



4-H Meat Rabbit Project

THE BASICS

PROJECT LENGTH 5 months

The meat rabbit project is approximately 5 months long, however, if you are breeding your own rabbits, the project will be longer.

COST \$300.00

The average total cost of the meat rabbit project is \$300 per pen. This includes purchase price, feed costs, supplies, veterinary care, show entries, etc. First time members should also consider costs of facilities and other one-time purchases.

TIME COMMITMENT 1-2 hrs/day

Expect to spend 1-2 hours working with the rabbits everyday. Animals need to be fed, have waters checked, hutches cleaned at least twice a day. Rabbits should be handled and brushed routinely.

FACILITIES

Meat rabbits should have a well ventilated hutch that is easy to clean, protects from the elements, and is predator proof. Hutches should have a minimum of three square feet per animal, and adult rabbits should be housed separately. Additionally, considerations for feeders, waterers, and easy of handling should be made.

PURCHASING ANIMALS.... WHEN

Meat rabbits should be at approximately 6 weeks old at time of purchase/validation. When purchasing rabbits it is *highly recommended* to contact a breeder **EARLY**. For shows in Wilson County, consider contacting breeders by the following:

<u>Show</u>	<u>Contact Date</u>
Wilson County JLS.....	August/September
La Vernia JLS.....	September/October

When breeding your own rabbits, rabbits should be bred approximately 101 days prior to the date of the show.



BEGINNER

This a great project for beginners! It is also an approved 4-H Clover Kid project.



EXPERT TIPS

PURCHASING ANIMALS... AMOUNT

Meat rabbits are most commonly shown as a pen of three. It is recommended to purchase 5-6 rabbits per exhibitor. In Wilson county rabbits may also be shown as a single "fryer" rabbit.

PURCHASING ANIMALS... WHERE

Meat rabbits can be purchased from anywhere in Texas. Asking other 4-H members where they purchase their animals is a great resource. Additionally, a list of rabbit breeders can be found on the Texas 4-H Youth Livestock website: <https://texasyouthlivestock.com/rabbit/>

VALIDATION

All meat rabbits MUST be validated in order to show at Wilson County Junior Livestock Show and La Vernia Junior Livestock Show. Validation typically takes place in January.

FEEDING

Feeding a pellet based feed that is 16 percent protein is recommended. Work with your local feed store to be sure they have rabbit feed in stock.

HEALTH CARE

The most important aspect of keeping a rabbit healthy is providing a clean environment with plenty of feed and water. Beyond that, the best veterinary care is preventative care. Start by building a working relationship with your local veterinarian.



For more information about the Texas 4-H Meat Rabbit project, visit:
<https://texasyouthlivestock.com/rabbit/>