



RABBIT

WELCOME

Welcome to the 4-H Rabbit Project! Please read through this guide carefully, as it contains information and suggestions that are important for your project. **4-H leaders can obtain a Leader Project Guide and other resources from the PEI 4-H Office.** Hopefully you, as a member, will “Learn to do by Doing” through hands-on activities that will encourage learning and enjoyment. If you have any questions, contact your District 4-H Officer or your project leader.

4-H YEAR COMPLETION

You complete a project by:

- completing the project Achievement Day requirements
- completing a communication project
- completing a community project
- completing an agriculture awareness project
- taking part in Achievement Day

You must complete all of the listed aspects in order to show at Fairs and Exhibitions.



ACHIEVEMENT DAY REQUIREMENTS

Conformation	40
Showmanship	40
Judging	<u>20</u>
	100 Marks

EXHIBITION REQUIREMENT

Rabbit members can show either one or two rabbits. If choosing to care for two rabbits they must be from the following combinations:

- A) one Senior Buck and one Senior Doe
- B) one Junior Buck and one Junior Doe
- C) one Senior Buck or Doe and one Junior Buck or Doe

Rabbits cannot be from the same age category and the same sex (i.e. two Junior Does)

Age categories:

- Junior Rabbit - born in current calendar year
- Senior Rabbit - born before current calendar year

Members must show all of their project animals at their Achievement Day in order to show in 4-H Classes at the Island Fairs and Exhibitions.

If an animal is not shown at Achievement Day it cannot show in 4-H Classes at the Fairs and Exhibitions.

You cannot interchange your rabbits throughout the show season.

Ages for 4-H members as of January 1st of the 4-H year:

Junior: 9-11 years
 Intermediate: 12-14 years
 Senior: 15-21 years

Check out the PEI 4-H Web Site
www.pei4h.pe.ca

All rabbit members must submit an Animal Identification Form to the PEI 4-H Office on or before May 15th to be eligible to show at the 4-H Fairs and Exhibitions.

HELPFUL RESOURCES!

www.rabbit.org
 www.threelittleladiesrabbity.com
 www.islandgems.net
 www.rabbits.com
 www.rabbitweb.net

Some books and videos are also available at the PEI 4-H Office which can be borrowed for a two week loan period. To book these, call 368-4833 or drop by the PEI 4-H Office at 40 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown.

CLASSES AT

ACHIEVEMENT DAY AND EXHIBITIONS

At your Achievement Day, there are two classes in which you must show your rabbit.

1. **Conformation Class** or Placing the Rabbit - In this class, you will be judged entirely on the quality of your rabbit. Factors considered include whether the rabbit has desirable conformation characteristics.
2. **Showmanship Class** - In this class, you and your rabbit will be judged on appearance and also on how well you show your rabbit. See the score card. The quality of the rabbit does not play a role in this class.

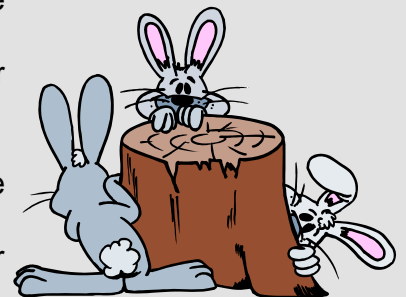
At Exhibitions members usually enter both of these classes.

SCORE CARD FOR RABBIT SHOWMANSHIP

Appearance and Condition of Rabbit <i>Cleanliness, Flething, Condition of Fur, and Training</i>	25
Appearance and Attitude of Club Member <i>Clean, Courteous, Attentive</i>	25
Showing the Rabbit <i>Ability to pick up, carry, pose and handle the rabbit</i>	40
Knowledge about Rabbit <i>Ability to answer questions regarding your rabbit and the parts of a rabbit</i>	10
	100 Marks

SHOW DAY DO'S AND DON'TS

- DO take water, clover or hay with your rabbit to the exhibition
- DO wear a white lab coat over your clothes or a long sleeved white shirt
- DO have your number harness on before entering the ring.
- DO BE PROMPT! Know the time of your class and be there before the judge.
- DO KEEP ALERT! Watch the judge at all times.
- DO take your own piece of carpet.
- DO be prepared to answer questions the judge may ask.
- DO walk behind other entrants when moving position.
- DON'T wear a hat in the ring.
- DON'T chew gum while you are showing your rabbit.
- DON'T bring the cage into the ring. Leave the rabbit in the cage and remove it only before you are called into the ring.
- DON'T over handle or pet your rabbit at the show table. Give your attention to the judge. This is where the practice pays off.
- DON'T talk unless spoken to be the judge.
- DON'T let your rabbit interfere with the other rabbits. Allow a space of two feet, if possible, between rabbits.
- Don't be distracted from showing by side noises, the audience, or the exhibitors beside you.



WORDS TO LEARN

Purebred	The rabbit is a member of a particular breed
Breed	A special class of rabbits which all have the same fur color, markings, shape, size and growth, i.e. the Dutch Breed or the Rex Breed
Crossbred	The rabbit has a variety of different breeds for its background



FEEDING YOUR RABBIT

There are two methods that can be used to feed your rabbit.

