

Rabbit Production

By Josh Schaeffer



Types of Rabbit Production

- Fanciers
 - Pets, Breeding Stock, and Show Animals
 - Laboratory
 - Fur/Hair
 - Angora
 - Rex
 - MEAT
 - Largest Rabbit Market
-



Basics Of Raising Meat Rabbits

- Breed Selection
 - General Management Techniques
 - Understanding Rabbits
 - Housing
 - Feeding
 - Breeding
 - Health
 - Marketing
-



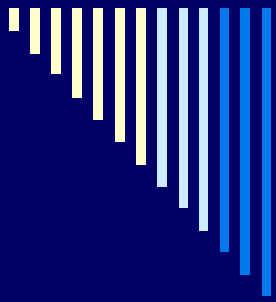
Breed Selection

- Meet demands
 - White
 - Fine-boned
 - Expected litter size
 - 8-10 kits
 - Personal preference
-

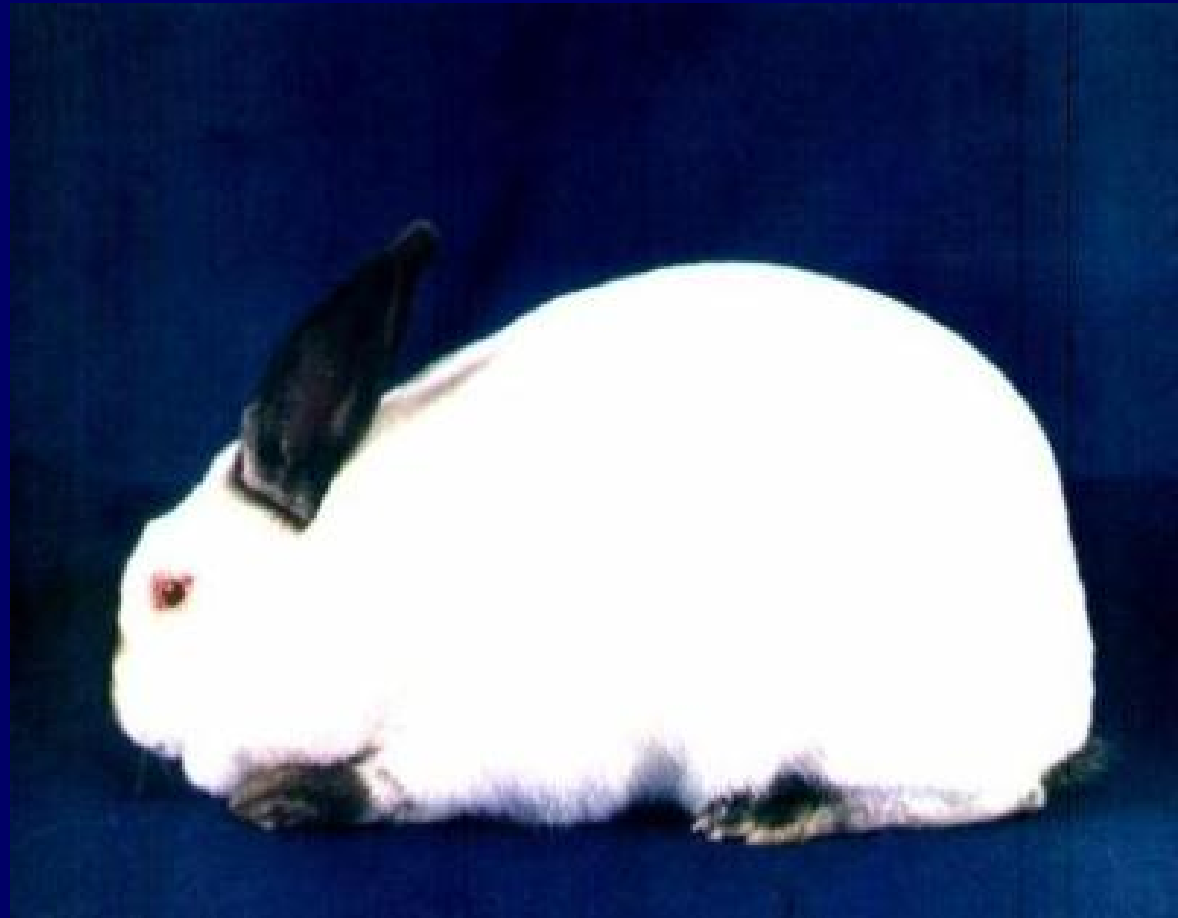
3 Most Popular Meat Breeds

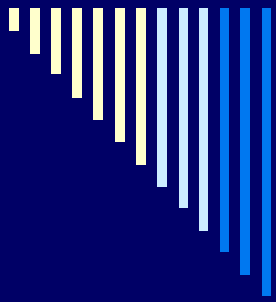
- New Zealand (white)





□ Californian





□ Florida White





General Management Techniques

□ Understanding Rabbits

- Behavior
 - Normals
 - Temp. 103.1 degrees F
 - Heart rate 180-350 beats per minute
 - Respiratory rate 40-65 breaths per minute
 - Hair coat
 - Mucous membranes
-



