

Products and Marketing*** 2025

Youth livestock projects focus on the selection, raising, showing, and often selling of animals. By virtue of their participation in livestock projects, youth become part of an industry that provides food and fiber for the world. The steps involved in the movement of animals and animal products from producer to consumer are known as *processing and marketing*. Tremendous changes have occurred in recent years in the ways animal products are harvested and marketed but the fundamentals remain the same. Price is dependent on *supply and demand*. We can impact supply through increased breeding, but demand is more difficult to affect. In order to maintain a stable market for animal products, consumers must have confidence in the **wholesomeness and quality** of what they are buying. That means the products must be safe, nutritious, and tasty. Many livestock organizations have implemented promotion programs to increase market share, improve prices and increase export markets.

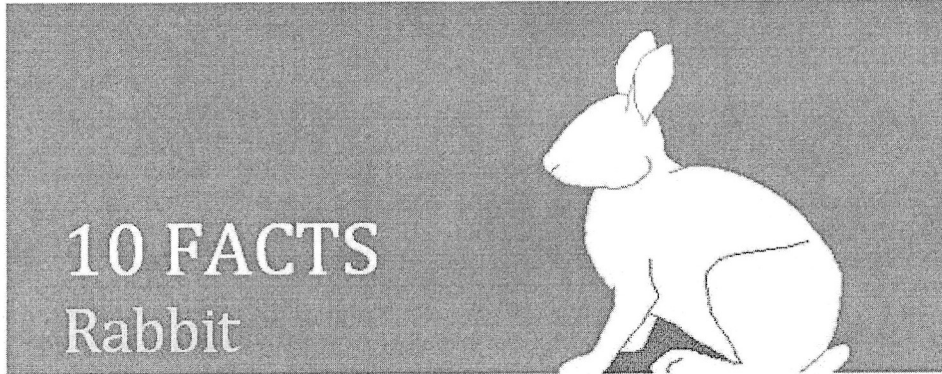
Marketing may be as simple as receiving a set price per pound or may involve a pricing system known as 'Value Based Marketing'. **Value based pricing systems** account for quality and apply deductions or bonuses as products deviate from an accepted *baseline*. This should ultimately improve the quality of products offered to consumers, therefore boosting consumer confidence. Animal products may be marketed at auctions, by direct sales, contracts or electronically with the use of computers and satellite technology. Regardless of the marketing method, the seller is trying to receive the highest *price* while the buyer is trying to receive the greatest *value* (high quality and reasonable price).

Rabbit Products and Marketing***

In the United States rabbit industry rabbits are produced for meat, Angora wool, pets, laboratory use, and show rabbits. According to the USDA 2023 Census of Agriculture (https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_1_US/st99_1_032_034.pdf) more than 3,000 US farms market over 430,000 rabbits annually, and nationwide there are approximately an estimated 10 million rabbits. Though many people consider rabbits as pets and raise them as a hobby, rabbits truly can constitute a livestock enterprise. Rabbits are extremely efficient meat producers due to their high reproductive rate (25 - 50 offspring per year) and excellent conversion of feed to muscle (4 pounds feed/ 1 pound of gain for fryers). They produce a carcass with white meat, high protein, and low fat. Rabbits are a significant source of meat worldwide, led by China in which produced 932,000 metric tons of rabbit meat in 2023. Between 2007-2017, world-wide rabbit meat consumption was up 12% and amounted to 6.4 billion dollars (<https://www.newfoodmagazine.com/news/85045/global-rabbit-meat-market-grow/>). Worldwide, rabbit consumption is still growing with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.5% expected in 2025. In the U.S. where rabbits are considered more of a pet, commercial rabbitries produce about 6 million pounds of rabbit meat each year (2700 metric tons). Since Americans consume 8 to 10 million pounds of rabbit meat annually, we must import rabbit meat in order to meet demands. This would indicate room for expanded production. Global rabbit consumption is projected to continue to increase each year through 2025.

A by-product of meat processing is pelts. Skins may be used for fur garments, slippers, glove linings, toy making and felt. Since colored pelts bring lower prices, white breeds are preferred as meat animals. There are some breeds with particularly fine pelts that are raised specifically for fur and others that produce wool or hair that can be harvested and spun into yarn. With the increase of synthetic fibers and artificial furs, markets for rabbit skins and pelts are diminishing.

