let go. Tail should go to normal upright position.
  
7. Under Arm Position              Start with hand on ears, and have your opposite hand supporting the rump. Lift and turn rabbit slowly upside down, while tucking it under the arm (if your right hand is on the ears, your rabbit should be under your right arm) and upside down with head towards judge. DO NOT CHANGE HANDS AT ANY TIME. Rabbit should be under your arm with your opposite hand free. Briefly drop your free hand to your side to show control. Proceed to check eyes, nose and teeth.
  
8. Show Nose                      Check nose for signs of snuffles or colds. Show nose with index finger. Check front legs for signs of matting due to colds.
  
9. Show Teeth                      Coming from above the eyes and holding sides of cheeks, use thumb and index finger to pull back on sides of mouth to expose upper and lower teeth. (Upper lip will split open. This is normal.) Pull head down with opposite hand holding ears and neck area so judge can see teeth.
  
10. Show Eyes                      Check both eyes while rabbit is under your arm. DO NOT TOUCH THE EYE. You are looking for blindness, spots, cloudiness, etc. Be sure judge can see your procedure on both eyes. If rabbit will not open eyes, let rabbit relax and their eyes will open.
  
11. Back Flip                      Exhibitor may start from under arm position and place rabbit directly on table in back flip position or exhibitor may place rabbit on table in upright position. Start back flip on table by placing one hand on ears and curve other arm around rabbit and support rump. Turn rabbit slowly and gently onto his hip area and continue to lower rabbit slowly onto its back. Keep control of rabbit at all times. When rabbit is firmly on its back, remove your hand from under rabbit's rump. Face belly toward judge.
  
12. Under Body Check              Check body for ruptures and abscesses. With your hand still on ear and neck area, feel firmly with your opposite hand all over underside of rabbit. Start at neck, under jaw, go between front legs, check chest and abdomen and between back legs. Feel gently but firmly.

13. Toenail Check      Check front nails by pushing thumb into center of paw. Push back fur with index finger if necessary to show toenail. Count four nails, one dew claw. Check for proper color of nail. Using thumb, check front foot pads for sores.
14. Check Front Legs      With one hand straighten out one front leg, then the other. Check each leg (inside area) for matting (colds).
15. Check Rear Legs      With rabbit still on its back, gently press on upper hind joints to straighten legs. Have your hand cupped, push gently on rear legs toward the tail. Look for straight or crooked bones.
16. Check Hocks      Show bottom of feet and take thumb and rub over each hock to show thickness of fur pad and lack of disease (sore hocks). Put thumb in toe area of foot. Check for proper color of nails.
17. Check Sex      Show sex to judge. Clamp tail with index finger and second finger; place thumb below genital area and push toward front of rabbit exposing vent or penis. Check testicles if male. There should be two showing, if not, comment on fact to judge. Need to show testicles by pushing away fur and exposing them; use index finger and thumb. Explain the fact that a doe has a vent and bucks have a penis and testicles.
18. Tail Check Rabbit on Back.      Feel tail with fingers for broken bones, lumps or kinks. Feel thoroughly. Move tail from side to side.
19. Reverse Rabbit to Upright Position      With your hand still on ears and neck, support rabbit's rump and gently set rabbit upright again on table facing you.
20. Posing Rabbit (Final Pose)      If necessary, return rabbit to original starting position. At this point, left ear should be facing judge. Pose your rabbit and take one step back. At judge's signal, return to your rabbit, keep your rabbit under control and answer judge's questions. Repose rabbit, if necessary, and hold on table with one hand over eyes.

## **EXHIBITOR CRITERIA**

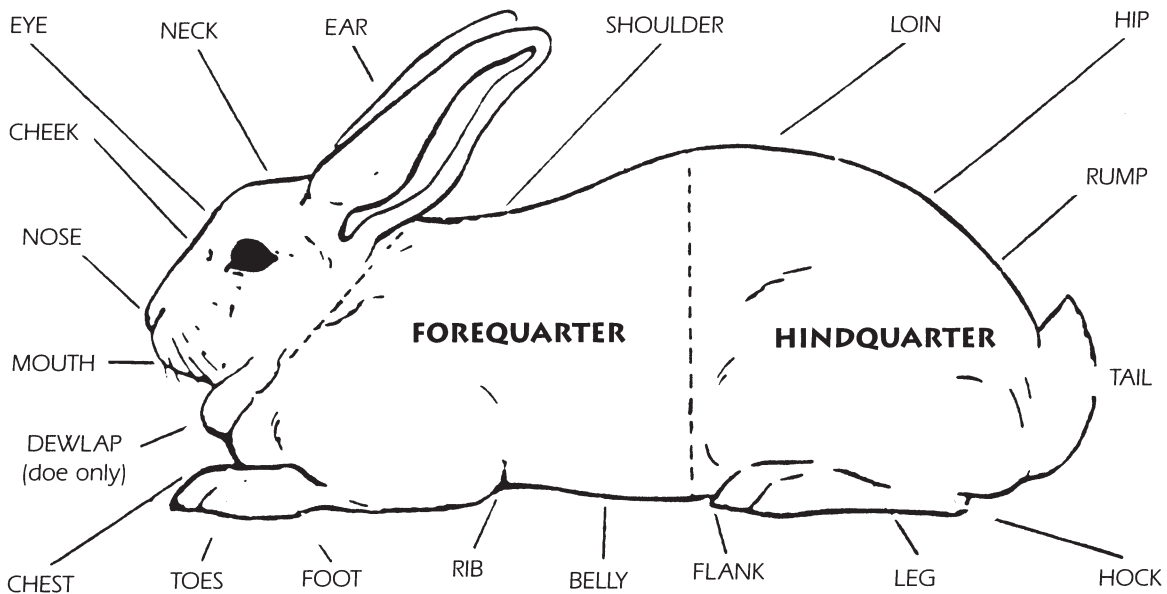
21. Appearance      Avoid unclean clothing and hands and hair not under control. Avoid clothing or jewelry that interferes with performance, avoid poor posture and leaning or laying on table. Do not wear short sleeve shirts. Avoid clothing with names/advertising/pictures of any kind. No hats/caps.

Avoid excessive fur/wool on clothing. Remember to smile and look pleasant.

- 22. Knowledge      Exhibitor should be prepared to answer questions about their rabbit with reference to parts, faults, disqualifications, breed and variety characteristics. (Exhibitor should be especially knowledgeable of the breed they are showing.) Exhibitor should learn and understand general rabbit care information. Questions will be taken from the ARBA Guide Book and current ARBA Standard Book which are available from the American Rabbit Breeders Association.
  
- 23. Actions        Exhibitor should carry out actions in a confident manner always being considerate of your animal. The judge should have your attention at all times. Eye contact is very important! A smile is good, too.
  
