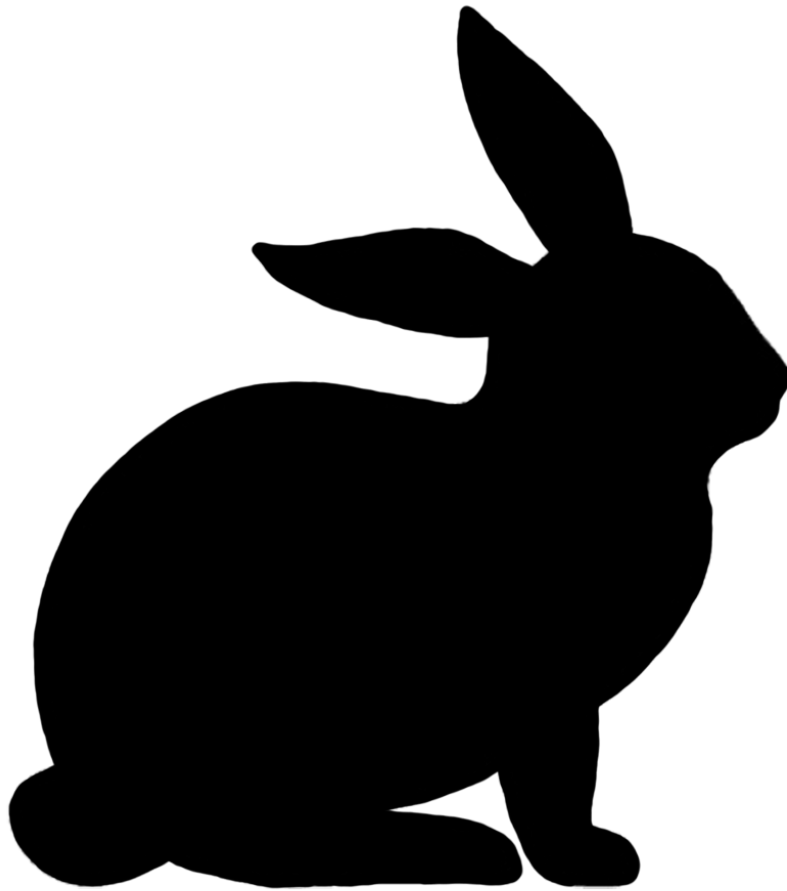


# Rabbit Exhibitor Handbook



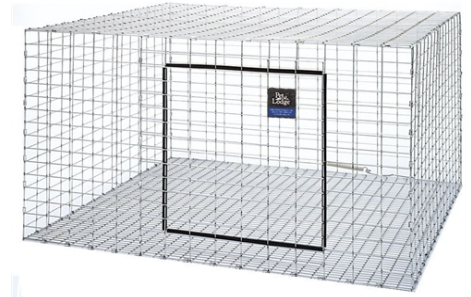
Mrs. Kaitlyn Pettit

[kaitlyn.pettit@wyliebulldogs.org](mailto:kaitlyn.pettit@wyliebulldogs.org)

# Basic Rabbit Equipment

## Hutch/Cage:

Recommended to have their own cage but can be paired up, and it is advised to have 2-3 cage's prepared (for 5 bunnies) so that they can be separated for feeding or behavior issues as needed. All cages should have wire floors. The School Farm will have a limited number of cages available for exhibitors. If you choose to keep them at home, each rabbit needs at least 2ft by 2ft of space. Feeding will be easier to manage if each rabbit has their own pen.



## Waterers:

Bowls are preferred. Water should be cleaned out and replaced with lukewarm water 2-3 times daily.



## Feeders:

Gravity/self feeders (with wide openings) are recommended. Food must be checked twice a day and any food remaining from the prior feeding should be documented then disposed of.



## Bedding/Composites:

Rabbits are NOT to be kept on bedding of any sort. It is ONLY to be used in drop trays or under cages to help collect urine/feces for easy cleaning. This applies to those keeping their rabbits at home or during transport.



Composite or pellet bedding make the best options. Bedding should be changed often, and dirty bedding/feces should NEVER be able to touch the floor of the cage.

## Grooming Supplies:

Not much should be needed for grooming if a sanitized environment is maintained. A damp hand to work the rabbit's fur, always wiping from head to tail, works great and should be done daily to ensure healthy hair growth.

Baby wipes can be used when cleaning is needed at a show and in the worst case scenarios. Brushes are not necessary.

