

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 rabbits. Subjects such as general care, nutrition, housing, and health care are presented in the curricular materials, through workshops, in activities such as the Rabbit Ambassador Contest, and in preparation to exhibit your rabbit. Youth also have the opportunity to develop responsibility, decision-making, nurturing, and communication skills through active participation in the 4-H Rabbit Project.

Exhibitor Guidelines:

- Enroll in 4-H, pay annual program fee, and enter project in v2.4online. Enrollment begins October 1st.
- Enter exhibit(s)- ID and enter any rabbit you might show in V2.4online by May 15, 2026 (MUST ENTER BREED, VARIETY, CLASS, SEX, & TATTOO)
- Enter exhibit(s) in Fair Entry (allencountyindiana.fairentry.com) by June 8th,2026 (CHECK BREED, VARIETY, CLASS, SEX, & TATTOO) See page 7 Rule #24.
- QLC/YQCA** – 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 (YQCA) or in-person trainings (QLC). For more information about obtaining in-person trainings in our county, please contact your County Extension Office. Online certification is available at <https://yqcaprogram.org/>
- The committee recommends any animal wanting to be shown should be present at 1 of the 3 ID meetings in the spring. The committee will verify breed variety, class, sex and tattoo to help with the Fair Entry process.

Exhibit Guidelines:

1. PAPER RABBIT ID GUIDE

- A. **All 4-H members must submit the Rabbit ID Guide filled in completely with Breed, Variety, Class, Sex, & Tattoo by June 8th, 2026.**
- B. The Rabbit ID Guide can be found on the 4-H website <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/allen/allen-4h.html>.
- C. Mini 4-Her's need to refer to section 7.

2. GENERAL RULES

- A. It is recommended that each family purchase a Rabbit Resource Handbook. This book is a great reference. *ARBA - American Rabbit Breeders Association - www.arba.net – is also a great source of rabbit information.
- B. **ALL NEW RABBITS MUST BE PURCHAED BY 3rd Saturday in March.** 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

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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.

- C. 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.
- 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, Best of 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 committee member 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 a rabbit(s) that are 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. Members/parents must attempt to contact a Rabbit Committee member or a Fair Board member before a you take a sick or injured rabbit off the fairgrounds. Only the Rabbit Committee and the owner may handle or inspect the rabbit. No exceptions.
- K. The Rabbit Committee will decide on the trophies/awards and submit their proposal to the Awards Committee.
- L. The rabbit committee may recognize members in each level for outstanding work on the rabbit project. This can include completion of worksheets or participation in activities and workshops.
- M. The Rabbit Committee will choose one rabbit member to receive the Rabbit Leader's Award annually, which will be presented on the day of the Rabbit Show.

3. RABBIT ONLINE ENTRY

- A. All exhibitors are allowed to pre-enter up to 20 rabbits in 4-H online (V2.4online) by May 15, 2026. They may then finalize and exhibit up to 20 rabbits which must be entered in Fair Entry by June 8, 2026. Rabbits may be shown in 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.
- B. **Exhibitors may show up to 2 rabbits per class.** (An example would be that you can enter and show 2 Holland Lop, Solid, Senior Does in the same class together.)
- C. **Exhibitors may exhibit up to 3 breeds of rabbits.** (Meat rabbits are not included as a breed.)

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- D. Only rabbits listed in the online Fair Entry may be exhibited. (Filling out your Rabbit ID Guide will help you have the correct information for Fair Entry.)
- E. Class/Age (Junior, Intermediate, and Senior) **Members should enter their individual rabbits according to the age/class they will be on the day of the show.** If the rabbit will be 5 months old the day of the show you should enter them as a junior. If that particular breed requires that the rabbit be shown by weight it can be moved up a class at check-in. Rabbits will not be moved down if they are entered as a senior and they are junior weight.
- F. A rabbit tattoo can be replaced at check-in. To change a tattoo the breed, variety, class and sex of the rabbit entered on the online Fair Entry must remain the same.
- G. Members can exhibit in any or all four of the following Meat Classes: Meat Pen, Single Fryer, Roaster and/or Stewer. (Meat classes do not count as a breed.)
- H. **4-H members showing Single Fryers or Meat Pens** should contact the name listed on ID Guide to receive information on their assigned tattoo letter/s and the letter/s must appear in the online Fair Entry and on the ID Guide.