- 24. Lift Rabbit Off Table      When excused by judge, lift rabbit, do not drag or drop rabbit, support the rump and tuck its head securely under your arm and place rabbit in carrier. SMILE - you've done a good job. You do not have to back up, but TURN and leave the area.

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## PARTS OF A RABBIT



**SOUTH DAKOTA RABBIT SHOWMANSHIP SCORE SHEET**  
**(Judge should use one showmanship score sheet per contestant)**

Lot \_\_\_\_\_ Breed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exhibitor Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exhibitor Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Indicate by Circling Beg. Jr. Sr. Years in Project \_\_\_\_\_

**4-H 606A**  
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|  |     |   |     |   |     |   |     |
|--|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|
| <b>1. Carry to Table:</b> Max Pts (2)  |     | <b>4. Top Body Check:</b> Max Pts (3)   |     | <b>7. Under Arm Hold &amp; Turn:</b> Max Pts (5)  |     | <b>10. Show Eyes:</b> Max Pts (4)   |     |
| Use of carrier .....( )<br>Correct lift out of carrier .....( )<br>Lose control .....( )   | Pts | Failure to check neck .....( )<br>Failure to check back .....( )<br>Failure to check sides .....( )<br>Failure to cover all areas of rabbit .....( )  | Pts | Incorrect lift .....( )<br>Lose control .....( )<br>Rabbit under arm .....( )<br>Opposite hand not free .....( )<br>Poor support .....( )<br>Dropping rabbit .....( )   | Pts | Failure to show both eyes .....( )<br>Poor hand position .....( )<br>Forcing eye open .....( )<br>Touching eye .....( )   | Pts |
| <b>2. Posing Rabbit (first pose):</b>  | (3) | <b>5. Check Fur:</b>  | (3) | <b>8. Show Nose:</b>  | (3) | <b>11. Back Flip on Table:</b>  | (5) |
| Incorrect pose for breed shown ..( )<br>Tail not showing .....( )<br>Feet not tucked in .....( )<br>Feet over tucked .....( )<br>Running rabbits<br>Will not run .....( )<br>Needs to be pushed .....( )<br>Jumps off table .....( ) | Pts | Rabbit in excessive molt .....( )<br>Rabbit stained or dirty .....( )<br>Rabbit matted .....( )<br>Failure to show density .....( )<br>Failure to show flyback or rollback on commercial fur (Rex or Wool) .....( ) | Pts | Failure to show nostrils .....( )<br>Failure to check for cold in nostrils .....( )<br>Poor hand position .....( )<br>Rabbit in poor position .....( )<br>Lose control .....( )<br>Check front legs .....( )          | Pts | Incorrect lift .....( )<br>Lose control .....( )<br>Rabbit not on table .....( )<br>Belly not facing judge .....( )   | Pts |
| <b>3. Show Ears:</b>   | (3) | <b>6. Check Tail:</b>   | (2) | <b>9. Show Teeth:</b>   | (5) | <b>12. Under Body Check</b>   | (4) |
| Failure to show left ear .....( )<br>Failure to read ear number .....( )<br>Improper hold .....( )<br>Canal not exposed .....( )<br>Failure to show right ear .....( )   | Pts | Incorrect turn into rear view .....( )<br>Failure to check the bone .....( )<br>Failure to move tail from side to side .....( )   | Pts | Inability to show teeth .....( )<br>Hand in front of mouth .....( )<br>Poor position of rabbit .....( )<br>Incorrect hand position .....( )<br>Teeth not shown on first try .....( )<br>Only two teeth shown .....( ) | Pts | Failure to check belly area .....( )<br>Failure to check under jaw .....( )<br>Failure to feel rabbit .....( )<br>Failure to check between front legs .....( )<br>Failure to check between back legs .....( )<br>Check chest and abdomen .....( ) | Pts |

**Explanation of Points/Ribbons Scale**

The purpose of the points/ribbons scale is to adjust the showmanship scoring in consideration of the child's age and their ability to perform the required exercises.

**Points/Ribbon Scale**

| Ribbon | Beginner   | Junior     | Senior     |
|--------|------------|------------|------------|
| P      | 80 & above | 85 & above | 90-100     |
| B      | 70-79      | 75-84      | 80-89      |
| R      | 60-69      | 65-74      | 70-79      |
| W      | 59 & below | 64 & below | 69 & below |

|   |     |  |     |   |      |  |
|---|-----|--|-----|---|------|--|
| <b>13. Toenails on Front Feet and Front Feet Pads:</b>  | (4) | <b>17. Check Sex:</b>  | (5) | <b>21. Appearance:</b>  | (6)  | <p>Total Points: _____</p> <p>Placing: _____</p> <hr/> <p>Judge's Signature</p> <hr/> <p>Date</p> <hr/> <p>Exhibitor Name</p> <p>Comments:</p> |
| Failure to show any toenails . . . . ( )<br>Failure to show all toenails . . . . ( )<br>Failure to use thumb . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to check dewclaw . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to check front pads . . . . . ( )<br>Does not check toenail color . . . . ( )   | Pts | Failure to show the sex . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to expose the vent (doe) . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to expose penis . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to expose testicles . . . . . ( )<br>Incorrect turn into rear view . . . . ( )<br>Lose control . . . . . ( )             | Pts | Improper clothing . . . . . ( )<br>Poor posture . . . . . ( )<br>Hair not neatly groomed . . . . . ( )<br>Excessive fur or wool on clothing . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to smile or look pleasant . . . . . ( )<br>Laying on table by exhibitor . . . . ( )  | Pts  |  |
| <b>14. Check Front Legs:</b>  | (3) | <b>18. Second Tail Check (with rabbit on back):</b>  | (2) | <b>22. Knowledge:</b>   | (10) |  |
| Failure to show front legs . . . . . ( )<br>Improper lift . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to support rabbit . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to check for matted fur on both front legs . . . . . ( )  | Pts | Incorrect turn into rear view . . . . ( )<br>Failure to check the bone . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to move tail from side to side . . . . . ( )   | Pts | Incorrect answer given . . . . . ( )<br>Incomplete answers . . . . . ( )<br>Incomplete sentences . . . . . ( )<br>Poor use of terms . . . . . ( )<br>Marked breeds<br>Not all markings described . . . . ( )<br>Used incorrect terms in marking . . . . . ( )   | Pts  |  |
| <b>15. Check Rear Legs:</b>   | (3) | <b>19. Reverse the Rabbit to Upright Position:</b>   | (4) | <b>23. Actions:</b>   | (10) |  |
| Failure to show rear legs . . . . . ( )<br>Improper hand position . . . . . ( )<br>Lose control . . . . . ( )   | Pts | Dropping the rabbit . . . . . ( )<br>Improper grasp . . . . . ( )<br>Poor support . . . . . ( )<br>Rabbit in poor position . . . . . ( )<br>Lose control of rabbit . . . . . ( )   | Pts | Outside prompting . . . . . ( )<br>Talking with other showman . . . . ( )<br>Chewing candy or gum . . . . . ( )<br>Poor eye contact . . . . . ( )<br>Lacking confidence in handling . . . ( )<br>Lacking smoothness . . . . . ( )<br>Occasional roughness . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to watch rabbit . . . . . ( )<br>Exhibitor pets rabbit . . . . . ( ) | Pts  |  |
| <b>16. Toenails on Rear Feet and Checking Hocks:</b>  | (4) | <b>20. Posing Rabbit (final pose):</b>   | (3) | <b>24. Lift the Rabbit Off the Table to Leave Area:</b>   | (4)  |  |
| Poor hold and position of rabbit . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to use thumb . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to show any toenails . . . . ( )<br>Failure to show all nails . . . . . ( )<br>Failure to check hocks . . . . . ( )<br>Does not check toenail color . . . . ( ) | Pts | Incorrect pose for breed shown . . ( )<br>Tail not showing . . . . . ( )<br>Feet not tucked in . . . . . ( )<br>Feet over tucked . . . . . ( )<br>Running rabbits<br>Will not run . . . . . ( )<br>Needs to be pushed . . . . . ( )<br>Jumps off table . . . . . ( ) | Pts | Dragging rabbit at any time . . . . ( )<br>Dropping the rabbit . . . . . ( )<br>Improper grasp . . . . . ( )<br>Poor support . . . . . ( )<br>Rabbit in poor position . . . . . ( )<br>Lose control of rabbit . . . . . ( )   | Pts  |  |

