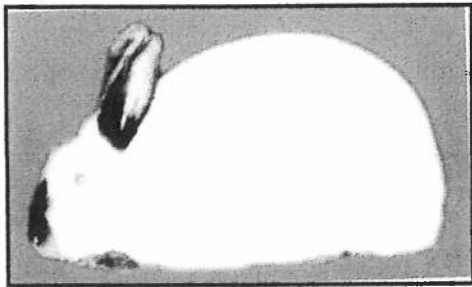




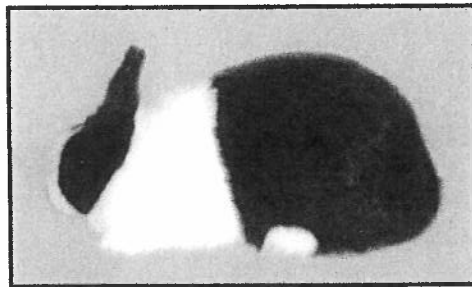
## Rabbit Breed Identification

Rabbits are selected for traits that are considered economically important. A purebred rabbit has the characteristics defined by a breed registry and purebreds are expected to pass those traits on to their offspring with a high degree of predictability. Crossbreeding has been used to develop new lines of rabbits that are now considered purebreds because they have a set of traits that are consistently passed on and a breed registry has been established. Some breeds of rabbits and their descriptions are listed below. The American Rabbit Breeder's Association (ARBA) recognizes 52 different breeds of rabbits. Visit the official website of the ARBA to learn more about the breeds of rabbits listed here as well as others not listed. <http://arba.net/breeds.htm>.



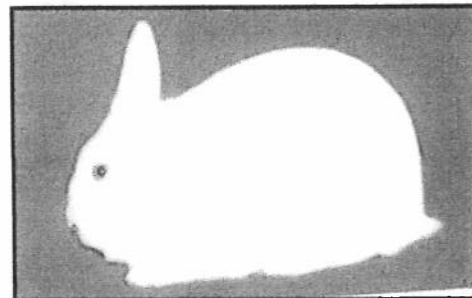
### Californian:

This commercial breed is best known for its meat-producing qualities. The body is medium in length with a depth equal to its width. The profile is to rise gradually from the front of the neck to the highest point over the hips. This breed was developed in 1928 and is white with a black nose, ears, feet, and tail. At maturity, bucks ideally are 9 pounds, and does are 9 ½ pounds.



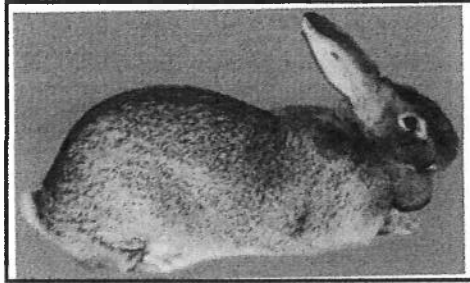
### Dutch:

This breed is one of the oldest breeds and is said to originally trace back to Holland, but the breed was established in England in the 1830s. There are seven varieties of this breed: black, blue, Chinchilla, chocolate, tortoise, steel, and gray. Although small in size, 3 ½ - 5 ½ pounds at maturity, this breed carries a lot of meat on its compact body type. These rabbits have a unique distribution of points in the Standard of Perfection, with 48 points out of 100 devoted to markings.



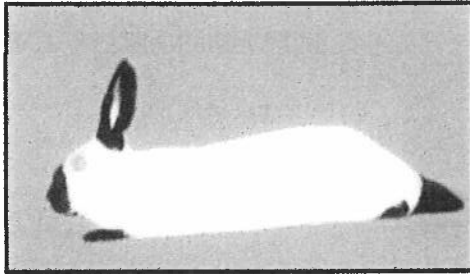
### Florida White:

Developed in Florida, this breed has a close-coupled, meaty body type with well-developed shoulders, hips, and hindquarters. This breed comes only in red-eyed white and is characterized by fly-back, normal fur. A small rabbit, this breed is ideally 5 pounds at maturity.



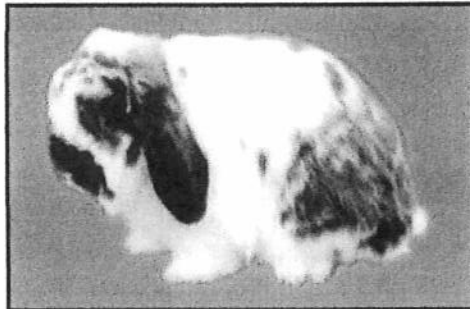
### **Flemish Giant:**

Possibly dating back to the 1500's the Flemish Giant is one of the original rabbit breeds. The Standard requires a 13-pound minimum for bucks and a 14-pound minimum for does. It is one of the largest rabbit breeds today. Accepted colors include Black, Blue, Fawn, Light Gray, Sandy, Steel Gray, and White. The Flemish Giant should be a well-balanced animal with a gradual arch starting from behind the shoulder blades. This breed is used in many commercial meat rabbit crosses but has limited use as a meat rabbit itself.



