

# Rabbit Activity Sheet -2024

## Level 3 - Grades 9 & Up

Complete Packet due to the Extension Office May 31, 2024

\$1.00



Allen County 4-H  
Skills for Life

### What you will do in this project:

- Enroll in the 4-H program by **January 15** in v2.4HOnline.
- Enter rabbits to be shown at the County Fair online by May 24 on the Fair Entry website at <https://allencountyindiana.fairentry.com>. You will need to use Firefox or Google Chrome to make the entries. It is helpful to fill out the Rabbit Identification Guide first.
- Complete the 2 activities in the Rabbit Activity Worksheet and turn it into the Extension Office on or before **MAY 31**. The form is at <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/allen/allen-4h.html>
- The Rabbit ID Guide must be turned into the Extension Office on or before May 31. It is to be attached to the Rabbit Activity Worksheets.
- Members showing meat pens and single fryers must contact person on Rabbit ID Guide to get an assigned tattoo letter. The assigned letter must be on the ID Guide when it is turned in. Check the rule book for age and weight requirements of rabbits.
- It is recommended that exhibitor attends two County 4-H Rabbit workshops when offered.
- It is recommended that each family purchase a Rabbit Resource Handbook. The handbook is a good source of information and can be used as a reference when answering questions in the activity sheet.
- All new rabbits in your rabbitry need to be purchased before March 10. This includes the does that are bred for your meat pens and single fryers.
- Refer to the Allen County 4-H Rules Book for a complete listing of all regulations concerning this rabbit project. The rule book can be viewed online at website <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/allen/allen-4h.html>
- To exhibit beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, meat goats, dairy goats, poultry and rabbits, 4-H members must be certified either through the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals program or Indiana's Quality Livestock Care program. These are annual programs that can be completed via online modules or in-person trainings. For more information about in-person trainings in your county, please contact your County Extension

Office. More information about YQCA is available at <http://yqca.org/>. If completing online, please email a copy to your county extension educator.

### Management Tips:

- Rabbits should be provided with plenty of fresh water daily. It is best to change their water twice a day, especially on hot days or in the winter when the water dishes freeze.
- Use a good quality commercial food pellet. Ask other rabbit breeders what feed they give their rabbits and find one that works for your rabbits. The package should give a suggested amount of feed to give daily and then adjust to each rabbit's needs.
- Get in the habit of watching your rabbit's behavior. Make sure they are acting, eating and drinking normally.
- Purchase rabbits from a reputable breeder. The breeder that you purchase your rabbits from will be able to answer questions on feeding, health, housing, and breeding.
- Provide rabbits with an appropriate size cage for their size and weight. The cage should also protect them from predators as well as shelter them from cold drafts, rain, sun and heat.
- Regularly handle your rabbits. A rabbit that is handled often is easier to work with. Practice poising them for show, groom and trim nails if needed, check their teeth and overall condition.
- Be responsible. Your rabbits depend on you to feed, water and care for them.
- A good source of information is The American Rabbit Breeders Association. Their web page is: <http://arba.net>.

4-H Member: \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade in School (January 1, 2024) \_\_\_\_\_ Years in this project \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of 4-H Member verifying that you have completed these activities:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent that you have reviewed this information:

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4-H Animal Care:

The Indiana 4-H program strongly supports positive animal care and strongly opposes animal abuse. 4-H is also dedicated to the mission of developing youth and volunteers through “Learning by Doing” programs. 4-H livestock projects teach life skills such as acquiring knowledge, making decisions, and applying leadership skills.

- When working and caring for animals, it is important to insure that appropriate safety measures are in place for both the animals and the persons who care for them. Therefore, there is no substitute for knowledge, common sense, and experience.
- Animal handlers should study and learn to anticipate an animal's reaction and try and avoid problem situations. It is most important that 4-H members understand an animal's behavior so one can “outsmart” not “out-muscle” an animal. Foremost in the 4-H'ers mind should always be safety of the handler and the animal. Moving animals is more of an art than a science. Movement of animals requires planning and knowledge to accomplish it with the least amount of time, effort and stress to the animal.
- An animal's good health is often directly related to the environmental factors associated with its living space. The presence of predators, dust, odors, pests, temperature, and humidity has a direct effect on an animal's well-being.
- Animals react favorably to daily care and comfortable housing. Consideration should also be given to specific animal needs such as size of their housing space, lighting, and ventilation. The best facilities and equipment cannot and should not be a substitute for daily observation and careful attention to signs of illness, injury, and/or unusual behavior.
- Frequent consultation with your veterinarian is a must. Reasonable attention must always be given to the use of drugs and their approved withdrawal times.