# JUDGES WILL DEDUCT POINTS FOR:

**Remember: Judges will deduct points for use of incorrect terms.**

1. Carry to Table Not describing procedure while doing the procedure. Not using carrier, incorrect lift, losing control of rabbit.
2. Posing Rabbit (First pose) Incorrect pose, tail not showing, feet over tucked or not tucked in. Doesn't describe rabbit. Running rabbit won't run, pushing rabbit, rabbit jumps off table.
3. Show Ears Failure to show one or both ears, not reading ear number, improper hold.
4. Top Body Check Failure to check neck, back and sides.
5. Check Fur Rabbit in excessive molt, stained or dirty, matted fur - wool, failure to show density. Texture - fly back - roll back (Rex fur pat, wool pull twist - float wool).
6. Check Tail Incorrect turn, failure to check bone, move tail from side to side.
7. Under Arm Hold & Turn Incorrect lift, lose control, rabbit head not under arm, opposite hand not free, poor support, dropping rabbit.
8. Show Nose Failure to show nostrils, poor hand position, rabbit in poor position, failure to check for colds on front legs.
9. Show Teeth Inability to show teeth, hand in front of mouth, rabbit in poor position, incorrect hand position, teeth not shown on first try, not showing all teeth, lose control.
10. Show Eyes Failure to show both eyes, poor hand position, forcing eye open, touching eye.
11. Back flip on Table Incorrect lift, lose control, rabbit not on table, belly not facing judge.
12. Under Body Check Failure to check belly, under jaw, between front and back legs, check, abdomen, just going through motions.
13. Toenails on Front Feet & Front Feet Pads Failure to show all parts of nails. Failure to show dew claws, failure to check toe color, failure to check pads, failure to use thumb.



14. Check Front Legs Failure to show legs, improper lift, failure to check for matting on front legs for colds, lose control.
15. Check Rear Legs Failure to check rear legs, improper hand position, lose control.
16. Toenails on Rear Feet & Checking Hocks Failure to check and show all nails, poor hand position, failure to check toe nail color, failure to check hocks, failure to use thumb.
17. Check Sex Failure to show the sex, failure to expose vent, failure to expose penis, failure to expose both testicles, incorrect turn into rear view, lose control.
18. Tail Check Rabbit on Back Rabbit not on back, incorrect turn, failure to move tail from side to side.
19. Reverse the Rabbit to Upright Position Lose control, drop rabbit, improper grasp, poor support or position.
20. Posing Rabbit (Final Pose) Incorrect pose for breed shown, tail tucked, feet not tucked in or over tucked, if marked breed describe, using correct terms. Running rabbit won't run, pushes rabbit, jumps off table.
21. Appearance Avoid unclean clothing and hands and hair not under control. Avoid clothing or jewelry that interferes with performance, avoid poor posture and leaning or laying on table. Do not wear short sleeve shirts. Avoid clothing with names/advertising/pictures of any kind. No hats/caps. Avoid excessive fur/wool on clothing. Remember to smile and look pleasant.
22. Knowledge Beginners (Use correct size of rabbit)
1. Know information on rabbit using for showmanship
    - A. Name, breed, name variety, class of rabbit, sex of rabbit
    - B. General care of rabbit, amount of feed and water
    - C. Know body parts - use correct terms
    - D. Know correct eye & toe nail color of rabbit
    - E. Know where dew claw and dewlap is on rabbit
    - F. Can turn rabbit over without any roughness
    - G. Know markings on marked breed
- Juniors
1. Know all beginner information above and the following:
    - A. Breed type - fur type, body type
    - B. Name groups and varieties
    - C. Know correct eye & toe nail color
    - D. Use correct terms for marked breed
    - E. Know protein and fiber content of feed
    - F. Know general meaning of terms and terms used

### Seniors

1. Know all beginner and junior information above and the following:
  - A. Weights of breed using
  - B. Know schedule of points on breed using
  - C. Know texture - density points, description of varieties (color) in breed, ring color if needed
  - D. Know how breeding is carried out. What gestation is proper care of a doe and litter of babies
  - E. Know faults and disqualification on breed
  - F. **Know general disqualifications for all breeds**
- G. Know general information on other breeds than the rabbit you are using for showmanship such as:
  1. Breed type - Commercial - Compact, Semi - Arched, Full Arched and Cylindrical
  2. Classes (age groups) four classes - six classes
  3. Fur types - Commercial Fur, Roll Back, Fly Back, Rex, - Wool, Satin Fur. How to check fur in other breeds.
  4. Know different types of poses and breeds that are shown running. Full arched type (most are shown running).
  5. Know difference between registered and pedigreed rabbit.
  6. Varieties and Groups - how many and name them

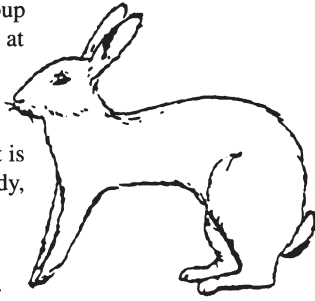
Strongly suggest seniors have a current ARBA Standard of Perfection and ARBA Guide book.