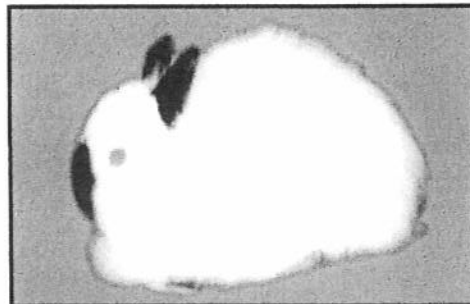
### **Himalayan:**

This is the only breed that has a cylindrical type, characterized by a long, narrow body. They are white with color on their ears, nose, feet, and tail. Accepted colors are Black, Blue, Chocolate, and Lilac They reach 2 ½ - 4 ½ pounds at maturity. The Standard specifically states this breed must be posed stretched out on the show table.



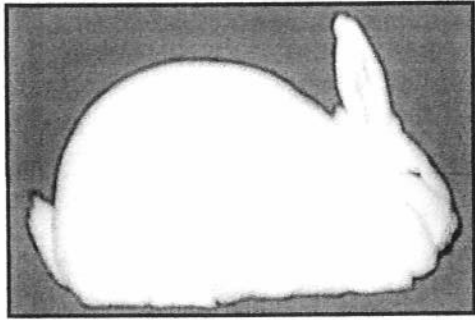
### **Holland Lop:**

Developed in the Netherlands, this breed is shown in two varieties: solid pattern and broken pattern. This fancy breed is known for its good-natured personality and lovable face. The smallest member of the lop family; this breed only reaches 4 pounds at maturity.



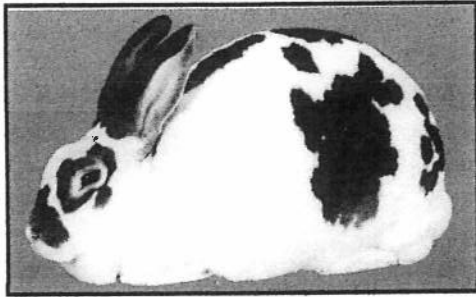
### **Jersey Wooly:**

This short, compact breed is one of the newest to the Standard. The body type resembles that of a Netherland Dwarf, but it is covered in wool instead of fur. Although the wool can be spun, the Standard recommends it should not be used for commercial purposes. This breed is shown in five groups: Agouti, AOV, Self, Shaded, Tan, and Broken Pattern. A small, fancy breed, these rabbits are only 3 ½ pounds at maturity.



### **New Zealand:**

Accepted by the A.R.B.A. in the mid-1920s, this commercial breed comes in four different varieties: Black, Broken, Red, and White with white being the most popular for laboratory use. At maturity, this breed's bucks weigh 9-11 pounds and the does, 10-12 pounds. They are known for their excellent meat-producing qualities.



### **Rex:**

Though its fur is the standout characteristic of this breed, a commercial meat body is found under the velvety pelt. An extremely dense, plush coat with guard hairs almost as short as the undercoat gives the Rex its name. The colors appear deeper in hue compared to a normal rabbit coat due to the unique texture. This breed has sixteen different varieties: Amber, Black, Otter, Blue, Broken Group, Californian, Castor, Chinchilla, Chocolate, Lilac, Lynx, Opal, Red, Sable, Seal and White. These make wonderful meat rabbits reaching ideally 8-9 ½ pounds when mature.



### **Satin:**

This unique commercial breed gets its name from the satin sheen the fur gives off. This quality is a mutation of the normal hair shaft that turned it translucent. This breed has eleven different varieties: Black, Blue, Broken Group, Chocolate, Chinchilla, Californian, Copper, Otter, Red, Siamese, and White. They have a medium-length body with depth that equals its length. These too are excellent meat rabbits, ideally reaching 9 ½-11 pounds at maturity.

Adapted from the A.R.B.A. Standard of Perfection, and Official Guide to Raising Better Rabbits and Cavie.

When selecting breeding stock, it is important to choose a breed with a body type that will help you meet your production goals. Are you raising rabbits for food, show, wool, fur, or pet stock?

**Commercial-type** breeding stock should have excellent meat-producing qualities. Examples of commercial breeds are Californian, New Zealand, Florida White, and Satin.

**Fancy-type** breeding stock should be good representatives of their breed according to their breed standard of perfection. Dutch, English Spot, Belgian Hare, Rex, Netherland Dwarf, and Lops could all be classified as fancy-type breeds.