## Activity 1

# The Rabbitry and Rabbit Husbandry

To complete this section of the worksheet, refer to both Chapter 4 - Housing and Equipment on pages 35-40 and Chapter 7 – Health on pages 53-56 in the Rabbit Resource Handbook.

One of the most important aspects of raising rabbits is the rabbitry. Look up the definition for rabbitry in a dictionary, online, or in the glossary in the back of the book. What does the word rabbitry mean?

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Look up the word husbandry in a dictionary or online and write down the definition.

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Would the words rabbit husbandry be a better description of a rabbitry that produces, sells and shows rabbits? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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A rabbitry should be designed for ease of cleaning, have good ventilation and light, give easy access for feeding, handling, grooming and breeding rabbits. The cages should be large enough for the size of the rabbits being raised. Extra space and cages maybe needed as the rabbitry grows to avoid overcrowding. Feed storage is another subject that needs to be considered. Feed should be stored in a clean dry place, out of the direct sunlight and away from rodents. A grooming and or breeding table will be very useful. The safety and well-being of the rabbits are a main concern. Housing should provide rabbits with protection from what two things?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Next to the categories below briefly describe what is in your rabbitry now and what improvements would make your rabbitry more efficient. Additional paper may be attached to this worksheet if needed. Example: *Ventilation – There are two small exhaust fans in ceiling and to move air better and keep the barn cooler in the summer, I would like to get larger ceiling fans or for Feeders – I have crocks and would like to get J feeders to hang on the outside of cage to make it easier to feed rabbits.*

Hutches and Cages:

Building:

Security:

Ventilation:

Lighting:

Feeders:

Waterers:

Nest Boxes:

Feed Storage:

Grooming and or Breeding Table:

Other:

Make a sketch of what you think the ideal rabbitry would look like. Briefly describe what is in this rabbitry that makes it efficient, like size of the barn, types of cages, ease of cleaning, fans or heaters, ventilation, type of watering system, and anything else that you feel would make the perfect rabbitry. Additional paper may be attached to this worksheet if needed.

## Activity 2

# Rabbit Diseases

Use Chapter 7 to find the answers to this puzzle. Write the answer next to each clue and then find the word in the word search.

### Word Search Clues

1. bacterial infection of the mammary glands
2. bacterial infection of the respiratory tract
3. nasal discharge and sneezing caused by *Pasteurella multocida*
4. bacterial infection of middle ear, affects equilibrium
5. spirochete bacterial disease of the vent
6. intestinal parasite in the cecum
7. fur mites cause dermatitis
8. bacteria produce toxins in intestines
9. usually caused when a rabbit does not have enough fur on their hind feet
10. caused by excess calcium oxalate and calcium carbonate in feed
11. viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes and fleas
12. incisor teeth grow abnormally
13. protozoan parasite of intestine
14. fungal skin infection that is zoonotic
15. small parasites in the ear canal
16. bacterial infection causes pus-filled sack under skin
17. bacterial infection causes eye discharge
18. initials for disease caused by Calicivirus

P	R	T	G	D	V	P	B	Z	X	W	Y	M	S	E	V
K	M	A	P	N	E	U	M	O	N	I	A	V	E	N	H
C	S	U	B	A	M	U	E	Y	T	L	E	U	S	T	D
E	G	I	L	B	U	S	D	G	O	H	U	H	S	E	Z
S	S	I	S	O	I	D	I	C	C	O	C	R	E	R	V
M	Q	O	Y	O	D	T	C	M	P	A	E	W	C	O	D
F	R	B	R	G	T	L	S	I	A	K	U	C	S	T	A
S	U	O	X	E	U	A	N	Y	N	N	S	Q	B	O	M
E	S	Y	W	S	H	W	M	A	P	I	G	E	A	X	A
L	S	Z	I	G	O	O	C	O	C	H	Y	E	H	E	S
F	T	O	F	R	N	R	C	M	X	E	I	B	B	M	T
F	N	X	M	U	A	I	I	K	Y	Y	W	L	S	I	I
U	B	S	V	E	T	D	R	P	S	U	M	V	I	A	T
N	E	N	I	R	U	D	E	R	K	L	H	H	O	S	I
S	U	E	B	D	P	E	W	R	Y	N	E	C	K	I	S
L	W	D	U	X	W	U	N	J	F	I	W	V	O	K	O

## Activity 3

# Healthy Rabbits

A well-planned rabbitry will result in healthy rabbits. A healthy rabbit will produce more efficiently, grow faster, and will show better.