### Transport Carriers:



Rabbits should be transported in transport carriers. The school has a MINIMUM number of carriers available. Please be sure to have proper transportation for your rabbits to the Wylie Livestock Show and the Taylor County Livestock Show.

It is recommended that the bottom pan of the rabbit carrier be lined with puppy pads to absorb urine. Rabbits should not be transported in cat carriers or similar carriers because they lack a wire floor, rabbits can slip and cause injury while being transported in a solid bottom carrier. Carriers should not be lined with hay, puppy pads should be used.

**\*\*NEW for 2023-2024: The school will be purchasing new carrier cages that are appropriate for your fryers! They will be available for rent with a \$100, fully refundable deposit, if the cages are returned in the same condition that they were loaned out!\*\***

# Rabbit Care

## Project Timeline:

1. Complete the Google Form by September 7th @ 3:40 PM
2. Pay your Deposit (1/2 of the total bill) by September 7th @ 3:40 PM
3. Gather and clean all supplies
4. Pay the remaining balance for rabbits one week before Delivery Date
5. Mrs. Pettit will deliver your rabbits and check your supplies; feed and water must be ready for rabbits upon arrival. (Delivery Date will be communicated once it has been set with the breeder)
6. Weigh your rabbit after you have had it for 24 hours then email it to Mrs. Pettit.
7. Weigh again at the same time daily and email Mrs. Pettit all of them each time you weigh them
8. Be sure to watch the FFA Website ([www.wylieabilenechapter.ffaNOW.org](http://www.wylieabilenechapter.ffaNOW.org)) for dates, show information and other important details.
9. The Taylor County Livestock Show will be your final destination. You will need a plan for your rabbit upon the completion of the show.



## Purchasing:

This year, we will be offering two different breeder options. Select the breeder that best fits your budget.

Option #1: Fort Worth Finest Rabbitry      Phil Lisle (817)401-6755      Kendall Lisle (817)939-6357

5 rabbits = \$300

2 bags of feed = \$50

Additive (Muscle Max) = \$15 {optional}

Option #2: Heaton Rabbits      Michael Heaton (361)564-8764

5 rabbits = \$325

2 bags of feed = \$60

### Weighing:

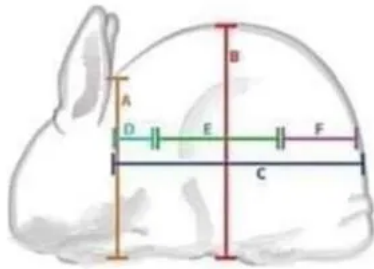
All rabbits are to be weighed DAILY! Each rabbit will have an identification number tattooed in their ear. When reporting your weight to Mrs. Pettit, you will email her your rabbit's tattoo number, current weight and their current feed amount. Make sure you do this for all of your rabbits. Rabbits should be weighed at the same time each day (weekdays, weekends, holidays). Your beginning weight will happen 24 hours after you have received your rabbits. When weighing your animal, make sure your box is in the center of the scale and is stabled. Then, make sure your scale reads 0 lbs 0 oz. Place 1 rabbit into the box, once the scale numbers have settled and the weight is final, record the weight as \_\_\_\_lbs and \_\_\_\_oz. This is the same format that you will use to submit weights to Mrs. Pettit. Repeat this process for each rabbit.

### Handling:

Rabbits NEED to be handled regularly to be sure that they can be handled by the judges easily to assess their body composition. They should not be allowed to roam out of their cage. When handling a rabbit, be sure that they are held close to your body in a Football Hold. Everyday, you are to set-up your rabbit in a ball and work their hair. This will all be demonstrated in a video within the first week after Delivery Date.



## Market Rabbit Selection Guide



- A) Depth of Shoulder
- B) Depth of Body
- C) Length of Body
- D) Shoulder
- E) Midsection
- F) Hindquarter



Ideal. Excellent depth of shoulder, midsection and hindquarters. Body is medium length and depth balances with length of body.



A little longer and not as deep as the first rabbit. Rabbit is a little longer in the shoulders. Not a bad animal but not ideal.



Good depth to the shoulders and midsection, but this rabbit "falls off" or is "lacking depth" in the hindquarters. The high point of the rabbit is also too far forward.



Long and low in shoulder, and the rabbit has a very late rise and is long in body. Rabbit severely falls off and is choppy in the hindquarters. Avoid rabbits like this!