**Wool-type** breeding stock should have a high-quality wool coat. Jersey Woolly and Angoras are examples of wooly-type breeds.

In all rabbits intended for show, all breeds, regardless of what the breed is intended, should conform to that breed's established ARBA standards of perfection.

# Selection: Visual Evaluation



Jr., Int. & Sr.

Many traits of economic importance can be evaluated by simply looking at the animal. In purebreds or registered animals, the “ideal” is usually described or illustrated by the breed registries like the ARBA Standard of Perfection. Most rabbit show judges are trained to evaluate the way the animal looks, moves, and feels to make their decisions on class placings. Learn to evaluate rabbits by type, structure, and color patterns and be familiar with faults and disqualifications.

## Feet and Leg Structure

How well an animal can stand and move around will have a major impact on its ability to find food, mate, and care for its young. Often, an animal that stands correctly will move freely while a crooked-legged animal may have trouble getting around and may become sore or lame. Feet and leg structure as well as movement are important evaluation criteria for breeding animals. Rabbits should be straight-legged, free from sore hocks, with clean, well-furred feet.

## Criteria for Selection

The criteria listed below are commonly considered most important in the evaluation of rabbits. The priority or emphasis placed on each may change with market demand, breed, age, management scenario, and performance data.

General type - varies greatly and depends on intended use (food, show, wool, pet).

Includes evaluation of:

Body	Fur	Pedigree
Head	Color	Breeding Record
Ears	Condition	Overall Health

Faults - Some criteria considered faults for show rabbits of all breeds include hutch stains, stray white hairs in colored fur, poor tail carriage, poor ear carriage, poor eye color, flabby or overly fat, thin or extremely poor flesh condition, and a specimen in molt.

Disqualification - can arise from ailments like ear canker, abnormal nasal or eye discharge, tumors, hernia, and infestation with mites, fleas, or lice. Other factors related to structure (eyes, legs, ears, teeth, toenails, etc.), color or color pattern, or altering appearance that can lead to disqualification are outlined in the Standard of Perfection. <http://www.thenaturetrail.com/rabbit-equipment/arba-standard-of-perfection/>

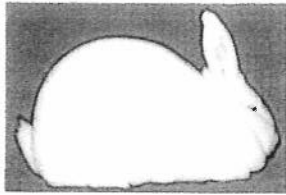
Rabbit terms are listed at: <http://www.angelfire.com/tx3/rabbitpad/terms.html>

You can research breeds and types at: <https://rabbitbreeders.us/rabbit-breeds/#chart>

There are five different body types found in rabbits: Commercial, Compact, Cylindrical, Full-Arch and Semi-Arch. Those body types are described and illustrated below.

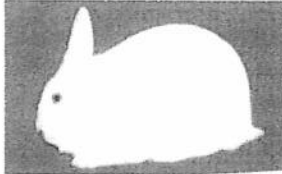


**Commercial:**



Rabbits with commercial type are considered to be the ideal meat type. They are medium in length, with depth equaling width and showing roundness of body. This group is posed down on the table. Included in this group are: New Zealand, Californian, Crème d'Argent, Champagne d'Argent, Blanc de Hotot, French Angora, Giant Angora, Satin Angora, Cinnamon, American Chinchilla, French Lop, Harlequin, Palomino, Rex, American Sable, Satin, Silver Fox and Silver Marten.

**Compact:**



Most rabbits with compact body types possess commercial-type characteristics but are smaller. Most of this group is posed down on the table, but a few are posed standing up. Included in this group are: American Fuzzy Lop, English Angora, Standard Chinchilla, Dwarf Hotot, Dutch, Florida White, Havana, Holland Lop, Jersey Wooly, Lilac, Mini Lop, Mini Rex, Netherland Dwarf, Polish, Mini Satin, Thrianta, and Silver.

**Cylindrical:**



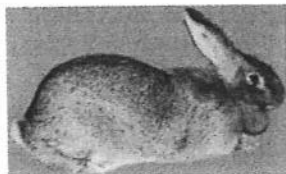
This group has a type that is long, slim, and cylindrical with fine bone and a long slender body. They are posed and stretched out on the table. This group includes one breed, the Himalayan.

**Full-Arch:**



Rabbits with the full arch type show an arch (rise) starting from the back of the neck over the body. Most rabbits in this group show more depth than width and pose standing up. Most are allowed to move naturally on the show table. Included in this group are: Belgian Hare, Britannia Petite, Checkered Giant, English Spot, Rhinelander, and Tan.

**Semi-Arch:**



Rabbits with semi-arch (mandolin) type show an arch (rise) starting from *behind* the shoulders and over the body. This group is posed down on the table but may be allowed to move about for further evaluation. Included in this group are: American, Beveren, English Lop, Flemish Giant, and Giant Chinchilla.