High humidity, high ammonia, and poor air quality will lead to respiratory diseases like pneumonia and snuffles. Proper ventilation is just as important in the winter months as it is in the summer. Rabbits cannot tolerate high temperatures with high humidity. Ventilation keeps the air circulating, reduces the humidity, and the heat build-up in the barn. Ventilation also reduces ammonia build-up from the manure. (Chapter 4)

1. A minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ air exchanges per hour will provide the rabbits with fresh air.
2. What is the ideal temperature range for rabbits?

Disinfecting hutches or cages, and equipment regularly will reduce health problems like abscesses, enterotoxemia, and coccidiosis. Remember to remove all debris and fur from the surfaces before disinfecting. A wire brush and or a power sprayer will work well. White vinegar will break down the off-white urine deposits in the trays and on the cage wires. Pour undiluted vinegar on the urine deposits and let it soak, and then scrub with a wire brush. Rinse thoroughly with water. More than one application of vinegar may be needed for heavier deposits. A disinfecting solution of chlorine bleach and water is an inexpensive disinfectant and used most often. Apply the solution with a brush, sponge or spray bottle and allow it to soak for two minutes. Remember bleach is corrosive to metal surfaces, so cages and equipment should be thoroughly rinsed with water to help increase the life of your cages. Drying the cages in the sun will help to reduce disease-causing organisms. (Chapter 7)

1. How often should hutches or cages be cleaned and disinfected?
2. How often do you clean and disinfect your hutches or cages?
3. What is the ratio of bleach to water when used for disinfecting the cages?

Below is a handy guide for mixing a 1-gallon disinfecting solution of bleach and water. In the Rabbit Resource Handbook on page 52 is a blank page. Write this information on the blank page for future reference.

### Disinfecting Solution

1 ounce = 2 Tablespoons

8 Tablespoons =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

4 quarts = 1 gallon

1-ounce bleach to 1-quart water

Add  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup bleach to 1 gallon of water to make a disinfecting solution

\*Note: New solution should be mixed daily

It is important to remove the manure from pull out trays and the ground under hanging cages to reduce ammonia. A clean environment will decrease fly infestation and rodents that can carry or spread diseases. Feeder, crocks, and water bottles should be cleaned out regularly too, and disinfected with a bleach and water solution. Fresh clean water is important to a rabbit's health. A rabbit that does not drink an adequate amount of water will not eat well, and therefore will not gain weight properly and will not have quality fur. (Chapter 7)

1. How often should manure be removed from the rabbitry?
2. How often do you clean manure from the cage trays or under hanging cages?
3. How often do you clean feeders, crocks, and water bottles?

Rabbits should be checked every day for signs of illness or injury. Look to see if they are drinking and eating their normal amount. Watch how the rabbit responds when you approach the cage. Get to know each of your rabbits. Some rabbits are very friendly and come to the front of the cage when it is open, while others are more reserved, and will sit back in the cage. When manure is removed regularly, it is easier to see if there is a normal amount of droppings and urine in the tray or on the ground. A grooming table is very useful when you want to examine an individual rabbit. Be sure to check not only the top of the rabbit, but underneath it as well. Answer these questions the best that you can. There is not just one right answer to these questions.

1. Why is it good to check your rabbits every day for signs of illness or injury?
2. How can you tell if a rabbit is ill?
3. Why is it important to know how much each rabbit normally eats and drinks?
4. Why is it important to know the personality of each rabbit?
5. How can looking at the droppings and urine help you to determine if a rabbit is sick?

Chapter 7, on pages 54-56, explains how to safely remove a rabbit from a cage. This is a good technique to learn and practice. Chapter 10, on pages 84-88, explains how to do a rabbit showmanship. Look over the showmanship guidelines. The objective of the showmanship is to evaluate your rabbit's condition. There should not be any faults or disqualification in a show rabbit. Under each category is a list of physical disorders, signs of illnesses, or other general disqualifications. Showmanship is a good method to learn, not only for competition, but also to use when you are buying a rabbit or just checking the overall health and condition of one of your own rabbits.