23. Actions
  1. Exhibitor being uncooperative
  2. **Outside prompting of youth by any person**
  3. Talking to other persons while being judged
  4. Chewing candy or gum
  5. Poor eye contact
  6. Lacking confidence in handling
  7. Lacking smoothness in exhibiting
  8. Rough handling of rabbit
  9. Rabbit uncontrollable (not used to being handled)
  10. Not watching rabbit
  11. Exhibitor petting rabbit
  12. Dragging rabbit at any time during judging
24. Lift the Rabbit Off The Table To Leave Area
  1. Not using a carrier
  2. Dropping rabbit
  3. Improper grasp of rabbit
  4. Poor support of rabbit
  5. Rabbit in poor position
  6. Lose control

Judges may deduct the maximum or all points from each area if they decide it is warranted based on exhibitor performance.

## A PROFILE ON THE TYPES OF RABBITS

Group "A" - Full Arched Type - This group is easily recognized by an arch which starts at the NAPE of the neck, continuing over the shoulders, midsections, loins and hips to the base of the tail. This type is novel in that it is much deeper in body height than it is in width, and by its long limbs and long body, which imparts a very racy appearance.



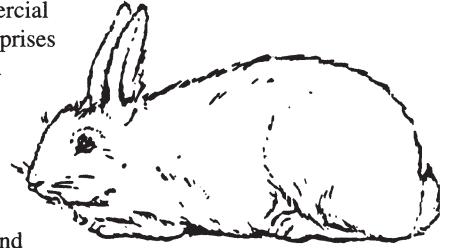
Group "B" - Semi-Arched Breeds - This group is well arched, but starting at back of shoulder rather than at nape of neck, and continuing to base of tail. They are sometimes referred to as Mandolin type.



Group "C" - Short Coupled, Compact Type - This group is considered a good meat type, but in a category lighter in weight and shorter in body length. Some differ in shape of body, being round or tubular, while others are the conventional broader type. They are all related by being shorter in body length than the commercial type, described in the next group (Group D). The width, depth and length are controlled by the differences in weight within the group.



Group "D" - Commercial Type - This group comprises all of our highly touted meat producing breeds (with one or two exceptions). Most of these breeds excel in width and depth of body, fullness of loin and roundness of hips and rump, hardness in flesh, and having the smallest amount of offal when dressed. Most are medium length (15 to 17 inches) and differ slightly in wording of their standards, particularly in the curvature and rise in their top body lines, shoulders to hips and width of bodies.

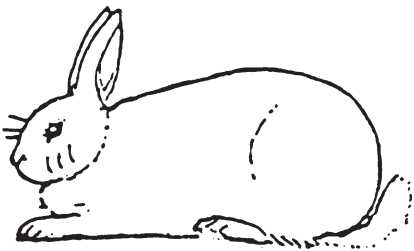


Group "E" - Snaky Type - Himalayan, referred to as snaky type. A type all its own.

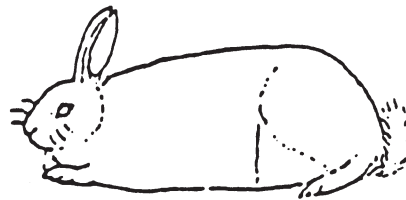
Body to be slim, snaky, round and long enough to show off its markings. Head rather slim and long, legs fine in bone and long, body should lie snakelike upon the judging table.



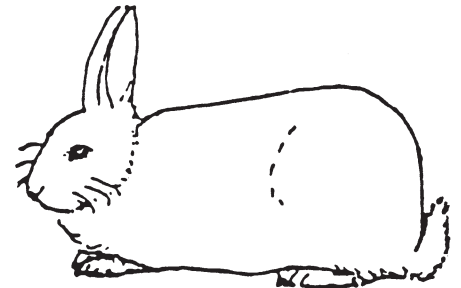
## BASIC HANDLING AND BREEDING FAULTS FOUND IN COMMERCIAL GROUP "D" AND OTHER GROUPS



1. Tucked under too far, spoiling basic type. Head trifle small.



2. Stretched out too far to rear, making rump slope off, spoiling depth and type.



3. High point behind center of hip, causing hips to chop off. Rather flat top line.



4. High point forward of center of hip causing hip to slope off instead of rounding off.

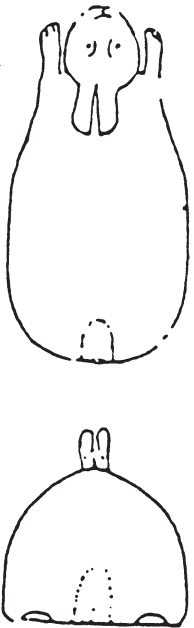


5. Low in shoulder, good depth of hip, but ruining balance.

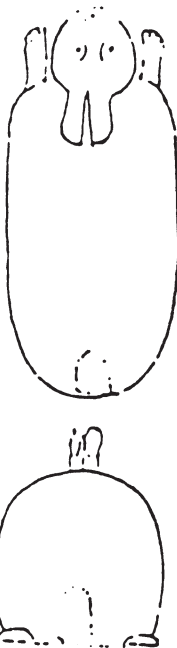


6. Low over mid-section (swaybacked).

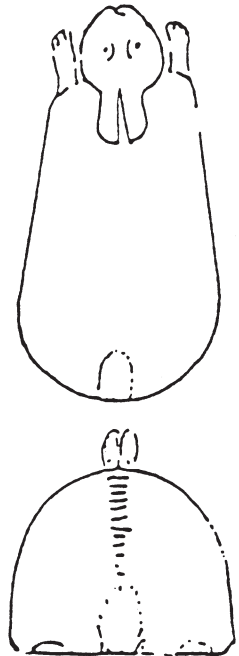
## TOP AND END VIEWS OF GOOD AND BAD TYPE FEATURES



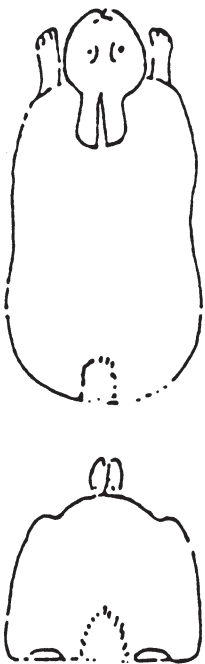
A. Narrow in shoulders, hip lacking roundness, pinched and sloping off at top.



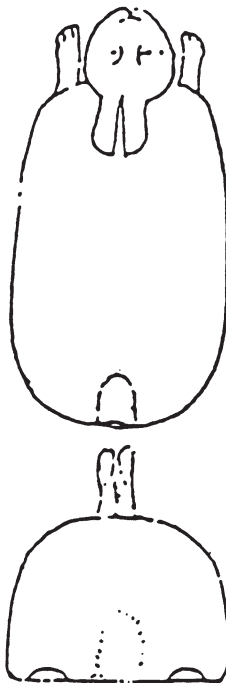
B. Shoulders too wide for pinched back end. Slightly undercut in hindquarters.



