

# 4-H Rabbit Project



SNAPSHOT 4H1613

## CURRICULA & RESOURCES

### Michigan 4-H Curricula

<http://4h.msue.msu.edu/>

- » Rabbit Fitting and Showing Member's Guide (4H1268)

### National 4-H Curricula

<http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/>

- » Rabbits
  - What's Hopping?: Level 1 (08080)
  - Making Tracks: Level 2 (08081)
  - All Ears!: Level 3 (08082)
  - Rabbit Helper's Guide (08083)
- » Rabbits, Rabbits, Rabbits (4H 662) (Check your local Michigan State University [MSU] Extension office for this publication.)

### Other Resources

- » American Rabbit Breeders Association: <http://www.arba.net>
- » American Satin Rabbit Breeders Association: <http://www.asrba.org>
- » Michigan State Rabbit Breeders Association: <http://www.msrb.net/> and on Facebook at [https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group\\_261393042780](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_261393042780)

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The 4-H rabbit project can provide youth with the opportunity to learn about selection, management, health, marketing and careers in the rabbit industry.

- » Learn the basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more rabbits.
- » Explore knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- » Investigate marketing and project expansion, and discover how you can start a career in the rabbit business.

## THE BIG PICTURE

### Starting Out:

- » Learn the different types of breeds and their characteristics.
- » Determine the use of your rabbit projects.
- » Develop a rabbit management and care plan.
- » Identify rabbit equipment and its uses.
- » Locate and name rabbit body parts.
- » Learn proper feeding techniques.
- » Discover proper rabbit showmanship steps.
- » Learn parts of a pedigree.
- » Examine rabbit behavior.
- » Learn proper breeding management.
- » Build a nest box.
- » Learn proper rabbit terminology.

### Learning More:

- » Learn to judge rabbits and give oral reasons.
- » Learn the difference between 4-class and 6-class rabbits.
- » Explore the different rabbit body types and their functions.
- » Design a plan for preparing rabbits for show.
- » Learn proper grooming techniques.
- » Learn about tattooing rabbits.
- » Learn about diseases and environmental concerns.
- » Keep records of rabbit expenses and income.
- » Identify the characteristics of different coat types.

### Expanding Horizons:

- » Learn about rabbit breeding programs and genetics.
- » Manage your rabbitry.
- » Determine pregnancy and palpation techniques.
- » Design a rabbitry.
- » Identify bones on a skeleton.
- » Evaluate rabbit health.
- » Complete rabbit pedigree and registration papers.
- » Market your rabbits to others.
- » Expand your project into other areas.
- » Learn the importance of genetics in rabbits.
- » Learn the principles of culling.

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## FOCUS ON RABBITS

### Science

- » Explore the parts and function of the rabbit digestive system.
- » Monitor the effect of environmental conditions on your rabbits.
- » Track genetic traits in your breeding rabbits.

### Citizenship & Leadership

- » Volunteer your rabbit for a community petting zoo.
- » Hand out food samples at your local grocery store or farmers market.
- » Volunteer to help at a local rabbit show.
- » Teach others how to handle rabbits safely.
- » Lead a rabbit selection and feeding clinic.

### Communication

- » Design a poster on the parts of a rabbit.
- » Participate in the contests at the Michigan State 4-H Rabbit & Cavy Expo.
- » Explain the use of rabbits for meat production.

### Life Skills

- » Use critical-thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills to help you make good decisions about project management.
- » Keep records on your project expenses and income.
- » Practice personal resiliency through successes and challenges in your project.



## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- » Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- » Tour a rabbit producer's farm.
- » Attend a rabbit show and observe the judges and their techniques.
- » Attend a 4-H rabbit project meeting.
- » Design a business card or marketing brochure for your farm.
- » Write an educational article about some aspect of rabbit production for your local newspaper.
- » Participate in a rabbit skillathon.
- » Organize a rabbit showmanship contest.
- » Attend a national conference.
- » Job shadow a local veterinarian to learn about animal health.
- » Learn about the different uses for rabbits.
- » Attend the Michigan State 4-H Rabbit Show or the Michigan State 4-H Rabbit & Cavy Expo.
- » Show at your county fair.
- » Complete a rabbit project record book to track your income, expenses and experiences in your rabbit project.
- » Contact your local MSU Extension 4-H staff to be nominated to serve on one of the state 4-H rabbit committees.
- » If you are interested in a college education in animal science or veterinary medicine, visit Michigan State University's website at [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu) to explore those majors.

Adapted with permission from "4-H Rabbit Project," by Iowa State University Extension, 2011, *Iowa 4-H Project Hot Sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/>

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