1. How will the showmanship outline help you find an illness, physical disorder, or injury on your rabbit?
2. How will this showmanship outline help when buying a rabbit?
3. What is a disqualification?

# ALLEN COUNTY 4-H PRODUCTION RABBIT RECORD



*Records serve as a way to measure your own success with a project. When answering these questions, you should be able to see where improvements can be made for next year and if you wish to continue with this project for another year.*

1. List types of feeds, hay, and conditioners that you feed to your rabbits.

Breed of Rabbit	Brand name of Feed	% of protein	Amount fed & frequency	Weight & cost of bag

Breed of Rabbit	Supplement	Amount fed & frequency	Cost

2. How many rabbits do you take care of in a year? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many breeding animals do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you sell your rabbits? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who buys your rabbits and for what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How do you care for your animals in both hot and cold weather? Tell about housing, feeding and watering.

7. How often do you clean your cage trays? How often do you sanitize cages, feed and water dishes, and equipment?



8. List any tours, workshops, clinics, shows or contests that you may have participated in during the last year that pertained to rabbits.

9. What resources do you use to help you have a successful rabbitry? (List people, magazines, websites, etc.

10. List two new things that you have learned about rabbits this year?

11. Did you get a new breed of rabbit this year? If so, what breed and what have you learned about them?

_____ Complete v2.4online enrollment by January 15, 2024
_____ Completed Fair Entry on line by May 24, 2024
_____

***This Form DUE May 31, 2024 –To the Allen County Extension Office***

Exhibitor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in School (1/1/2024) \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Number for Fair – Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number \_\_\_\_\_ Parent(s) Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Members must list on this Rabbit Identification Guide the breed, variety, class, sex, and tattoos of all potential rabbits to be exhibited at the County Fair. Exhibitors can pre-enter up to 20 rabbits on the Rabbit online Fair Entry and exhibit up to 14. Exhibitor may show only one animal per class and may exhibit up to 3 breeds of rabbits, but more than 3 breeds can be listed. Write the tattoo down for the rabbit you intend to show. Only the tattoo can be changed at check in. The breed, variety, class, and sex will all stay the same. Meat Classes do not count as a breed. Meat Classes are listed separately from breeds on second page. 4-H member can only exhibit in two of the four meat classes. Meat Pens and Single Fryers must get an assigned letter from the leader listed on this form. The assigned letter **MUST** appear on this ID form. All new rabbits in your rabbitry need to be purchased by **March 10**. This includes the doe used for your meat pen. Refer to Rule Book for more information. Only rabbits listed on this rabbit identification form may be exhibited. Remember to enter your rabbits on this form for the Breeders Class, because the Breeders Class it is not on the online entry. Breeders Class entry on page 2 of this ID form.

Breed	Variety Variety – Color	Class Junior, 6/8, or Senior	Sex Buck or Doe	Tattoo Use capital letters and numbers. Print clearly.	Fair Use	Fair Use
<i>Example: Mini Rex</i>	<i>black</i>	<i>Junior</i>	<i>Buck</i>	<i>CJ587</i>		
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
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7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						

Breed	Variety Variety – Color	Class Junior, 6/8, or Senior	Sex Buck or Doe	Tattoo Use capital letters and numbers. Print clearly.	Fair Use	Fair Use
<i>Example: Mini Rex</i>	<i>black</i>	<i>Junior</i>	<i>Buck</i>	<i>CJ587</i>		
13.						
14.						
15.						# of Rabbits to be shown
16.						\$ Collected
17.						4H Member's Initials
18.						4H Leader's Initials
19.						
20.						
<b>Breeder Class Rabbit – What Breed are you Showing?</b>						

Single Fryers and Meat Pens **MUST** have an assigned tattoo letter on this form. \*\* To obtain your assigned tattoo letter for the meat pen and single fryer contact:

Cheryl Smith  
260-637-5502 or 260-409-9077  
[cmlhoppers@msn.com](mailto:cmlhoppers@msn.com)

**I hereby certify that I own these rabbits and they are in my personal possession and under my daily care.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of 4-H member verifying that the information above is accurate.      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian verifying that the information above is accurate.      Date

Meat Classes	Breed	**Assigned Tattoo Letter <b>and</b> Tattoo of Roaster and Stewer	Fair Use
Single Fryer**		**	
Meat Pen**		**	
Roaster		**	
Stewer		**	

**ALLEN COUNTY 2024 RABBIT IDENTIFICATION FORM**