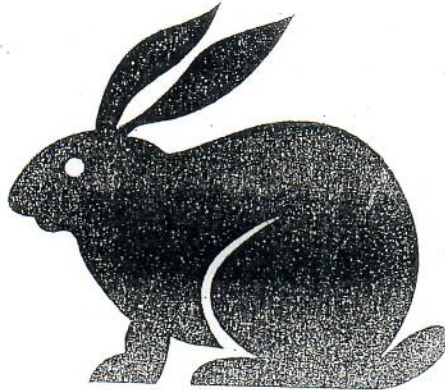


# BENDER RABBITS

Californian



Wayne Bender  
4786 CR 126  
Van Vleck, TX 77482

Home (979) 244-2327  
Cell (979) 479-4180  
School (979) 323-5095  
Email – [wbender@vvisd.org](mailto:wbender@vvisd.org)  
Please Do Not Call After 9:00 p.m.

I do not text - when you  
call if I do not answer -  
call back, please.

1. Keep feed in front of rabbits at all times--Remember rabbits are nocturnal, they eat more at night.
2. Keep FRESH water- empty daily- refill
3. Brush and handle rabbits daily- The more you handle and sit them up the better
4. Weigh rabbits once a week
5. Rabbits like to be cool but not in the north and east
6. Wind or rain
7. No dogs or cats around the cages
8. If you have bunnies in a cage with a bottom the urine and the feces may turn red
9. Feed rabbits at the same time each day- you do not want them to miss meals
10. Check teeth
11. Watch for ear mites
12. Clip toe

YOU ONLY HAVE RABBITS 42 DAYS... 1 DAY COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN MAKING SHOW!!!

Equipment needed:

- 1 big Feed bowl
- 1 small Feed bowl
- Water bowl or hang up waterer
- Brush
- Table
- Throw rug
- Carrying cage

#1 most important  
Thing  
A quality scale

My recommended feeding schedule... the whole feeding period all the quality Feed Ration they can eat

At 36 days before show start feeding the following mixture in equal parts.

- Whole oats
- Black sunflower seeds
- Barley
- Show bloom
- I would only buy 5lbs. Of each 2 mixes together

★ Feed at the  
Same Time  
Each Day

Feed one film canister per bunny in the morning only in a separated bowl. Take away at night.

DO NOT feed this mixture all the time. Bunnies get addicted.

If the bunnies get too big before the show limit their feed - not water- use the following schedule:

- Day one- One cup rabbit feed per bunny  
No grain
- Day Two- Mix ¼ cup Black Sunflower seeds  
Mix ¼ cup Oats  
Mix ¼ cup Barley

My recommended Feed:  
Pettus 50/50  
Purina Grey Bag

ON Feed always read Feed tag:  
Feed should not be over 60 days old

## ALL ABOUT HEAD TYPES

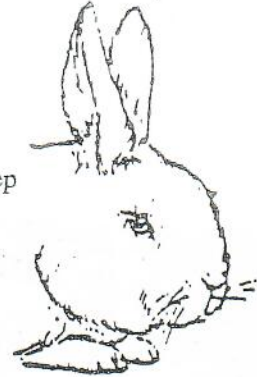
### WELL BALANCED HEAD

This is a well-balanced head for small, compact breeds.



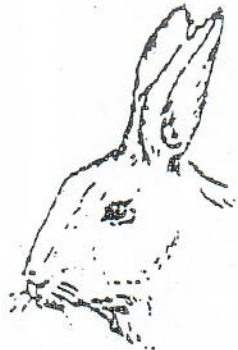
### BULLDOG TYPE HEAD

Broad, heavy, wide skull, deep jaws well flared out.



### PEAR-SHAPED HEAD

Snipey head and muzzle. Undesirable on any type rabbit, as we know them today.



### MALE TYPE HEAD

A well-balanced male-type head, good ear base, fitting most all group "D" rabbits.



### GIANT TYPE HEAD

Enough breadth to support giant type ear base, and long, heavy ears. A giant being very long in body needs a longer type head to balance.



### POOR EAR CARRIAGE

This is a strong head; however, the ear base is too narrow and weak, ears spread. This, of course, is undesirable. The skull should always be broad enough at the ear base to support the ears properly, regardless of the size of the breed.