## Market Rabbit Selection Guide



Ideal. Has good balance between width and depth. Width carries well down to the table. Loin and hindquarters are full and smooth.



Great width, but not enough depth to balance. Very flat over the loin and hips, where it lacks roundness.



Good depth, but not enough width to balance. Makes the rabbit look very tall and skinny.

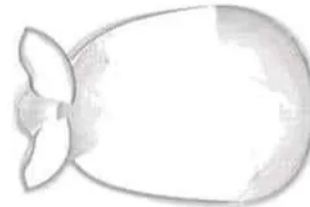


Good roundness to the top of the hindquarters, but is pinched in the lower hindquarters. Doesn't carry its fullness all the way to the table.



Loin lacks fullness and is hollow. This also makes the hips look like they're protruding. Rabbit lacks smoothness and roundness over the top.

## Market Rabbit Selection Guide



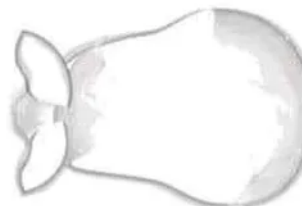
Ideal. Has good width and roundness of body. Nice full shoulders, well rounded hindquarters and good width to length. Note how the shoulders slightly taper, this is desirable.



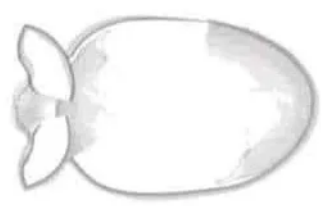
Not enough width to the hindquarters to balance out the shoulders. Rabbit is rather long.



Shoulders are too long and narrow to balance. Hindquarters are flat and lack roundness.



Narrow throughout the shoulders and midsection. Not a smooth transition from the front to the rear of the rabbit. Hindquarters are nice, full and round though.



Shoulders are too wide to balance. Hindquarters is very angular and lacks fullness and roundness.

**\*\*some visuals to assist in the processing of learning to BALL a rabbit.\*\***

Be on the lookout for a showmanship clinic in December with Mrs. Pettit.

# Feeding

Rabbits are very picky about feed and will not eat well if only given stale food. The more often the feed is filled, the more likely they are to eat well. Keeping an accurate measure of how much your rabbits are consuming is also essential to market projects to accurately gauge which rabbits are gaining efficiently and at what rate. We will be using a measuring cup (like you would use in the kitchen) for measuring out the feed. Feed instructions will be described as a cup...literally 1 cup! Feed instructions will begin with delivery of rabbits. Feeders should be checked 2-3 times daily. Once a day, generally in the mornings, it is recommended that you dump any remaining feed.

2 bags of feed should last you the entire project. They will be available for purchase when we place the rabbit order with the breeder.

For your reference, the feed Fort Worth Finest Rabbitry will be using is Rowe Feed.



For your reference, the feed Heaton Rabbits will be using is Petrus 5050 Elite.