General Management Techniques

Housing

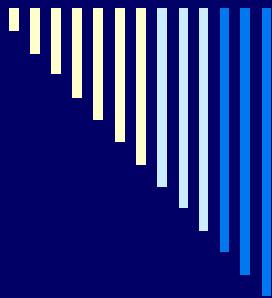
- Sanitary
 - Climate Control
 - Owner-friendly
 - Types- **If you can imagine it, then it exists!**
 - Hanging Hutches
 - Slants
 - Stacked
-

Hanging Hutches



Stacked---Climate Controlled





**Recording
Keeping**



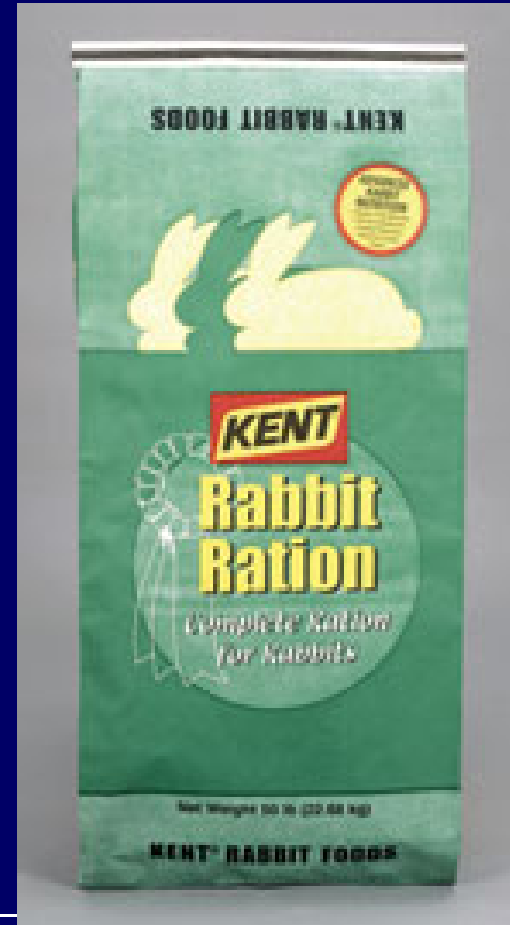
**Sanitary &
Organized**



General Management Techniques

□ Feeding

- Fresh, Clean Water is essential
- Pellets
 - Usually all that is needed
 - Hay not necessary
 - Formulated to meet rabbit needs
- Hay and Grains





Feed Efficiencies of Common Meat Animals

BEEF	LAMB	HOG	CHICKEN	RABBIT
6-8 lbs feed/lb gain	4 lbs feed/lb gain	2.5-3 lbs feed/lb gain	2 lbs feed/lb gain	4 lbs feed/lb gain



General Management Techniques

□ Breeding

- KEEP RECORDS!!!!!!
 - Doe is induced ovulator
 - In heat 14 out of 16 days
 - Gestation = 31-33 days
 - Breeding Schedule
 - Take doe to buck
 - Day 10-16: palpate
 - Day 28: add nest box
 - Day 31-33: doe kindles
-



General Management Techniques

□ Post-kindling

- Observe and count kits
 - Remove dead
 - Remove nest box 15 to 21 days post-kindling
 - Wean and rebreed on ~ day 30
 - Allows for 5 litters per year
-



General Management Techniques

Health

- Sanitation
 - *Pasteurellosis multocida*
 - External parasites
 - Flies
 - Fleas
 - Mites
 - Internal parasites
 - Not a major problem
-



General Management Techniques

Marketing

- Pricing
 - Live sale
 - Butchered rabbit
 - Health regulations
-



The Rabbit Industry

□ GROWING

- Especially in developing countries

□ Current production estimated at 1.5 million tons

□ Not large N. American market

- No need for animal raised in confinement
 - Low demand-consumer ignorance
-

MMMMMMM.....It's GOOD

- Highly nutritious
- Fine Grained
- Mild flavored

- Fryer
- Roaster
- Inspection
 - Voluntary
 - Grading





Rabbit vs. the Rest

This is based on 1 pound of raw meat.

MEAT	PROTEIN	FAT	CALORIES
Rabbit	20.8	10.25	795
Chicken	20.0	11.0	810
Veal	18.8	14.0	910
Turkey	20.1	22.2	1190
Beef	16.3	28.0	1440
Lamb	15.7	27.7	1420
Pork	11.9	45.0	2050



NOT get Rich Quick!!

- Initial costs are high

- Housing
- Breeding Stock
- Supplies

- Annual Costs

- Feed
- Health program
- Upkeep

- Labor intensive



Works Cited

- Bennet, Bob. Strorey's Guide to Raising Rabbits.
 - Pavia, Audrey. Rabbits for Dummies.
 - "Rabbits." The Merck Veterinary Manual. pg. 1386-1402.
 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org> 23 April 2004.
 - Food Safety and Inspection Service. <http://www.fsis.usda.gov> 23 April 2004.
 - Agricultural Alternatives: Rabbit Production. Penn State, 1994.
-