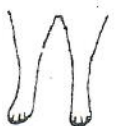
## LEGS - FEET - TAILS



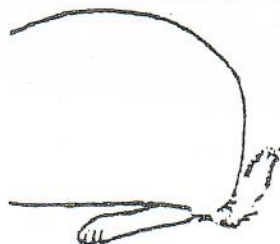
Bowed limbs, outward



Bowed limbs, inward



Good front feet



Cow-hocked hind feet



Carrier Hind Feet



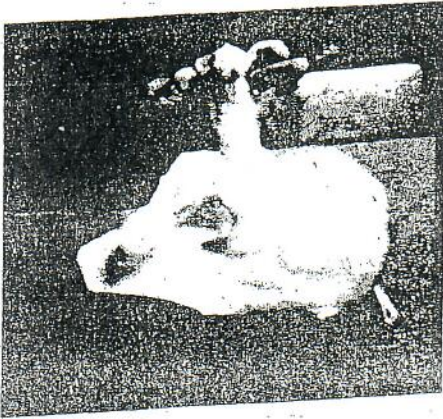
Side carried tail



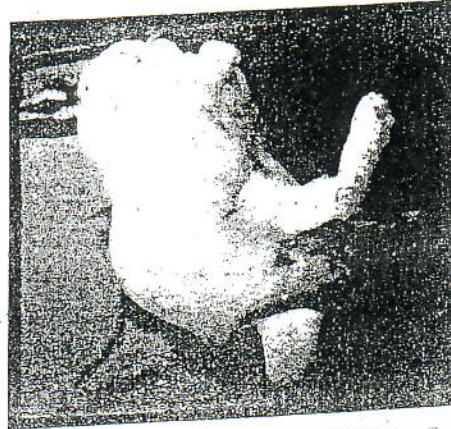
Screw tail



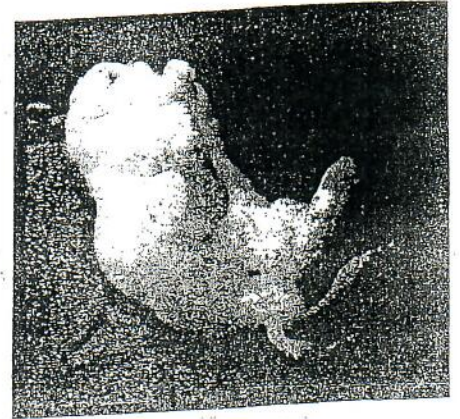
Good tail carriage



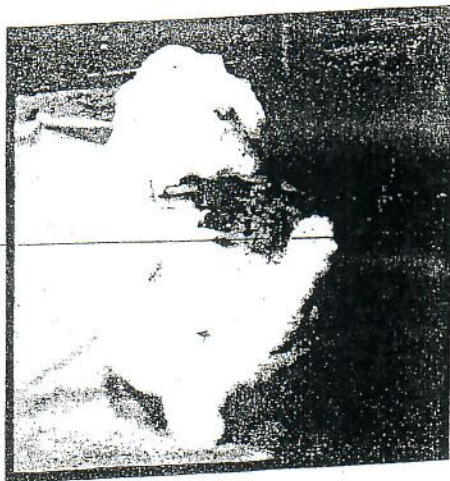
10. Extend leg to check for straightness.



11. Check sex and look for infection; check hocks.



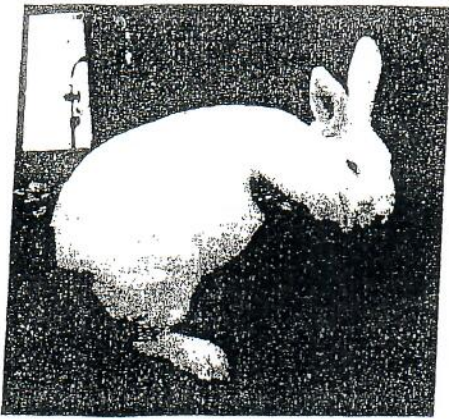
12. Check tail.



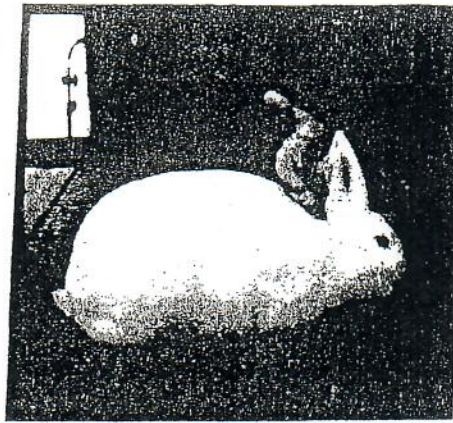
13. Check belly for rapture and abscesses.