One of the most significant contributions that rabbits bring to mankind is their usefulness in laboratory research and diagnostics. Over 200,000 rabbits per year are used in medical schools, laboratories, and hospitals to aid in areas like cardiac surgery, hypertension, virology, infectious diseases, toxins and antitoxins, and immunology. These institutions must adhere to strict government guidelines in the care and use of these animals and they in turn place stringent guidelines on their suppliers.



1. The rabbit was the first animal model of cancer caused by a virus.
2. Rabbits are used to produce antibodies, used for research into infectious diseases and immunology.
3. Rabbits are used as models for cystic fibrosis and cholera.
4. Louis Pasteur used rabbits to develop his rabies vaccine.
5. Rabbits are important in the study of cardiovascular disease, particularly hypertension and arteriosclerosis.
6. Rabbits are key for studies on cancer, glaucoma, ear infections, eye infections, diabetes, and emphysema.
7. Surgical lasers were developed using rabbits.
8. Rabbits are used to research the influence of high cholesterol.
9. Rabbits love liquorice root.
10. Rabbits can use a litter box.

Source: <https://www.understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/what-is-animal-research/a-z-animals/rabbit>

Animal By-Products

Animal by-products are anything of economic value other than the carcass that comes from animals during harvest and processing. They are classified as edible or inedible for humans. There may be some disagreement about what is edible, but we can all agree that there are many uses for what is left after the carcass is placed into the cooler. In developing countries by-products may become jewelry, religious implements, tools, fuel, construction material, fly swatters, or musical instruments. In developed countries, advances in technology have created many products from non-animal sources (synthetics) which compete with animal by-products, thus reducing their value. Still, by-products represent multibillion dollar industries in the United States and other developed countries. An added benefit of changing inedible parts of carcasses into useful products is that the decaying materials don't pile up and cause environmental problems. **Rendering** is the term for reducing or melting down animal tissues by heat and the rendering industry refers to itself as the "original recyclers". The creativity of meat processors in finding uses for by-products has led to the saying "the packer uses everything but the squeal".

Edible by-products

Raw Material

Brains, Kidneys, Heart, Liver, Testicles
Cheek and head trimmings
Blood
Fats
Intestines
Bones

Principal Use

Variety Meats
Sausage ingredient
Sausage component
Shortening (candies, chewing gum)
Sausage casings
Gelatin for confectioneries (marshmallows), ice cream and jellied food products

Inedible by-products

Raw Material

Hides

Processed by-product

Leather
Glue
Hair

Principal Use

various leather goods
paper boxes, sandpaper, plywood, sizing
Felts, plaster binder, upholstery, brushes, insulation
Textiles
Leather goods
Ointments
Industrial oils, lubricants, soap, glycerin
Insecticides, weed killers, rubber, cosmetics, antifreeze, nitroglycerine, plastics, cellophane, floor wax, waterproofing agents, cement, crayons, chalk, matches, putty, linoleum
Livestock and poultry feeds
Glue, hardening steel, refining sugar, buttons, bone china
Animal feed, fertilizer, porcelain enamel, water filters
Medicines
Pet foods
Livestock and fish feeds
Leather preparations, textile sizing
Livestock, pet and poultry feeds

Pelts

Wool
Skin
Lanolin

Fats

Inedible tallow

Bones

Tankage
Dry bone

Bone meal

Glands

Pharmaceuticals

Lungs

Blood

Blood meal
Blood albumen
Meat meal

Viscera and meat scraps

Rabbit Breeds by Use and Classification

A descendant of the European wild rabbit, the domestic rabbit is used for many purposes in the United States. In terms of numbers of owners, the pet segment of the industry is the largest (over 6 million rabbits). There are roughly 23,000 members of the American Rabbit Breeders Association and the majority of them raise rabbits as a hobby or to exhibit at shows. In 2022, over 400,000 rabbits were marketed for meat purposes and those producers typically raise hundreds to thousands of rabbits each year. Schools and universities use rabbits for teaching and research purposes. Other uses might include “feeder rabbits” for carnivorous pet reptiles, or for endangered or injured animals like eagles, condors, alligators, and wolves. There are also seed stock producers who provide high quality breeding animals for new producers. With all of the potential uses for rabbits, it is no surprise that there are 52 breeds of rabbits described by the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) in their Standard of Perfection. They are classified by **color, type, shape, weight, fur, wool and hair**. <https://arba.net/recognized-breeds/>.