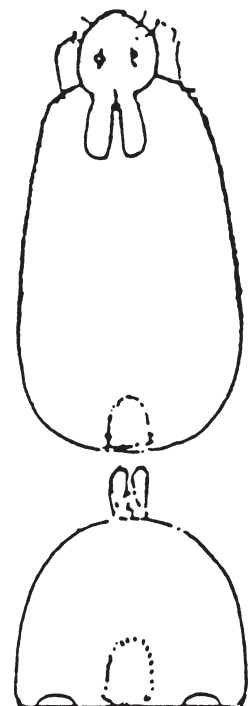
C. Narrow in shoulders and mid-section. Valley or low at center of hips.



D. Weak at mid-section and loin. Rough and protruding hip bones.



E. Trifle beefy in shoulders, nice, full width rump, but flat over top of hindquarters.



F. Very well balanced throughout, showing nice taper from front to back, full back end, with well rounded top.

## ALL ABOUT HEAD TYPES

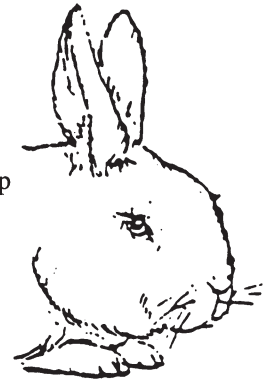
### WELL BALANCED HEAD

This is a well-balanced head for small, compact breeds.



### BULLDOG TYPE HEAD

Broad, heavy, wide skull, deep jaws well flared out.



### PEAR-SHAPED HEAD

Snipey head and muzzle. Undesirable on any type rabbit, as we know them today.



### MALE TYPE HEAD

A well-balanced male-type head, good ear base, fitting most all group "D" rabbits.



### GIANT TYPE HEAD

Enough breadth to support giant type ear base, and long, heavy ears. A giant being very long in body needs a longer type head to balance.



### POOR EAR CARRIAGE

This is a strong head; however, the ear base is too narrow and weak, ears spread. This, of course, is undesirable. The skull should always be broad enough at the ear base to support the ears properly, regardless of the size of the breed.



## LEGS - FEET - TAILS



Bowed limbs, outward



Bowed limbs, inward



Good straight limbs



Cow-hocked hind feet



Good parallel hind feet



Side carried tail



Screw tail



Good tail carriage

# SUGGESTED BREEDING CHART

Preparing for a rabbit show next year begins now. Besides the usual work of feeding and caring for your rabbits through the winter, you need to plan for the birth of bunnies which will be the correct ages to show next year. In this part of the nation, rabbit shows are held in the spring and fall months. Winter weather is unpredictable and summer is too hot to move rabbits around. Bunnies born in the fall will be prime age juniors for the spring shows and will be seniors by next 4-H Achievement Days and State Fair. Bunnies born in late winter will be the fall intermediates and early spring births will be the bunnies that will be juniors for the fall season.

Following is a breeding chart that can be used in planning litters:

| <b>Breed<br/>In</b> | <b>Pre-Junior<br/>for Meat Pen</b> | <b>Juniors</b>    | <b>Intermediates</b> | <b>Seniors</b>     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>January</b>      | <b>April</b>                       | <b>June-July</b>  | <b>Aug.-Sept.</b>    | <b>Oct.-Beyond</b> |
| <b>February</b>     | <b>May</b>                         | <b>July-Aug.</b>  | <b>Sept.-Oct.</b>    | <b>November</b>    |
| <b>March</b>        | <b>June</b>                        | <b>Aug.-Sept.</b> | <b>Oct.-Nov.</b>     | <b>December</b>    |
| <b>April</b>        | <b>July</b>                        | <b>Sept.-Oct.</b> | <b>Nov.-Dec.</b>     | <b>January</b>     |
| <b>May</b>          | <b>August</b>                      | <b>Oct.-Nov.</b>  | <b>Dec.-Jan.</b>     | <b>February</b>    |
| <b>June</b>         | <b>September</b>                   | <b>Nov.-Dec.</b>  | <b>Jan.-Feb.</b>     | <b>March</b>       |
| <b>July</b>         | <b>October</b>                     | <b>Dec.-Jan.</b>  | <b>Feb.-Mar.</b>     | <b>April</b>       |
| <b>August</b>       | <b>November</b>                    | <b>Jan.-Feb.</b>  | <b>Mar.-April</b>    | <b>May</b>         |
| <b>September</b>    | <b>December</b>                    | <b>Feb.-Mar.</b>  | <b>April-May</b>     | <b>June</b>        |
| <b>October</b>      | <b>January</b>                     | <b>Mar.-April</b> | <b>May-June</b>      | <b>July</b>        |
| <b>November</b>     | <b>February</b>                    | <b>April-May</b>  | <b>June-July</b>     | <b>August</b>      |
| <b>December</b>     | <b>March</b>                       | <b>May-June</b>   | <b>July-Aug.</b>     | <b>September</b>   |

# TERMS TO USE IN SHOWMANSHIP AND JUDGING

**ARBA** — American Rabbit Breeders Association.

**4-CLASS BREED** — Shown as senior buck senior doe, junior buck and junior doe. Usually considered fancy or show type rabbit breed.

**6-CLASS BREED** — Shown as senior buck, senior doe, intermediate or 6-8 buck, intermediate or 6-8 doe, junior buck and junior doe. Usually shown as commercial or meat-type breeds.

**ADULT** — Any fully developed, mature rabbit of breeding age. For show classification, see senior.

**AGOUTI FUR COLORS**— Having three different colors on the same hair shaft, dark to light and light to dark.

**AGOUTI MARKING** — These rabbits will display the following hair color shadings (either light or dark) on nostrils, eye circles, jowls, inside ears, belly, inside legs, underside of tail and lap markings.

**ALBINO** — A pink-eyed, white-furred rabbit.

**ARCH (ARC)** — A gentle curvature of spine; extended from neck (or shoulders in some breeds) to rear of rabbit.

**AWN FLUFF** — Soft crimped, intermediate wool fibers, wool found in Giant Angora

**AWN HAIR** — Strong, straight guard hair protruding above undercoat in Giant Angora.

**BACK** — In general, entire top portion of animal extending from neck to tail. Area covered by backbone or vertebrae.

**BALANCE** — Type - shape or conformation, an orderly and pleasing arrangement of physical characteristics so as to present a harmonious appearance. Markings - equal distribution corresponding markings, such as color divisions of Harlequin, equal amounts of color on cheeks of Dutch. Equal distribution of color in pattern and side markings in Checkered Giants, English Spots and Rhinelanders.