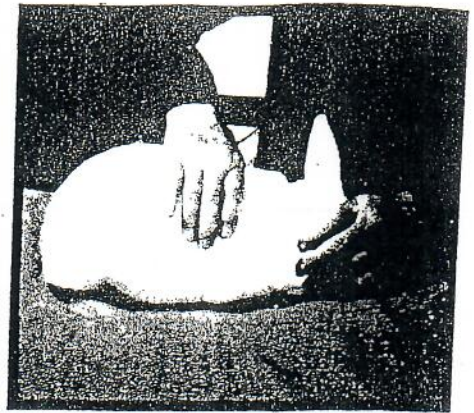
14. Check hind legs.



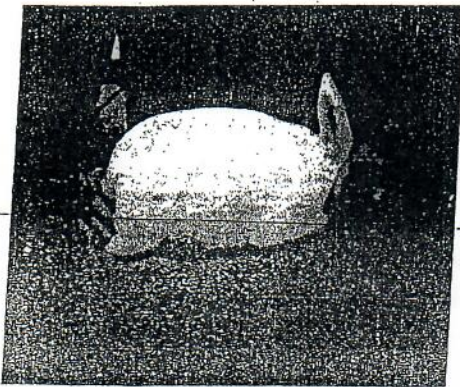
1. Lifting from holding pen. Note hands bearing weight.



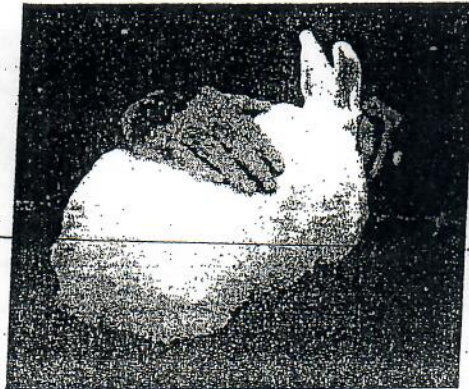
2. Posing for preliminary evaluation of overall balance.



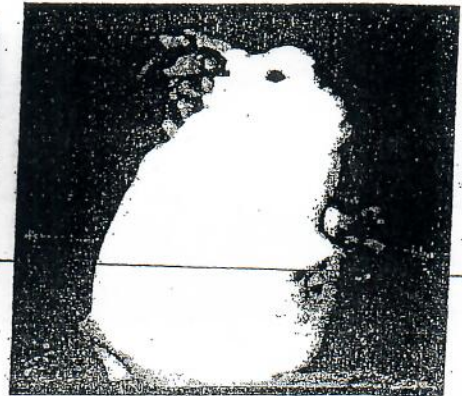
3. Checking shoulders and rib spread, fullness of loin.