Limited Feeding - means a certain amount of feed is given at each feeding. The rabbit's daily feed intake is set. This method is recommended for feeding dry does, bucks and breeding stock. There is less chance of animals becoming over fat. The fact that you have to feed your rabbit at least once a day leaves you with the opportunity to inspect him/her.

Self Feeding - means that feed is always available. Animals self-feed themselves when hungry. Self-feeding is recommended for pregnant and milking does as well as market animals. If feed is available at all times they will increase their feed consumption in keeping with their higher requirements. Self-feeding is less work.

Kinds of Feed:

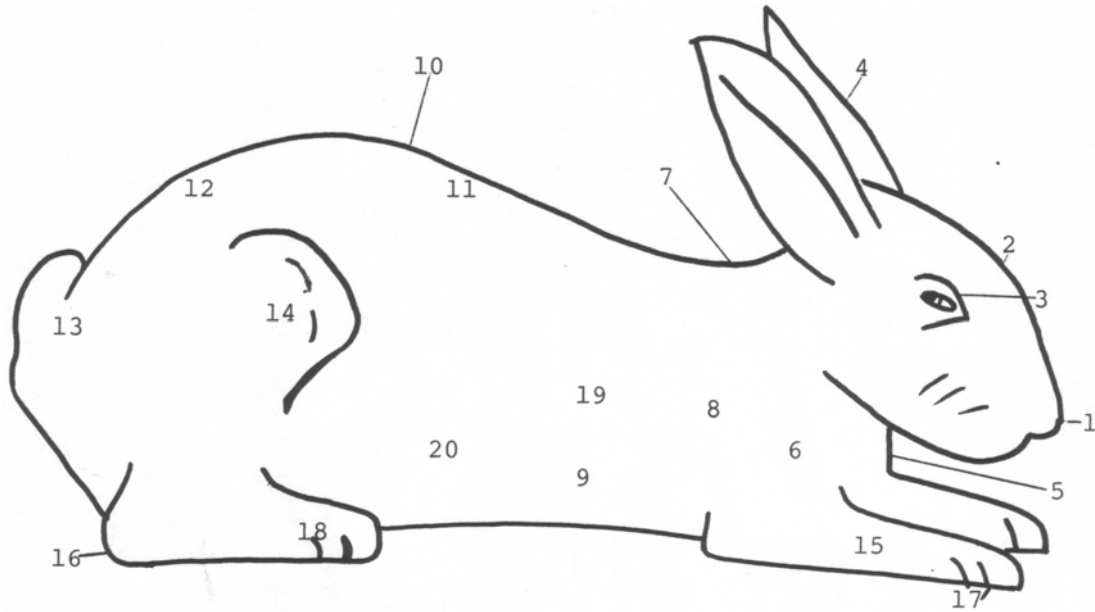
1. **Water** is the most important feed of all and a rabbit must have all it wants. It always must be fresh and clean. Provide warm water in winter. On warm days, rabbits drink more water, just like humans.
2. **Commercial Feed Pellets** - contain all the nutritional requirements of the rabbit.
3. **Grains** - such as oats, barley and wheat help to put on weight.
4. **Hay** - provides proteins, minerals and roughage. The hay should have fine leafy stems. Keep a good supply before the rabbit at all times and to avoid waste, cut the hay into 10 to 12 cm lengths before feeding.
5. **Salt** - is needed by all parts of the body. It is lost easily in sweat and body wastes. Most pellet feeds contain salt; nevertheless, you should keep a block or spool of mineralized salt in your rabbit's cage.

Water helps to carry feed throughout the body and wastes from the body.

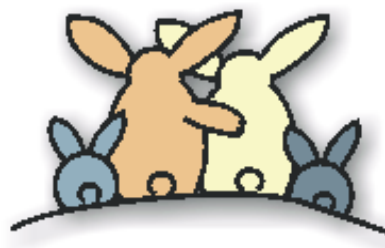
KNOWING YOUR RABBIT

To be able to buy a good rabbit with correct structural characteristics, it is necessary that you be able to identify the ideal. In this lesson, you will learn the parts of a rabbit and will learn how to recognize good and poor conformation features.

Parts of the Rabbit



- | | | | |
|-----|----------|-----|---------|
| 1. | Nose | 11. | Loin |
| 2. | Forehead | 12. | Rump |
| 3. | Eye | 13. | Tail |
| 4. | Ear | 14. | Thigh |
| 5. | Dewlap | 15. | Foreleg |
| 6. | Breast | 16. | Hock |
| 7. | Neck | 17. | Toes |
| 8. | Shoulder | 18. | Foot |
| 9. | Belly | 19. | Body |
| 10. | Saddle | 20. | Flank |