**BAND** — Color circling body.

**BARE SPOTS** — Section of animal entirely lacking fur.

**BARRED** — Elongated spots, as in side markings of English Spot. Also light colored streaks or bars on front legs, usually found on agouti-patterned or other non-self colored breeds.

**BASE COLOR** — Fur color next to skin.

**BELL EARS** — Ears which have large tips with distinct fall or lop.

**BELLY** — Lower part of body containing the intestines - abdomen. (For purposes of defining color area: Underbody of an animal from forelegs to crotch area.)

**BLAZE** — White marking found on head of Dutch rabbit.

**BLOOM** — Sheen or luster of a coat in good condition.

**BOILS OR ABSCESS** — A hard swelling or isolated collection of pus or purulent matter occurring in rabbits skin, accompanied by localized fever and heat.

**BOOTS** — Colored marking on rear feet of pointed animal, as in Himalayan- marked rabbits.

**BOWED LEGS** — Applied to both fore and hind legs. Bent like a bow, curved outwardly in the middle.

**BREED** — A race or special class of domestic rabbits which reproduce distinctive characteristics of fur, markings, texture, shape, size and growth. A breed may be subdivided into varieties, as for example, black, blue and tortoise varieties of Dutch breed.

**BREEDER** — One who breeds or rears a special variety or varieties of rabbits in conformity with accepted standards of perfection or for the purpose of improving their commercial value.

**BROKEN COAT** — Guard hair broken or missing in spots exposing undercoat; areas where coat is affected by molt exposing undercoat.

**BROKEN EAR** — A distinct break in the cartilage which prevents erect ear carriage. Also lop ear.

**BUCK** — An unaltered male rabbit.

**BUFF** - A rich golden orange with a creamy coat.

**BULL DOG** — As applied to head; a short, broad, bold head of pronounced masculine appearance.

**BUNNY** — A pet name for a rabbit.

**BUTTERFLY** — Nose marking found on many breeds of rabbits. Wing portions cover whisker bed from lip to lop, with body extending up center of face.

**BUTTING** — Form of malocclusion, incisors meeting together evenly without upper incisors “overlapping” lower incisors in proper fusion (also called “pegged” teeth). A disqualification.

**CAKED TEATS OR CAKED UDDER** — Inflamed and feverish condition of teats arising from superabundant milk supply in a doe rabbit. Easily noted by teats distended with hardened milk.

**CARRIAGE** — Mode in which a rabbit bears itself; style or station of animal.

**CHAIN** — Arrangement of spots on an English Spot rabbit, running from neck to abdominal area.

**CHARLIE** — Lightly marked animal in some breeds, particularly Checkered Giant, English Spot, Rhinelander and Broken Color Lops, Rex and Satins.

**CHEEK** — Sides of face beneath eyes.

**CHEST** — Front portion of body between forelegs and neck - breast or thorax.

**CHOPPY** — As applied to type - having back and loins cut off abruptly and falling vertically to tail; not having a gracefully arched back and loins.

**CLASSIFICATION** — System for organizing judging within different breeds.

**CLEAN** — 1. Term used on French Angora, Satin Angora, Jersey Woolly, Fuzzy Lops for their heads, ears, feet, legs. (No wool on these areas). 2. Marking term - to have well formed markings without congestion or drags.

**COBBY** — Stout and stocky; short legged and short coupled.

**COLD** — An infection localized in the nose, usually characterized by repeated sneezing and discharge of a thin watery fluid from nose; also, sometimes, by matted fur on inside of front feet. This is a disqualification.

**CONDITION** — Physical state of a rabbit in reference to health, cleanliness, texture and molt of fur and grooming.

**CONFORMATION** — Body structure conforming to standard type of breed represented.

**COTTONY** — Very fine, soft textured fur or wool without guard hair.

**COW HOCKS** — Hocks that turn or bend inward causing foot portion to turn outward.

**CREAMY** — Light yellow; the color of cream.

**CRIMP** — Natural waviness of fiber of a wool undercoat, most noticeable in awn fluff.

**CROWN** — Strong basal ridge or cartilage at top of head forming ear base on some lop eared breeds.

**CYLINDRICAL** — Snake like, Himalayan rabbit.

**DEAD HAIR** — Lacking life, produced as a result of molting.

**DEFINITION** — Sharpness and clarity of a color break, on a hair shaft, as ring color in Agouti fur.

**DENSITY** — Property or quality of a thick coat.



**DEPTH** — Measurement downward from top line of body to lowest portion of body.

**DEW CLAW** — Extra toe or functionless digit on inside of front legs.

**DEWLAP** — Fold or folds of loose skin hanging from throat found on does.

**DISQUALIFICATION** — Defect in a rabbit which cannot be cured.

**DOE** - A female rabbit.

**EAR MITES** — Very small parasites infesting the ear that suck blood and cause ear canker.

**EAR CANKER** — An inflamed, swollen, scabby condition of lower inside ear of rabbits caused by colonies of rabbit ear mites. An elimination.

**EAR LACING** — Black or dark colored line of fur outlining sides and tips of ear.

**EYE COLOR** — Color of iris, circle of color which surrounds pupil of eye.

**EYE STAIN** — Splotches or streaks of color around eyes in all Himalayan marked breeds.

**FAKING** — Any change in external appearance of a rabbit on exhibition, with intent to deceive.

**FAULTS** — Minor problem that will cause rabbit to be placed lower in class.

**FELTING** — Wool fibers that have become interwoven during natural growth.

**FERTILITY** — Ability to reproduce.

**FINE COAT** — Too fine in texture - lacking body; guard hairs being too weak and thin in structure similar to hairs making up the undercoat.

**FINISH** — Desired degree of perfection in condition. Fully prime in coat, color and flesh.

**FITTING FOR SHOW** — Preparing rabbit for show, feeding, grooming, training.

**FLABBY** — Condition of a rabbit when flesh or fur hangs loosely on animal by its own weight - not trim and shapely.

**FLANK** — Sides of rabbit between ribs and hips, above belly.

**FLAT COAT** — Coat lying flat or close to body, lacking spring or body as evidenced by touch. Fine coat coupled with lack of density.

**FLAT SHOULDERS** — Trait that occurs when top line over shoulders is noticeably parallel to surface of judging table; lack of taper over shoulders.

**FLYBACK** — Fur property which causes it to return quickly to its normal position when stroked toward the head.

**FLYING COAT** — Loose, fluffy coat of fur caused by under length and thinness of under wool and weak guard hairs.

**FOOT** — That part of leg on which an animal walks or stands. On foreleg, that portion below ankle or pastern. On rear leg - that portion below hock joint.

