

Advice from Veteran 4-H Rabbit Exhibitors (and their moms!):

Few days before fair:

- Fill out your entry card.
- Clip nails
- Check tattoo – can you read it?

What to take to fair:

- Each animal needs to be brought in a carrier or cage of some sort. Something that confines the animal during travel and waiting for check in. Do not put food or water in traveling carrier. Rabbits may get carsick and cannot vomit.
- Feed/water bowls; something that can be attached to the side of the cage and cannot be tipped over.
- A closable container for feed with your name on it. Enough feed for the week.
- A Water container; a juice jug works well. Your water from home is best. Your animals will be stressed, you don't need to add additional stress to their system with water they aren't used to.
- Hay/straw; stuff an empty toilet paper roll with straw or hay and give to rabbits for something to play with.
- Frozen water bottles/ceramic tiles – it may get really warm.
- Any last minute donations you've collected from suppliers, friends, and families for awards.

Check in:

- Come to the rabbit barn with your animals in carriers.
- **Check -in begins at 9:00 am Tuesday morning August 18 and all entries must be checked in or be waiting to be checked in by 7:00 pm**
- Bring your attendance card with entry info filled out on the back.
- Check in at registration table.
- Your animals will receive a marker # in their ear for additional identification purposes.
- Each animal will be briefly looked over for health conditions.
- Questionable animals will be sent home by Superintendent.
- No changes can be made to your entry for any reason. PERIOD!!! If you enter a Florida White Sr buck and decide not to bring him, you cannot bring your Florida White Sr doe in its place. Or if you entered a Holland Lop Sr buck but it should have been a Mini Lop Sr buck, the only change you can make is to 'scratch' an animal.
- If your animals are on the top, add wood shavings to the bottom of the cage. There will be wood shavings provided.
- If you are showing in other areas of the fair on rabbit judging day (Thursday) let check in people know.

Suggestions for Decorations:

- As a club, you should come up with a theme. Each club will be responsible for setting up information to educate fair-goers on the rabbit project and the rabbits themselves.
- Decorations go up first thing Wednesday morning... in case there are any last minutes cage changes made by the superintendent after check in Tuesday night.
- 1' x 4' stand alone signs are allowed to sit on top of the row of cages – your theme and club's name should go on this sign.

- Cheap dollar store table clothes are great to run along the bottom row of cages. (this also eliminates the need to rake up rabbit droppings under the cages) Each cage is approx. two feet wide and are stacked two high. So if your club has a total of 6 rabbits, the space your club will have is approx. 6 feet wide.
- Decorative name tags. Fair goers like to know what breed, the animal's name and exhibitor's name.

Bring to fair on show day:

- Bring a little cooler or bag with people treats and drinks. It's a long day and running around the fair ground for snacks and drinks gets expensive.
- Grooming supplies.
- White show coat or long sleeve white button up shirt that can be buttoned up AND tucked in!!!
- Watch for signs for show day picnic lunch; bring dish to pass, and beverages, plates, silverware, and napkins for your family.
- Patience... it's a long day with a lot of sitting around and waiting until your breed is called. Stay close. Some breeds take a long time, and others go quick. Here's another time when a 'bunny buddy' is helpful.
- If you are showing in other areas of the fair on show day, let the superintendent know what breeds you have.

Showmanship Pointers:

- Study your showman ship sheet several weeks before. You cannot bring this sheet to the table it is all from your memory. Also, study general rabbit facts and facts about your breed as the judge will ask you random questions at the end of your presentation.
- Listen for announcements on show day for signing up for Showmanship.
- Wear white show coat or long sleeve white shirt. Button up and tuck in!
- Bring rabbit and carpet sample to Judge's table.
- Do NOT talk to anyone about showmanship. Don't tell anyone what questions the judge asked you. If you tell others the questions you were asked, they have time to go find out the answers. Helping them only hurts you.

Barn Duty:

- Bring lawn chairs
- Walk up and down the rows look for stressed out bunnies. If you find any try to find the owner or the project leader, Bill Meyer,
- Rake the rows of all debris and trash and spray down the gravel with water to keep down the dust. Rake and water hose will be provided.
- Sit at table inside barn doors
- Put your rabbit out on a carpet square on the table.
- Let fair goers pet your rabbits. Engage fairgoers with conversation about your rabbits. Use this time to educate the public. When your rabbit gets sassy, change out for a different rabbit.
- Keep fairgoers' hands out of the cages; remind fairgoers that rabbits are already stressed with all these people, they WILL BITE and rabbits usually sleep during the day. (this is a tough one... grown-ups are the worst at this).
- What if a fairgoer says something to you that makes you uncomfortable? Let's say someone says to you, "you know, putting rabbits in cages is cruel..." and you respond, "rabbits in their own cages keeps them safe from each other, predators and people." And then it feels like they just want to argue with you.... You should say, "let me introduce you to our superintendent, he/she can answer your questions better than I can."

Maintenance:

- Keep water bowl or bottle full at all times. Always keep a little bit of feed in the bowl at all times. (Even though that's not how you feed at home) Fair goers will complain to superintendent AND the fair board if animals don't have food and water.
- Have a 'bunny buddy' help you keep an eye out for your rabbits, you'll do the same for them. Know where your buddy's feed and water is.
- Keep upper cages clean of feces. There will be dust pans and bags to put waste. Replace wood shavings as necessary.
- Keep ground under bottom cages raked if you didn't put up table clothes.
- DO NOT feed your rabbits grass from the fair grounds. It may have pesticides on it and may kill your animals.

Check out/tear down:

- Check out time will be posted. Try to be prompt. Your family and club may need to 'divide and conquer'. It's hard to be in two or three different areas at the same time.
- Bring carriers back.
- We ALL are responsible for tearing down and cleaning up our section of the rabbit barn.
- Bring grain shovels and rakes.

For Sale signs:

- "For sale" signs cannot be posted on cages until Saturday after the Small Animal Auction. Double check with superintendent.

Reminder:

- Rabbit barn and fair itself has BAD cell phone reception.
- Have fun, but remember you are representing 4h, FFA and the rabbit project while in the barn so be on your best behavior and be friendly to fair goers.
- Be a good sport whether you're in first place or last place.

Good luck!

Small Animal Auction

- The small animal auction is on Saturday afternoon at 4:00 August 22. Any blue ribbon winning rabbit is eligible for the sale.
- Proper forms must be filled out prior to the sale. Check with the superintendent when the form will be due and if you have any question about them .
- The form will be available at the June and July Rabbit Project meetings and also fair week.
- For the day of the sale bring:
 - A white button-up or long sleeve shirt
 - A cardboard box big enough to carry your rabbit
 - An index card with your name, information about the rabbit you are selling, what the money will be used for, and thanking everyone for being at the auction.
- More will be discussed about the sale during the June and July meeting and fair week.

*Kitty Peirick Richwood Rangers 4-H Club
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(and their moms)*