4. Check hips for fullness, smoothness, pinched or undercut.

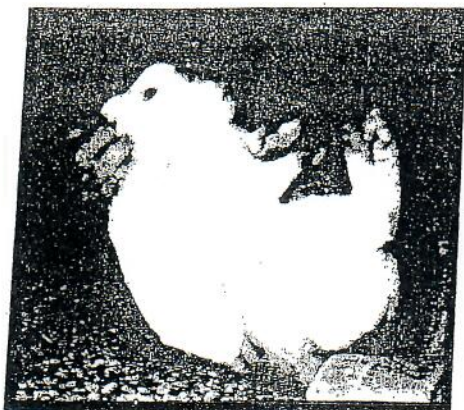


5. Check quality of fur.

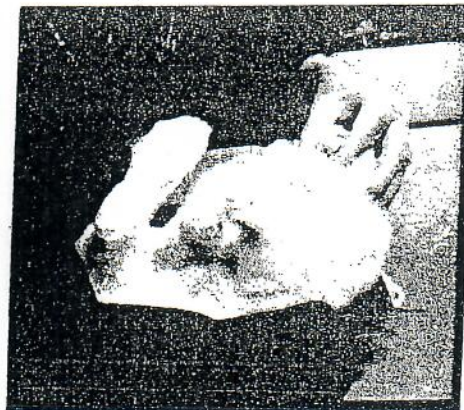


6. Lift to turn over - note left hand bearing weight.

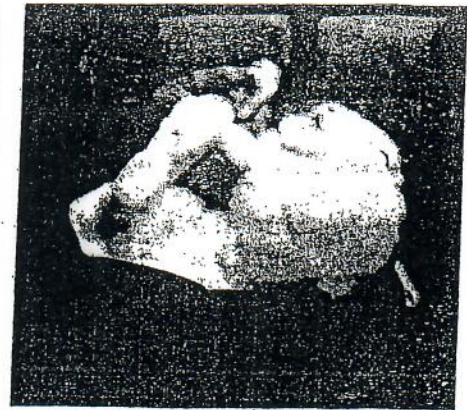
With your left hand, open the rabbit's mouth and check it for buckteeth and alert eyes. Examine the rabbit's toenails for disqualifications. It is a good idea to keep the toenails trimmed because if the rabbit were to get one caught and tear it off in the wire of the hutch, this would be a disqualification. Extend the legs to check for straightness. Now turn the rabbit around so that its head is cradled in the bend of your elbow.



7. Rest weight on table releasing left hand for examination.

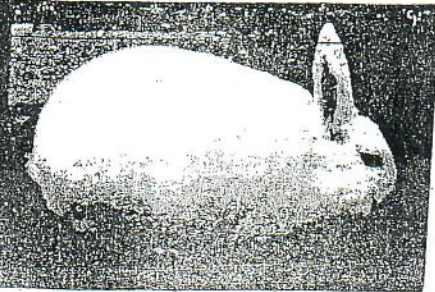


8. Check teeth and eyes.

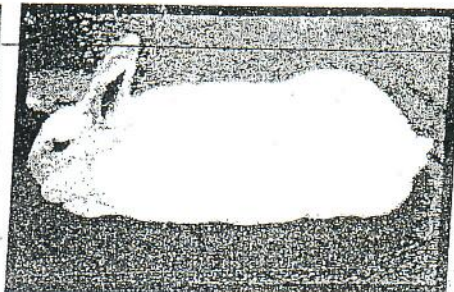


9. Check toenails.

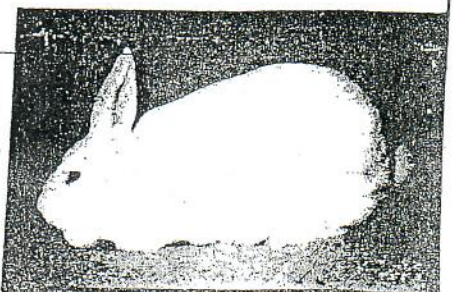
## PROPER POSING OF RABBIT



Too tucked up. Note appearance of chopped hindquarter and pinched, or undercut, lower hip.



Hips too stretched and flattened showing hip bones, flat hip, and no rise to loin.



Proper pose, front feet even with eyes, rear feet firmly on table, toes just even with hip joint. Note slight rise from shoulder to loin, just over hips, and rounded hindquarter.

## ALL ABOUT HEAD TYPES

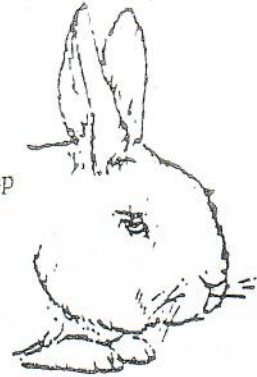
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Broad, heavy, wide skull, deep jaws well flared out.



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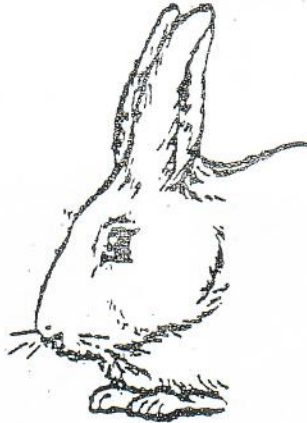
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A well-balanced male-type head, good ear base, fitting most all group 'D' rabbits.



