

Rabbit

Description: The 4-H Rabbit Project provides youth a fun and hands-on learning experience that develops life skills, as well as teaches valuable information about properly caring for their birds. Subjects such as such as general care, nutrition housing, and health care are presented in the curricular materials, through workshops and activities such as poultry judging, and in preparation of an exhibit. Youth also have the opportunity to develop responsibility, decision-making, nurturing, and communication skills through active participation in the 4-H Rabbit Project.

- Enroll in 4-H, pay annual program fee, and enter project in V2.4online by January 15
- Enter exhibit(s) in FairEntry by May 19, 2023. See page 7 Rule #24

To exhibit beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, meat goats, dairy goats, poultry and rabbits, 4-H members must be certified through the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals program. This is an annual program that can be completed via online modules or in-person trainings. For more information about in-person trainings in our county, please contact your County Extension Office. More information about YQCA is available at <http://yqca.org/>.

1. Rabbit Activity Worksheet & ID Guide

The 4-H member is required to complete a minimum of two of the activities in their level with the exception of the Mini 4-H member completing one activity for their grade level in the Mini 4-H Rabbit Activity packets. All activity worksheets will be due to the Extension Office by May 31, 2023. Activity worksheets must include the Rabbit ID Guide. Activity sheets, which are late or incomplete, will result in a ribbon grade one placing lower following placement of their animal/s. Late activity sheets must be received by the end of check-in. Members not turning in a completed activity sheets are ineligible to show. Member will compete in a level according to school grade as of January 1 of current exhibition year. The rabbit committee may recognize up to three members in each level for outstanding work with their Activity Sheets.

Level 1 – Grades 3-4-5

Level 2 – Grades 6-7-8

Level 3 – Grades 9-10-11-12

Mini 4-H – Grades K-1-2

2. General Rules

A. It is recommended that each family purchases a *Rabbit Resource Handbook*, which is a great reference and it is useful when completing the activity sheets. Website for all forms and activity sheets www.extension.purdue.edu/allen

*ARBA - American Rabbit Breeders Association - www.arba.net – a great source of rabbit information.

B. Rabbits shown in a breed class should be at least 4 months of age the day of the show and weigh the minimum junior weight for its breed according to ARBA standards.

C. All new rabbits must be purchased by March 10. This includes the does bought for your meat pens and single fryers. Rabbits shown must be purebreds. Pedigrees are highly recommended. Rabbits entered must be owned and cared for by the 4-H member. Rabbits shown must be an ARBA recognized breed with the exception of a potential new breed or variety that has passed their first presentation as explained below.

D. A potential new breed or variety that has passed their first presentation under the ARBA standards committee and has a certificate of development (COD) may be shown in our county as listed on their active COD only. Potential new breeds or varieties passing their presentation are eligible to win placings, Best of Breed and Best Opposite, but cannot compete in Best of 4 or 6 Class or Best of Show. Members showing a potential new breed or variety should be familiar with how their breed is progressing. Call a rabbit leader if you have questions about where your new breed or variety stands.

E. An individual rabbit may only be shown once during the show. There are two exceptions - the single fryer that is shown in the meat pen class and the rabbit that is shown in the Breeders Class will also be shown in its own breed class.

F. Judging will be governed by the latest rules of the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA).

G. All rabbits must be exhibited in their natural condition. Any violation of this rule shall exclude rabbit from competition.

H. 4-H members are expected to be present during judging at the fair. It is the 4-H member's responsibility to bring their rabbits to the exhibit table for judging. If there is a conflict with showing, please let a leader know who will be showing for you.

I. Refer to 4-H General Rules under Livestock in the Allen County 4-H Rules Book for additional information and rules pertaining to rabbits and ownership.

J. During the fair, the Rabbit Committee reserves the right to send any rabbit home that becomes sick or injured, without substitution. Only the Rabbit Committee and the owner may handle or inspect the rabbit. No exceptions.

K. The Rabbit Committee will decide on the trophies and submit their proposal to the Awards Committee.

L. To better assist you with completion of your project and to prepare you for the Fair exhibition, it is recommended that each exhibitor attend at least two county rabbit workshops in addition to completing their activity sheets.

M. The Rabbit Committee will choose one rabbit member or family to receive the Rabbit Leader's Award, which will be presented on the day of the Auction.

3. Fair Check In

For Date and Entry Time - (check County Fair schedule).

A. All 4-H members must check in immediately upon arrival. All rabbits will need to be individually inspected by a Rabbit Committee member before being penned. Rabbits showing signs of illness will be sent home.

B. Rabbits that are not permanently and legibly tattooed in their left ear will not be accepted.

C. No rabbits will be accepted prior to or after specified check in hours.

D. Mini 4-H members follow same rules, for checking in.

4. Rabbit Online Entry

All 4-H members, no matter how many years in the project, are allowed to show the maximum number of rabbits.