**FOREHEAD** — Front part of head between eyes and base of ears.

**FOREIGN COLOR** - - Any color of fur, nails and eyes differing from that called for in breed or variety in question.

**FOREQUARTERS** — That portion of the body starting with neck up to and including all but last rib.

**FRYER** — Meat type rabbit, compact, short with body well filled, rounded and with solid flesh. Under five pounds and not over 69 days of age. Pen of three is judged on uniformity of weight, size, appearance, condition and meat type (usually are from a 6-class breed).

**FUR MITES** — Very small parasites infesting fur behind ears, causes sores and loss of fur. An elimination.

**FURNISHINGS** — Tassels and fringes on ears, bangs and side trimmings on head and wool on front feet of English Angora.

**GESTATION** — Period that a doe carries her young from breeding to kindling. Average is 32 days, range is from 29 to 35 days.

**GLOSSY** — Reflected luster of brightness from naturally healthy fur in rabbits - a natural sheen of fur enhanced by grooming.

**GROUP** — Broader classification within some breeds than variety. Applied to color pattern groupings in many breeds.

**GUARD HAIR** — Longer, coarser hair of coat offering protection to undercoat and furnishing wearing quality to coat in addition to providing sheen.

**HERRING BONE** — Spine or dorsal stripe on English Spot. A herring bone or serrated edge to spine markings.

**HIND (REAR) LEG** — Consists of foot, hock, stifle (knee) and hip joint.

**HINDQUARTERS** - After portion or posterior section of body, composed of loins, hips, hind legs and rump.

**HIP** — Thigh joint and large muscular first joint of hind leg.

**HOCK** — Middle joint or section of hind leg between foot and hip.

**HUTCH** — Man made home of a rabbit.

**INTERMEDIATE** — Rabbit six months of age or over and under eight months of age.

**JUNIOR** — A rabbit under six months of age.

**KINDLE** — To give birth to young rabbits.

**KNEE** — Second joint of hind leg - connects thigh to leg. Also known as stifle.

**LACTATE** — To nurse, to produce milk.

**LAP SPOTS** — Intensification of belly color in the area of groin (inside hind legs). Normally associated with shaded selfs, agoutis and wide band agoutis (fawn and red).

**LIGHT TOENAIL** — Toenail showing some pigmentation but not full color called for in the standard.

**LITTER** — Bunnies belonging to one doe all of the same age.

**LOIN** — That portion of back on either side of spine and between lower rib and hip joint.

**LOOSE COAT** — Fur lacking density in undercoat coupled usually, with fine guard hairs and a resultant lack of texture (does not include a slipping coat).

**LOPPED EAR** — Hanging ear, not carried erectly; falling to the side or front.

**LUSTER** — Brightness and brilliance of fur.

**MALOCCLUSION** — Upper and lower teeth do not meet properly (front over bottom).

**MANDOLIN** — As applied to type; having appearance of body of a mandolin laid face down - back and saddle arching toward loin to make noticeably large and broad hindquarters.

**MARKED** — Having basic color broken up by orderly placement of a white (usually) background.

**MASK NOSE** — Muzzle color that extends farther up face than butterfly marking.

**MASTITIS** — An infectious inflammation of mammary glands.

**MATE** — To breed one rabbit to another rabbit.

**MATTED** — Wool entangled in a thick mass.

**MEAT PEN** — Commercial (6-class). Three young meat type rabbits of the same breed, age, size and color kindled 10 weeks before exhibiting. Minimum weight to be three pounds and maximum weight five pounds each. There can be as much as 1/4 pound difference between the three rabbits but other characteristics should match. Body to be well filled, rounded, firm flesh, with good depth of body, well developed shoulder and smooth feel to body. Loin depth, width and hindquarter thickness to be uniform in trio.

**MEALY** — Having appearance of being powdered or sprinkled with meal.

**MEATY** — Quality of being able to carry a goodly proportion of meat in proportion to size and type of rabbit - a noticeable meatiness at forequarters, back, saddle, loin and haunches.

**MID SECTION** — That portion of the body starting with 6th rib back to rear legs on sides. Including that portion of loin from last rib to high point of body.

**MOLT** — Act or process of shedding or changing fur twice yearly. Baby fur is molted at two months and the first natural coat of fur is fully developed at four to six months.

**MUTATION** — Sudden appearance of a new type, a change or alteration of organization of a gene. The best known mutations are Rex and Satin.

**MUZZLE** — Projecting portion of head surrounding mouth, nose and lower jaw.

**NECK** — That part of animal connecting head and body.

**NOSE FORK** — The body portion of butterfly marking.

**NOSTRILS** — Two openings of nose leading to internal structures of head.

**OFF COLORED** — Applied to several hairs or patches of fur foreign to standard color of the animal.

**OPEN COAT** — Fur lacking density in undercoat, accompanied by fine guard hairs and lacking texture.

**PAD** — Thick, coarse hair on lower leg that protects rabbit's feet and hock.

**PAIR** — A male and female rabbit.

**PARASITES** — Rabbits occasionally harbor mange, lice or fleas, but such parasites are very uncommon.

**PATCHES** — Small section of fur foreign to color standard of animal.

**PAUNCH** — Prominent portion of abdomen.

**PEA SPOTS** — Two spots of marking color at inside base of ear in Tan pattern breeds (Tan Crown Spots in Tan Standard).

**PEARL** — Intermediate color band of some varieties of rabbits; off-white in color.

**PEDIGREE** — Written chart of male and female ancestors of a rabbit showing date of birth, ownership of dam and parents, grandparents and great grandparents of rabbit in question.

**PELT** — Hide of animal after it is removed from animal.

**PENCIL LINE** — Protrusion of fur across throat under chin.

**PENIS** — Male copulatory organ.

**PEPPER and SALT** — Flat, unattractive appearance of black and white ticking, as in Chinchillas. Caused by lack of contrast and waviness and in ticking and weakness of color in tips of guard hairs.

**PINCHED HINDQUARTERS** — Hindquarters tapering towards tail at lower hindquarters, giving rabbit a "pinched" appearance.

**PLUSH** — Dense fine hair with a very soft feel.

**POINTS** — Three definitions: 1. Ears, tail, nose, rear feet and forelegs of a rabbit such as a Californian, Himalayan or Pointed White. 2. Scale of points listed showing value of each feature on rabbit; 3. Points exhibitor receives in Open Class show.

**POOR COAT** — Fur not in good condition through molting, rust or ill health of the animal.

**POT BELLY** — Distended condition of stomach and intestine usually found in young rabbits.

**PREGNANT** — About to produce young, carrying young; a bred doe.

**RACY** — As applied to type; slim, trim, alert and active. Slender in body and legs; harelike.

**REGISTERED** — A rabbit, upon reaching six months of age with a three generation pedigree, may be found worthy of registration by an ARBA registrar. The rabbit is then issued ARBA Registration Papers and tattooed in the right ear.