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## LEGS - FEET - TAILS



Bowed limbs, outward



Bowed limbs, inward



Bowed limbs, inward



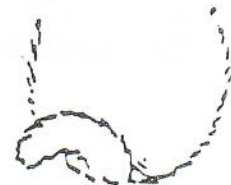
Cow-hocked hind feet



Correct Hind Feet



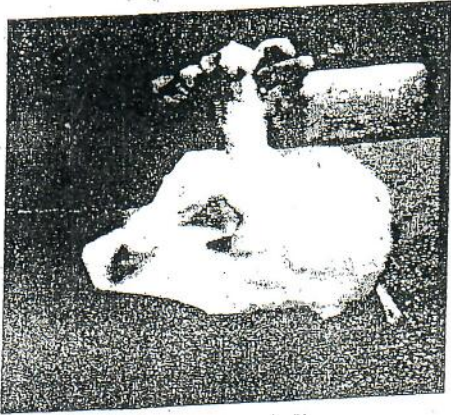
Side carried tail



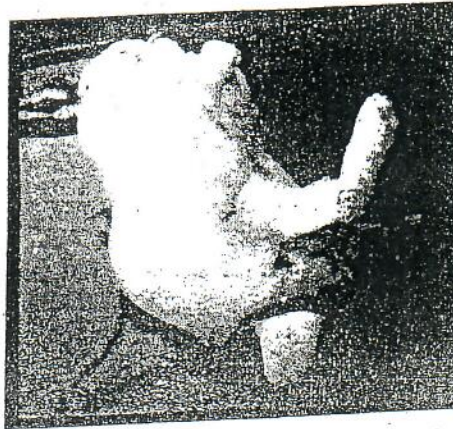
Screw tail



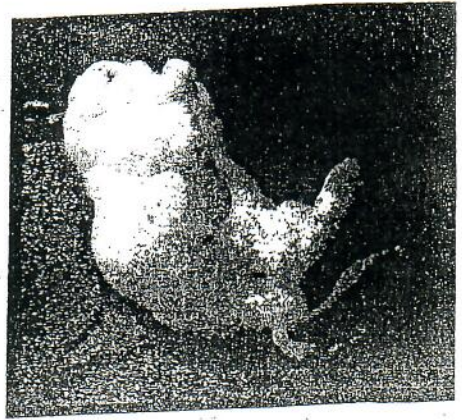
Good tail carriage



10. Extend leg to check for straightness.

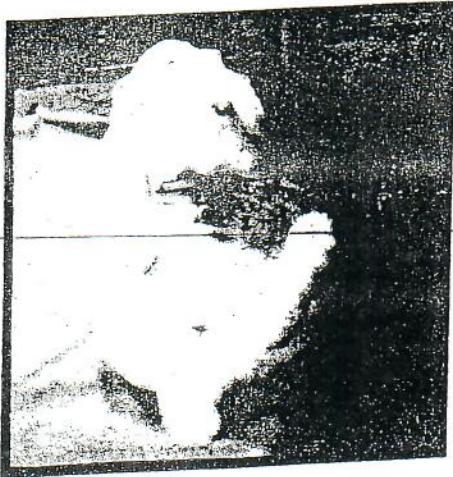


11. Check sex and look for infection; check hocks.



12. Check tail.

*California Rabbits  
tail should be  
gray - eye  
on under  
Necker side*



13. Check belly for rupture and abscesses.



14. Check hind legs.



Always use these types of  
cages to haul Rabbits - No  
Dog or Cat Kennels.









# FEEDING & MANAGING MARKET RABBITS

## WHAT DO I NEED TO PURCHASE TO GET STARTED?

CAGES  
WATER BOWLS  
FEEDERS  
FEED  
1 SPRAY BOTTLE  
SCALES

\*\*\*IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU PURCHASE A GOOD SET OF SCALES THAT WEIGH IN OUNCES, UP TO AT LEAST 10 LBS. THE WEIGHT LIMIT FOR MEAT PENS IS 3 LBS MINIMUM; 5 LBS MAXIMUM PER BUNNY.

## BREEDS

THE BEST BREEDS FOR MARKET RABBITS ARE CALIFORNIANS OR NEW ZEALANDS. IF YOU LOOK AT MOST SHOWS, THE WINNING PENS ARE USUALLY CALIFORNIANS.

BUY YOUR STOCK FROM A REPUTABLE BREEDER. WATCH OUT FOR JUNK. IF YOU BUY FROM A COMPETITOR, YOU CAN BET THAT YOU'RE NOT GETTING QUALITY BREEDING STOCK. DO NOT BUY RABBITS FROM FEED STORES; THEY ARE OFTEN SOME RABBIT BREEDER'S CULLS.