All exhibitors are allowed to pre-enter up to 20 rabbits on the Rabbit online Fair Entry and exhibit in up to 14 of the following classes:

(a) Senior Buck (b) Senior Doe (c) 6/8 Intermediate Buck (d) 6/8 Intermediate Doe (e) Junior Buck (f) Junior Doe. Rabbit Members can only exhibit in 2 of the following 4 Meat Classes: Meat Pen, Single Fryer, Roaster, or Stewer.

A. The rabbit online Fair Entry deadline is May 19, 2023. Member must list the breed, variety, class and sex of all potential rabbits to be exhibited at the County Fair. Only rabbits listed in the online Fair Entry may be exhibited.

B. Age (Junior, Intermediate, and Senior) maybe changed at check in on an individual rabbit that was entered on the online Fair Entry. Enter rabbit's age according to weight at the time of the online Fair Entry, and then they can be moved up.

C. Only the tattoo can be replaced at check in. The breed, variety, class and sex of the rabbit entered on the online FairEntry must remain the same.

D. Exhibitor may show only one animal per class and may exhibit up to 3 breeds of rabbits, and up to 2 of the meat classes, Meat classes do not count as a breed.

E. 4-H members showing Single Fryers or Meat Pens should contact the name listed on ID Form to receive information on their assigned tattoo letter/s and the letter/s must appear in the online Fair Entry.

5. Meat Classes

4-H members can auction only one of the following 4 meat classes: Meat Pen, Single Fryer, Roaster, or Stewer. The Rabbit committee must have the intent to auction slip within two hours from the completion of the show if the member wishes to offer a pen for sale. If participating in the Auction, 4-H members are responsible to bring their exhibit into the sale ring.

4-H members are responsible to dress and deliver the rabbits they sell at the auction if the buyer wants the meat. It is recommended that the 4-H member showing in Meat Classes also show in at least one breed class. Mini 4-H members cannot compete in the Meat Classes. Does used and bred for meat pens and single fryers need to be purchased by March 10.

MEAT PEN - A Meat Pen is 3 rabbits of the same breed, same color or variety (either all broken or all solid). Rabbits should be of equal size and weight. Each rabbit weighing a minimum of 3 1/2 pounds and a maximum of 5 1/2 pounds and not over ten weeks on the day of the show. They can be the same or opposite sex. Rabbits of marked breeds (broken) must be marked with no disqualification and be of the same variety. Does for Meat Pen and Single Fryers must be owned by rabbit members, and therefore her offspring will be raised by the member. *Rabbits under 3 1/2 pounds are not allowed to show.

SINGLE FRYER- A Single Fryer is a rabbit weighing a minimum of 3 1/2 pounds and a maximum of 5 1/2 pounds and not over ten weeks on the day of the show. Single Fryer must be owned and raised by 4-H member. *Note: A Single Fryer rabbit can be selected from the 4-H member's Meat Pen, so this particular rabbit will be shown twice. Once with the meat pen and a second time as a single fryer. *Rabbits under 3 1/2 pounds are not allowed to show.

ROASTER CLASS – A roaster is a single rabbit under six months of age, weighing a minimum of 5 1/2 pounds and a maximum of 9 pounds on the day of the show. Roaster must be owned and raised by 4-H member. Roasters should come from member's previous stock.

STEWER CLASS – A Stewer is a single rabbit six months of age or older, weighing a minimum of 8 pounds on the day of the show. Stewer must be owned and raised by 4-H member. Stewers should come from member's previous stock.

6. Breeder Class

The purpose of the Breeders Class is to encourage 4-H rabbit members to breed and raise their own show rabbits. Rabbits entered in this class must be owned and raised by the 4-H member. Rabbits must be born from the member's own breeding stock. This class will be held near the end of the show before the 4 Class and 6 Class judging.

A. Each member is allowed to show one rabbit in the Breeders Class. Note this rabbit must be shown in its breed class, so it will be shown twice.

B. Rabbit shown must be a recognized ARBA breed, and can be of any variety, age and sex.

C. A three generation pedigree of the rabbit to be shown in the Breeder Class must be turned in at fair check. Circle all rabbits that are owned by the 4-H member on the pedigree. 4-H member's name or rabbitry name must appear on the pedigree as the owner and breeder.

D. Rabbit must also be shown in the regular show under its breed. Please note that the rabbit will be shown twice – once in the regular show and once in the Breeders Class.

E. Rabbit must be listed in the online Fair Entry twice. Once in regular class and again in Fair Entry under Breeders Class.