4. MEAT CLASSES

- A. 4-H members can show in any or all four meat classes, but they are only allowed to auction one of the following 4 meat classes: Meat Pen, Single Fryer, Roaster, or Stewer.
- B. **Does used and bred for meat pens and single fryers need to be purchased by 3rd Saturday in March.**
- C. It is recommended that the 4-H member showing in Meat Classes also show in at least one breed class.
- D. 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 rabbit/pen for sale.
- E. 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.
- F. Mini 4-H members cannot compete in the Meat Classes.
- G. 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.
- H. 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.
- I. ROASTER CLASS –

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- 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.
- J. 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.

5. 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 have individual health checks by a Rabbit Committee member or designee before being penned. *Rabbits showing signs of illness will be sent home.*
- B. Rabbits must be permanently and legibly tattooed in their left ear before arrival. Rabbits that do not have a permanent tattoo 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.

6. Breeder Class

Members will show one offspring that they raised along with one or both of the parents in this class to show the progress they have made in improving their rabbits. 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 the offspring and one or both parents in the Breeders Class. Note these rabbits must be shown in their breed class to be eligible to show in breeder's class, so they will be shown twice – once in the regular show and once in the Breeders Class.
- B. Rabbits shown must be a recognized ARBA breed, and can be of any variety, sex, and must meet minimum show age and weight.
- C. Members must bring a three-generation pedigree to present the judge for each of the rabbits to be shown in the Breeder Class. Members should circle all rabbits that are owned by the 4-H member on the pedigree. The 4-H member's name or rabbitry name must appear on the pedigree as the owner and breeder of the offspring.
- D. Rabbit(s) must be listed in the online Fair Entry twice. Once in regular class and again in Fair Entry under Breeders Class.
- E. If the rabbit is disqualified during the regular show it cannot show in the Breeders Class.
- F. Awards will be given for Champion and Reserve Champion.
- G. 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. The judge will ask Mini 4-H members general questions about their rabbit (i.e. breed, variety, class, sex, care, etc.)

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- A. Mini 4-H members will follow the basic same rabbit project rules as the traditional 4-H members with a few exceptions.
- B. Mini 4-H members are also required to enroll in 4-H membership by stated deadlines and sign a 4-H Liability Release Form. **The Mini 4-H Liability Release Form and Mini 4-H Rabbit ID Guide need to be signed and turned in by the June 8, 2026 deadline.**
- C. **All Mini 4-H members must fill out the Mini Rabbit ID Guide filled in completely with Breed, Variety, Class, Sex, & Tattoo.** This document must be turned in to the Extension Office by June 8, 2026. Website for all forms and activity sheets www.extension.purdue.edu/allen.
- D. Mini 4-H Members can pre-enter two rabbits on the Mini Rabbit ID Guide, but they can only bring and show one rabbit at the fair.
- E. It is highly recommended that Mini 4-H members show one small breed (4-class), ARBA recognized rabbit breed with the help of an older 4-H member in the Mini 4-H Rabbit Class. Their class will follow the meat classes near the beginning of the rabbit show.
- F. All Mini 4-H members will show together in the Mini 4-H Rabbit Class no matter what breed of rabbit they are showing.
- G. 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.
- H. Mini 4-H members will not compete with the traditional 4-H members.
- I. Members will receive a 4-H Mini 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. This is a great reference and it is useful when completing the activity sheets. *The ARBA - American Rabbit Breeders Association- www.arba.net – is a great resource for rabbit information and updates.

8. SHOWMANSHIP

Exhibitors will follow the current Indiana Ambassador guidelines. Showmanship participants must be enrolled in the rabbit project and have shown their own animal they have exhibited in an earlier class. The current exhibit class guidelines: Beginner (grades 3-5) Intermediate (grades 6-8) Advanced (9-12) This is a county only class. Members are strongly encouraged to participate.

Suggestions for improving on your rabbit project

- Always show good sportsmanship and respect other 4-H members.
- 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.

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- 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.
- Help a new 4-H member get started in rabbits and continue to help others 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, clean up, volunteer to help at the food booth or ask a leader what you can do to help.

****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 Rabbit 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 Animal Education 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 may be used as a part of the Illustrated Rabbit Talk. The 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.**