## CAGES

\*\*\*\*\*NO HAY IN THE CAGES\*\*\*\*\*ONLY IN NEST BOXES WHEN KINDLING\*\*\*NO SALT OR MINERAL WHEELS \*\*\*\*\*ALL THIS DOES IS RUST YOUR CAGES. \*\*\*\*\*THE COMMERCIAL FEED HAS ALL THE MINERALS AND VITAMINS THE RABBIT NEEDS.

\*\*\*IT IS BEST TO HAVE EXTRA CAGES TO SEPARATE BUNNIES CLOSER TO SHOW DATE. \*\*\*



CAGES ARE BEST KEPT IN A BARN, HANGING FROM THE RAFTERS, OR TIED TO STEEL POSTS TO GET THEM UP OFF OF THE GROUND. IF YOU USE STEEL POSTS AND HAVE DOES KINDLE IN YOUR CAGES, YOU NEED TO PUT GREASE AROUND THE STEEL POSTS. ANTS LIKE SMALL BUNNIES, AFTERBIRTH & BLOOD. THE STACK CAGES WORK GREAT FOR EXHIBITORS WHO ARE PURCHASING BUNNIES ONLY.

PLACING CAGES ON BARRELS CREATES A URINE & FECAL MESS. PLACING CAGES ON SAW HORSES LEAVE CAGES TOO LOW TO GROUND.

VENTILATION IS IMPORTANT IN THE SUMMER. KEEP THE BUNNIES WARM IN WINTER, BUT BE CAREFUL NOT TO PLACE HEAT LAMPS TOO CLOSE TO CAGES.

IT IS ALSO IMPERRATIVE THAT THE CAGES NOT BE ACCESSIBLE BY DOGS. DOGS WILL GET UNDER THE CAGES, GET THE RABBITS EXCITED AND POSSIBLY CAUSING ONE TO BREAK IT'S NECK. ALSO, DOGS WILL PULL THE LEGS OFF OF BUNNIES IF THEY GO THROUGH THE CAGE BOTTOM WHEN THEY ARE SMALL. CATTLE PANELS PLACED AROUND THE BARN WILL SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

### **NEST BOXES (ONLY IF YOU ARE BUYING BRED DOES OR RAISING YOUR RABBITS FROM BREEDING STOCK)**

NEST BOXES NEED TO BE APPROX. 14" LONG; 10" WIDE, WITH SIDES ARE 7" TALL. NEST BOXES MADE COMPLETELY OF WIRE ALLOW FOR EASY CLEANING & GOOD VENTILATION. I BUILT MY NEST BOXES OUT OF ½" X 1" WIRE & PLACED SMALLER SCREEN WIRE IN THE BOTTOM TO KEEP THE BUNNIES FEET FROM FALLING THROUGH THE WIRE & CRIPPLING A BUNNY. YOU'LL FILL THIS WITH A SOFT HAY FOR BEDDING AND PLACE THE BOXES IN THE CAGE ABOUT 2-3 DAYS BEFORE KINDLING. THIS GIVES THE DOE TIME TO BUILD A NEST.

WHEN BUNNIES START APPEARING OUT OF NEST BOX, PUT THEM BACK IN. WHEN THE MAJORITY OF THEM ARE OUT DAILY, REMOVE THE BOXES. THIS SHOULD BE AT ABOUT 18-21 DAYS OLD.

### **WATERERS**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU USE **WATER BOWLS** INSTEAD OF BOTTLES OR AN AUTOMATIC SYSTEM. AUTOMATIC SYSTEMS AND BOTTLES ARE A PAIN TO KEEP CLEAN AND HARDER TO CHECK FOR WATER LEVELS. WATER BOTTLES WILL LEAK, CREATING A MESS, AND COULD LEAVE RABBITS WITHOUT WATER. NIPPLES ON AUTOMATIC SYSTEMS OFTEN CLOG WITH ALGAE, LEAVING RABBITS WITHOUT WATER.





