

Hello future bunny exhibitors!

Most of the information below will apply more to my first timers, but those of you returning feel free to let me know if I left anything out. ☺

Pens-

Wire cages (no wood) can easily be built at home or purchased. We normally build 24"X24"X24" galvanized wire cages and these can be purchased from The Tractor Supply Company for around \$25.00 each (you can find elsewhere, this just happened to be where I was checking prices). We house no more than 2 bunnies per cage so most of you will need three cages. (We separate the bunnies because they will bully each other and the more dominate ones will pull fur and get more feed. It is also easier to monitor feed consumption and weight gain when they are housed separately.) If you are building your own and/or price is not an obstacle it is better to house each bunny in a separate cage (cages can be smaller).



Home Rig House™ Rabbit Cage, 24 in.x24 in.

SKU Number: 2179407

They also sell legs for these cages if you do not think you can hang them.

Pen Placement-

Rabbits can be housed either indoors or outside (away from dogs and cats) in shaded areas (no direct sun!) with plenty of air flow. These pens are made to be suspended or, if outside, attached to t-posts. The idea is that all fecal and urine falls out of the bottom of the cage and away from the bunnies. There shouldn't be any wood or other material attached to the cage that can catch and hold fecal matter. Each one of you will have different placement needs/concerns and we would like to meet with everyone individually to help you set up your pens.

Materials-

You will need several 4 in. heavy ceramic or stoneware type crocks or cavy dishes for each pen. These will be used to supply the bunnies with both food and water. You can also have a hanging water bottle as a back up in case they spill the water from the dishes. Rabbits can be lazy and they will not get a lot of water from a water bottle. If they are not getting enough water then they will not eat enough; this is why we use the cavy dishes. (Stay away from plastic as they will chew on them).



If you are housing your animals outside then you will also want to start collecting several (at least 6) plastic 2 L. soda/juice bottles. These can be used to freeze water in and then placed in the cages. The bunnies will lie against them when they get hot. You will want enough bottles so you can easily change them out without waiting to refreeze.

You will also want a small piece of old rug (24"X 24" ish) to use when working the fur and setting up the bunnies (more information on how to do that to come).

Transporting bunnies-

Bunnies need to be transported inside the vehicle and not in the bed of a pickup truck. You can use a cardboard box or pet carrier lined with old towels. You can also purchase a 3-compartment wire rabbit carrier (~ \$50 new) designed specifically to carry rabbits. This would be a wise investment for those who are going to continue with rabbit projects in future years. If you plan to move on to other projects then we can get by without them. You will be transporting the bunnies when you pick them up on August 14th, fair tag in on August 20th, and then for the show in September.

Feed-

Our breeder uses a brand called Petrus and this is the type of feed that your bunnies will be weaned on. He has agreed to bring extra bags of feeds for those who want to purchase feed when he brings the bunnies. Bags cost \$20.00 each and you will need at least 1 ½ - 2 bags for 6 bunnies (in order to feed through the show). You will also need a few pats of hay. I will bring a bale to the school on delivery day and everyone can take a little bit- no need to purchase your own just for the bunnies, you will not go through that much.

That's all we feed them unless they get sick. No carrots or other table veggies.

Weighing-

The key to this project is monitoring weight and weight gain. We want the bunnies to be as close to identical in weight as possible and to fall within the fair's weight range (3-5 pounds). You will need a scale that measures pounds and ounces (postal scale works great) to keep more accurate records of weight gain.

In closing-

I think that just about covers the basics. So, what I need from each of you is an e-mail response ASAP to each of the following questions so I can make sure I get everything set up on our end and we're best able to help you.

1. Would you like to meet to discuss pen placement? (This is the big one as it may take a while to schedule everyone in)
 - We'll need your address/directions as well as possible dates and times that will work for you.
2. Please double check your schedules (8th -12th grade) and make sure you are enrolled in an Ag. Class in order to maintain eligibility!! 😊 It is easier for me to help fix schedule problems now rather than later.

Thank you for your time and as always please let me know if you have any questions or concerns as we gear up for this project. We have a lot of bunny exhibitors this year and I want to make sure you are each prepared and comfortable with the project. It's going to be fun!