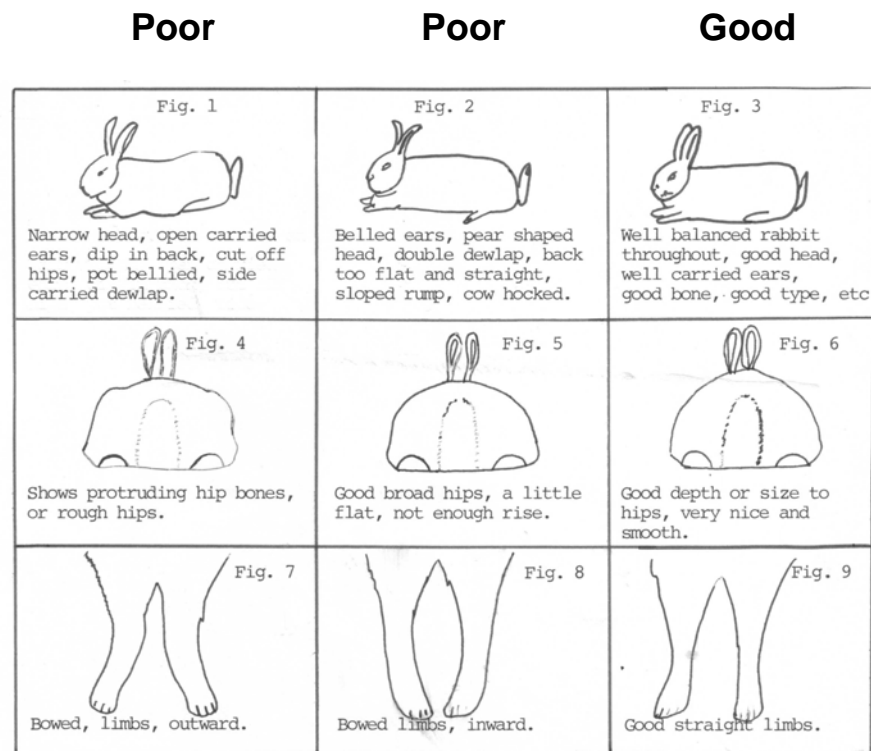
When evaluating your rabbit, you should look at the following points:

- medium to long body
- well-filled in loins
- full hips and wide back
- deep, firm flesh covering
- uniform, well-balanced and proportioned
- alert eyes
- healthy appearance - dense fur with thick undercoat, interspersed with heavy guard hairs
- does should have a large evenly carried dewlap

The following pictures illustrate good and poor conformation.

Getting Your Rabbit Ready for Show

1. The rabbit must be clean. Make sure there is no stain on the legs and paws. Prior to show day, it may be necessary to clip the nails. Your own nail clippers will work well on the rabbit's nails. Be careful not to clip them too short. If you do, the rabbit will find it painful to put pressure on its feet. As a result, it won't show as well.
2. Inside the ears should be clean - use only a slightly damp cloth to clean ears with NO excess water. If you do get excess water in the rabbits ears, the ears will droop over and the rabbit will constantly be shaking its head to remove the water from the ears.



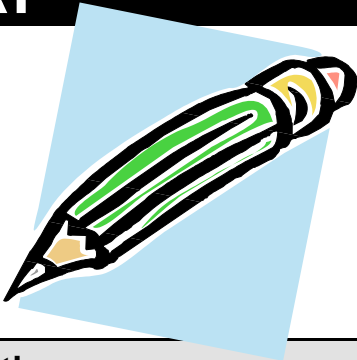
Show Ring Technique Checklist

The judge may ask you to do any of the following:

1. *Carry the rabbit*
2. *Set the rabbit up* - making sure the feet are squarely set up under the rabbit, place your hands on the table at the rabbit's sides.
3. *Be able to pivot your rabbit* - giving the judge an opportunity to view the rabbit from all sides.
4. *Show the rabbit's teeth* - Cradle the rabbit with one arm. Keep the rabbit's body pinned against your body with the animal's head outwards. Then, using the hand cradling its head, use your fingers to pull back its lips to its teeth. Checking the rabbit's teeth is important when buying a rabbit to use as breeding stock since improper teeth can be passed on to offspring. Poor teeth (one tooth crossed over another, one tooth longer than another, etc.) may interfere with proper eating and hence the ability to put on weight.
5. *Show Rabbit's legs, toe nails and hocks.*
6. *Be able to indicate some of the major parts of the rabbit if the judge asks you to point out the parts.*
7. *Be able to answer any questions the judge may ask about your rabbit.*

PROJECT MEETINGS DIARY

Most projects will require at least six to eight project meetings to complete the project.



Meeting Date	Location	Time	At this meeting, we...

Community and Agriculture Awareness Projects

COMMUNITY PROJECT

Each year you are encouraged to provide a service to your community as a 4-H member. This introduces you to the responsibilities of citizenship. You must participate in your club's plan for a community project and you should have a role to play. Describe your involvement with your club's community project this year.



Our Community Project was _____

I helped by _____

It was beneficial because _____

I learned _____

AGRICULTURE AWARENESS PROJECT

Agriculture is one of PEI's main industries. You are expected to participate with your club to complete a project (or provide a service) which helps your club or others become aware of the importance of agriculture in our lives. As in the community project, you should actively participate.



Our Agricultural Awareness Project was _____

I helped by _____

It was beneficial because _____

I learned _____