## **Petrus Feed** **Elite 5050 Rabbit Conditioner**

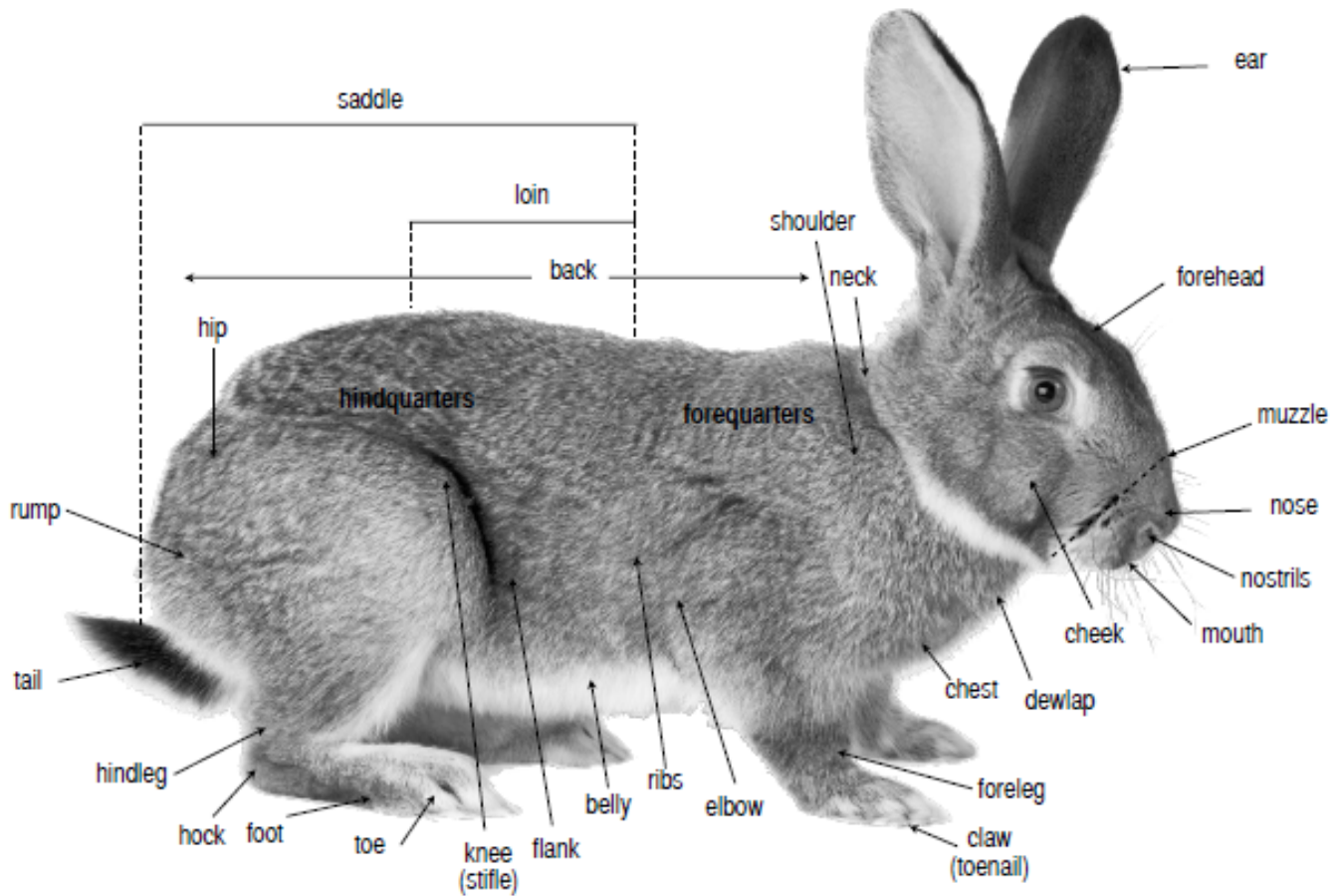


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IN AND AROUND ALEXANDRIA, LA*



# Judging Rabbits

Parts of the Rabbit:



## What Judges are looking for in Meat Pens:

Meat pens consist of three rabbits shown as a group. They are judged on having a good body type, and for having uniformity among the three individual rabbits. Basically you are looking for 3 identical triplet rabbits based on weight, width, depth, frame, and fur. Two exceptional rabbits shown with a fair rabbit normally will not beat three good rabbits. Since you have to show 3 identical rabbits, it is best to have a few spares to choose from to pick the ones that look alike.



# Getting Ready for Show

Be sure that the validation tattoos remain visible for the show to verify upon arrival.

Show Checklist:

- Carrying Cage(s) with your Show Tag on top {Mrs. Pettit will provide you with that before the Wylie Livestock Show + again for the Taylor County Livestock Show}
- Wagon/cart for moving cages
- Table (to groom rabbits)
- Small, cheap bathroom rug/carpet square
- Feeder
- Waterer
- Feed
- Brush
- Puppy Pads for carrier

Once you arrive at the show make sure you do the following:

- Check-In
- Place rabbits in assigned area
- Be courteous to other people's space and animals
- Be respectful of the judge(s) and those who are working the show
- Have your rabbits brushed and ready for the table before your class is called
- Take your carpet square and the correct rabbit to the table when called

# Showmanship

To Learn more about showmanship, please utilize these great resources and guides -

<http://www.starrcounty.org/Rabbitshowmanship.pdf>

<https://quizlet.com/6080372/4-h-rabbit-showmanship-flash-cards/>

<https://www.arba.net/PDFs/Showmanship.pdf>

<https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/antelope/4-HRabbitShowmanshipGuide.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/@fortworthsfinestrabbitryte5830/featured>

Mrs. Pettit will have a showmanship clinic in December to cover in more detail what to expect and how to properly exhibit your rabbits for the Wylie Livestock Show and the Taylor County Livestock Show. Date and information to come.