## **HOW TO WORK RABBIT HAIR:**

YOU NEED TO PLACE THE RABBIT ON A PIECE OF CARPET TO PREVENT THE BUNNY FROM SLIDING AROUND. PLACE YOUR HAND OVER THE RABBIT'S HEAD & TUCK THE REAR LEGS UNDER THE BUNNY. DON'T BUNCH HIM UP, BUT MAKE HIS REAR ROUND, LIKE A BALL. THIS IS HOW YOU SET UP A BUNNY. MAKE SURE THAT THE FRONT LEGS ARE UP UNDER HIM & HE IS RELATIVELY SQUARE. WITH A SPRAY BOTTLE, SPRAY A LIGHT COAT OF TAP WATER ON THE HAIR, DAMP, NOT WET. RUN YOUR FREE HAND BACK & FORTH ACROSS THE HAIR ABOUT 100 STROKES. THIS HELPS TO CONDITION THE HAIR & REMOVE DEAD HAIR. 3-4 DAYS BEFORE SHOW, USE CORN STARCH INSTEAD OF WATER. THIS HELPS MAKE THE HAIR SHINE & SLICK. WHEN YOU WORK THE HAIR AGAINST THE GRAIN, IT SHOULD POP RIGHT BACK INTO PLACE & LOOK GOOD. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRAND AND RESERVE MAY JUST COME DOWN TO THE QUALITY OF THE HAIR.

## **SELECTING BUNNIES**

AGAIN, YOU MUST HAVE A SCALE THAT WEIGHS UP TO 10 LBS IN OUNCES. IF YOU KEPT UP WITH YOUR BUNNY WEIGHTS, YOU'LL HAVE A MUCH EASIER TIME PICKING OUT YOUR PEN. YOUR BUNNIES MUST BE VERY CLOSE IN WEIGHT AND FEEL THE SAME. WHEN THE BUNNY IS SET UP, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO RUN YOUR FREE HAND OVER THE BUNNIES SHOULDERS AND ACROSS THE LOIN TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE THE SAME WIDTH ACROSS THE SHOULDERS AND THE LOIN IS THE SAME WIDTH.

YOU MUST CHECK YOUR BUNNIES TO SEE THAT THEY HAVE ALL OF THEIR TOE NAILS. THE BUNNY SHOULD HAVE 5 TOE NAILS ON EACH FRONT FOOT, AND 4 TOE NAILS ON EACH REAR FOOT. 1 MISSING TOE NAIL WILL GET YOU SIFTED. THE TOP TEETH SHOULD BE STRAIGHT AND OVER LAP THE BOTTOM SET. IF BOTTOM SET OVER LAP TOP SET, YOU WILL GET SIFTED.

CHECK EARS FOR EAR CANKER. EAR CANKER IS CAUSED BY MITES IN THE EARS. THEY EAT THE SKIN DOWN IN THE EAR AND CAUSE SORES. THIS WILL ALSO GET YOU SIFTED. CHECK RABBIT EARS EACH TIME YOU WORK HAIR. CAT MITICIDES WORK WELL ON RABBIT EARS IF YOU GET MITES. AS LONG AS YOUR CAGES ARE CLEAN, MITES SHOULD NOT BE A PROBLEM.

**HAVE FUN!!.....IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.....YOU KNOW HOW TO CONTACT ME!**

## **FEEDERS**

METAL FEEDERS THAT HANG ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE CAGE WORK VERY WELL, BUT SOMETIMES LIMITS ALL BUNNIES ACCESS TO FEED. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A RABBIT THAT WILL PUSH OTHERS OFF OF FEED. USE METAL FEEDERS, AND ALSO PLACE A CROCK IN THE CAGE WITH EXTRA FEED. YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS WITH BUNNIES URINATING IN THE BOWL, MAKING THE FEED BAD. IT HAPPENS.

## **WORKING THE HAIR**

ABOUT THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE SHOW, YOU NEED TO BE WORKING HAIR AND WEIGHING THE BUNNIES EVERY OTHER DAY. THIS HELPS GET THE BUNNIES ACCUSTOMED TO BEING HANDLED AND LETS YOU KEEP UP WITH THEIR PROGRESS. THE WEEK OF THE SHOW, YOU NEED TO WORK RABBIT HAIR DAILY AND WEIGH BUNNIES DAILY. IF RABBITS ARE NOT CLOSE IN WEIGHT, YOU MAY HAVE TO SEPARATE THE LARGER ONES FROM THE OTHERS. \*\*YOU REALLY NEED MORE THAN ONE CAGE FOR THIS REASON\*\*