F. If the rabbit is disqualified during the regular show it cannot show in the Breeders Class.

G. Awards will be given for Champion and Reserve Champion.

H. Mini 4-H members are ineligible to show in the Breeder Class.

7. MINI 4-H MEMBERS GRADES K-1-2 * NOTE: It is highly recommended that Mini 4-H members own and care for their own rabbit.

- A. Mini 4-H members will follow the basic same rabbit project rules as the traditional 4-H members with a few exceptions.
- B. Members are required to enroll in 4-H membership by stated deadlines and sign a 4-H Liability Release Form. Liability Release Form needs to be signed and turned in with rabbit activity worksheets.
- C. Members are required to complete a rabbit activity worksheet for their level and turn it into the Extension Office by May 31, 2023. Website for all forms and activity sheets www.extension.purdue.edu/allen
- D. Members can pre enter 2 rabbits on the rabbit identification form that is included in the rabbit activity worksheets, but they can only bring and show one rabbit at the fair. Identification forms are due at the Extension Office by May 31, 2023.
- E. Mini 4-H rabbits will stay at the fair and will be checked in and check out with the traditional 4-H members. Members are responsible for the care of their rabbit during the week of the fair.
- F. Mini 4-H members will not compete with the traditional 4-H members.
- G. Mini 4-H members are allowed to show one small breed, ARBA* Recognized rabbit with the help of an older 4-H member in the Mini 4-H Rabbit Class following the meat classes near the beginning of the rabbit show.
- H. All Mini 4-H members will show together in the Mini 4-H Rabbit Class no matter what breed of rabbit they are showing. Rabbits will fit in one of these categories (a) Senior Buck (b) Senior Doe (c) Junior Buck (d) Junior Doe.
- I. Members will receive a participation ribbon for their rabbit. They cannot compete with the traditional 4-H members, nor can they compete in the meat classes or sell at the auction.
- J. It is recommended that each family purchases a *Rabbit Resource Handbook* from the extension office, which is a great reference and it is useful when completing the activity sheets. *ARBA - American Rabbit Breeders Association- www.arba.net – is a great resource of rabbit information.

Suggestions for improving on your rabbit project

- Improve upon your rabbit knowledge and inventory. Learn how to tattoo a rabbit, how to fill out pedigrees, and how to keep current records of your rabbit herd.
- Begin this year's record with the closing inventory of the year before. Keep two does and one buck from the previous year. Plan a breeding program so you can raise your own rabbits to show in the fair's breed and meat classes.
- Show your rabbits in at least one ARBA Youth Division Show to see how your rabbits have improved and measure up to those of other breeders.
- Learn to dress-out rabbits and/or find a market for your offspring that you do not plan to keep.
- Serve as a Junior Executive Leader for the Rabbit Program, get involved in the 4-H Rabbit Club, or become a 4-H Junior Leader.
- Always show good sportsmanship and respect other 4-H members.
- Help a new member get started in rabbits and continue to help other 4-H members before, during and after the fair.
- Get involved in Rabbit Ambassador, make a Rabbit Poster or give a Rabbit Illustrated Talk. (See details below)
- Help with fair set up and clean up. Volunteer to help at the food booth. Ask a leader what they need help with.

****RABBIT AMBASSADOR CONTEST (OPTIONAL):** This event is open to all traditional 4-H members enrolled in the 4-H Rabbit Project. Contest is divided into five levels: Novice – grades 3 & 4; Junior – grades 5 & 6; Intermediate – grades 7 & 8; Senior – grades 9 & 10; and Master – grades 11 & 12. Grade is as of January 1st of the current year. One contestant per level is eligible for State Contest. Participants will learn about rabbits as well as how to judge and identify different breeds. The contest will consist of a test of rabbit knowledge, breed identification, and showmanship.

Information about the Ambassador Contest can be found online under Indiana 4-H Handbook. The Rabbit Ambassador Contest is held prior to the county fair usually in the spring. Check the Clover Chronicle for specific date. Contact rabbit leaders for more information.

****RABBIT POSTER EXHIBIT (OPTIONAL):** The exhibit is open to any traditional 4-H member and is not limited to exhibitors of 4-H rabbits. See Rabbit Educational Poster for further information.

****ILLUSTRATED RABBIT TALK (OPTIONAL):** The Illustrated Talk is a demonstration speech given by the traditional 4-H member on a rabbit topic at the county or state level. The Illustrated Talk should last 5 to 7 minutes, and is given in front of an audience. The Rabbit Poster maybe used as a part of the Illustrated Rabbit Talk. Contest is divided into five levels, the same as the Rabbit Ambassador Contest.

**More information can be obtained on the optional projects from the County Extension Office (CEO), and by contacting a rabbit leader or committee member. Information on the Ambassador Contest can be found online under Indiana 4-H Rabbit Handbook.