Large breeds - 14 to 16 pounds mature weight
 Medium breeds - 9 to 12 pounds mature weight
 Small - 2 to 4 pounds mature weight.

Some examples of rabbit breeds and their uses are:

Californian - is considered a good **commercial** breed due to their good growth characteristics and white (normal) fur. They are often raised for show. (Medium)

Checkered Giant – A popular show breed, the Checkered Giant is one of 11 breeds with **defined markings**. It may also be used as a meat and a fur breed (Medium to Large)

Dutch - is a popular show breed and are most noted for their **distinctive markings**. Their small size also makes them a good lab animal. (Small)

Holland Lop - is one of the breeds recognized by the ARBA as a **pet breed** and are popular at shows. (Small)

English and French Angora - breeds which produce high quality **wool**. Because the wool is harvested by shearing or plucking, the animal does not need to be slaughtered to harvest the product. (Medium)

Florida White – The Florida White was developed for laboratory use, third best **commercial** breed due to their good growth characteristics, also used for show. (Small)

Flemish Giant – Originally a **commercial** breed, this breed is a popular show breed, and as the name implies, is of impressive **size**. (Large)

New Zealand - is considered an outstanding **commercial** breed due excellent growth characteristics and meaty carcass. They are used as a show animal and the white variety is very popular for laboratory use. (Medium)

Rex – their plush, velvety **fur** used by the garment industry makes them a pelt breed, but they are also good **commercial** rabbits and are a popular pet and show breed. (Medium)

Satin – is named for its silky **fur** but is also a good **commercial** breed. (Medium).

Standard of Perfection

Standard of Perfection is the basis of the rabbit judging system. The Standard of Perfection for each breed is broken into sections with the most points being placed on the items of greatest importance for that breed. Standard of Perfection is used to create an image of the ideal animal in a particular breed. Judging rabbits is still done by comparing one rabbit to another but a judge must have a working knowledge of the breed Standard of Perfection while comparing rabbits for placing. By combining comparison judging with a point system, a judge should get the most accurate placing. An example of Standard of Perfection for the Dutch breed follows. For Dutch rabbits, markings are the most important aspect for judging with 50 points placed on this section. Each breed will have Standards of Perfection with detailed explanation of the ideal rabbit as well as faults and disqualifications.

Dutch Standard of Perfection

General Type	<u>27 Points</u>	Markings	<u>48 Points</u>	Fur	<u>10 Points</u>
Body Type	17 Points	Cheeks	12 Points	Color	<u>10 Points</u>
Head	5 Points	Blaze	5 Points	Condition	<u>5 Points</u>
Ears	2 Points	Neck	3 Points	Undercut	8 Points
Eyes	1 Point	Saddle	10 Points	Total =	100 Points
Feet, Leg and Bone	2 Points	Stops	10 Points		

Types of Fur

The manufacture of fur garments or trim requires specific characteristics for which standards have been defined. The hair/fur classifications for show are normal, rex, satin, and wool.

Commercial Normal Fur Classes – all normal furred breeds. A coat of fur which “*flies back*” to its smooth normal position when stroked from the hindquarters to the shoulders. All breeds not having commercial normal fur are shown in their respective breed or wool classes.

Colored – All colors except white. White – Usable portion of the pelt to be white.

Point Schedule

Texture..... 40 points

Guard hair offers resistance when stroked toward head, flies back and lies smoothly.
Fine, soft undercoat should be interspersed thickly with heavier/thicker guard hair.

Density..... 30 points

Underfur soft, fine, dense interspersed with guard hairs which extend above and provide a protective surface. Quality should carry down sides to stomach.

Balance and Condition..... 30 points

Combination of texture, density and uniform length with a differential between guard hair and underfur not to exceed 1/8 inch. The coat should be uniform, tight, clean, bright, and free of stain.

TOTAL.....100 points