**REPRODUCE** — To have young.

**RESPIRATORY INFECTION** — Bacterial infection of nasal sinuses, characterized by sneezing, a thin watery discharge and slightly matted fur on inside front feet.

**RIBS** — Curved portions of sides immediately back of shoulders above belly.

**RING COLOR** — Color of intermediate portion of a hair shaft; as in Agouti Colored fur.

**ROLL BACK** — Gradual return of coat of fur to normal position when it is stroked from hindquarters to shoulders.

**ROMAN NOSE**— Nose whose bridge is higher to form slightly convex line from forehead (ears) to nose tip.

**RUMP** — The hinder portion of the back and backbone.

**RUN** — Intrusion of white into color area, or color into white area of marked breeds.

**SADDLE** — Rounded, intermediate portion of back between shoulder and loin.

**SANDY** — Color of sand, as in sandy gray Flemish Giants. Gray with reddish brown cast interspersed with dark guard hairs.

**SCREW TAIL** — See Wry Tail.

**SCROTUM** — Skin sack that contains testicles.

**SENIOR** — Older than eight months of age.

**SEX** — Determines whether is buck or doe.

**SHADOW BARS** — Weakness of self color in fur on both front and hind legs; appearing in form of light colored bars running across feet. Also occurs in Agouti pattern.

**SHEEN** — Principal feature of Satin mutation. A bright, natural luster attributed to unique structure of hair shaft, because glass like, transparent hair shell has ability to reflect light.

**SHOULDER** — Uppermost joint of foreleg, connecting to body.

**SILVERED** — Having appearance of silvery sheen or luster; abundance of silver white or silver tipped guard hairs interspersed through fur so as to produce a lustrous silvery appearance.

**SLIPPED CROWN** — Crown too far forward on head or too far back on some breeds of Lops, causing ear carriage to be misplaced.

**SLIPPING COAT** — Coat that is shedding or molting a profusion of hair.

**SLOBBERS** — Excessive salivation creating wet or extremely moist and unsightly fur around mouth and lower jaw and forelegs.

**SMUT** — Dark, sooty appearing surface color, usually formed by a large number of dark guard hairs. Found in many rabbits that carry genetic factor of red. Pelt stain found in Himalayans and Californians. Nose markings found on Himalayans.

**SNIPEY** — A long, elongated narrow head.

**SNUFFLES** — Virulent contagious infection of nasal passages and respiratory organs, usually terminating in chronic illness. Indicated by fever, heavy breathing, sneezing and discharge of thick, creamy pus from nostrils. This is a disqualification.

**SOLID** — A variety classification for judging rabbits with one color over all the body.

**SORE HOCKS** — Ulcerated condition of foot pads or soles of either fore or hind feet of rabbit (a misnomer - not actually pertaining to hock).

**SPECIES** — Division or group of animals or plants with certain similar characteristics that may interbreed (all domestic rabbits are of same species *O. Cuniculus*).

**SPLAYED** — Spraddled legged - (The front and/or back legs are not in proper position, not under rabbit, but to the side).

**SPOT** — Distinct, noticeable cluster of foreign colored hairs forming a definite spot and not just stray hairs close together.

**STANDARD OF PERFECTION** — Book published by ARBA stating requirements of each breed of rabbit for judging purposes. This book is updated every five years with any changes to improve present breeds and/or including new breeds.

**STANDARD WEIGHT** — Recommended weight established for breed and age class.

**STOCKY** — Compact, stout and cobby.

**STRAIN** — Race or stock of rabbits in any standard breed of same family bloodline, having quality of reproducing marked racial characteristics.

**SUCKLE** — To nurse.

**TASSELS** — Longer wool on top of ears on some wooled breeds.

**TATTOO** — Marking in ear for identification.

**TESTICLES** — Male reproductive glands.

**TEXTURE** — That qualify of fur pertaining to its action when stroked toward head. Character of fur as determined by feel or touch, such as fine or coarse in texture

**TICKING** — Wavy distribution of longer guard hair throughout fur of a color distinct from under wool or body fur. Such ticking is usually produced by black tipped guard hairs, as in agouti cavies, chinchilla, Flemish giants and Belgian hares and adds greatly to beauty of fur.

**TOP COLOR** — Surface color of fur lying in its normal position.

**TRIANGLE** — Small area in shape of a triangle behind ears, which is generally lighter in color than rest of coat. A feature of Tan patterned rabbits.

**TRIO OF FRYERS** — Commercial (6-class). Three young meat type rabbits of the same breed, age, size and color kindled 10 weeks before exhibiting. Minimum weight to be three pounds and maximum weight five pounds each. There can be as much as 1/4 pound difference between the three rabbits but other characteristics should match. Body to be well filled, rounded, firm flesh, with good depth of body, well developed shoulder and smooth feel to body. Loin depth, width and hindquarter thickness to be uniform in trio.

**TUCKED UP** — Trim appearance of a rabbit with flank and belly gathered in closely to form an arch when rabbit is in a sitting position.

**TYPE** — Denotes body conformation of a rabbit or shape of a particular part of animal as in “head type”. General description of physical makeup of animal.

**TYPICAL** — Serving as an ideal representative of any given breed or variety as applied to type, color or fur quality.

**UNDER COLOR** — Color at base of fur hair shaft next to skin, not belly fur of the animal.

**UNDER WOOL** — Shortest wool fiber, to be more numerous than other two types.

**UNDERCUT** — Belly marking on a Dutch rabbit; a continuation of saddle marking.

**VARIETY** — (as applied to rabbits, type shows breed and color of variety.) A breed subdivision applicable to animals of any recognized standard breed, but distinct in color of fur from other races or subdivisions thereof.

**VENT DISEASE** — Venereal diseases in rabbits of both sexes. Indicated by scabby, reddened male or female organs, usually exuding pus (rabbit syphilis). This is a disqualification.

**VULVA** — External female sexual organs.

**WALL EYES (MOON EYE)** — Having a milky film over cornea or appearance similar to a moonstone. Colored eyes having an extremely light iris giving a glazed appearance.

**WHITE TOENAIL** — Nail without pigmentation showing only pink cast of blood vessel. This is a disqualification in some breeds.

**WOLF TEETH** — Protruding or elongated incisors in either upper or lower jaw causes malocclusion, improper alignment of upper and lower teeth which prevents normal wear.

**WOOL** — Applied as descriptive of fur of Angora rabbits; guard hairs and under fur being from 2 \_ to five inches in length and resembling fine wool in texture.

**WRY TAIL** — Abnormally bent, curled or twisted permanently to one side; a corkscrew tail with one or more turns.



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