

Rabbit Handbook

Sanitation

The rabbits' environment must be kept clean and sanitary. This means removing wastes and keeping housing, feed, water and air relatively free of disease germs and parasites. Sanitation and disease prevention are the keys to a healthy rabbitry.

Quarantines

The best rule in disease prevention is to start with healthy animals from a reliable breeder. The history of disease in a colony of rabbits is as important as the health of individual animals when they are bought. To avoid buying disease "carriers" that transmit diseases without showing symptoms, ask the breeder whether his or her rabbits have had specific diseases.

Quarantine all new animals brought to an established colony (keep them at least 50 feet from all other rabbits) for at least 2 weeks. Experienced rabbit raisers with healthy colonies buy few rabbits, because each addition brings a risk of adding new diseases.

Housing

Houses should be well ventilated and easy to clean. Thoroughly clean all hutches of manure and debris daily. Clean open feeders and waterers daily and closed feeders weekly.

Clean nests and disinfect them before kindling and after the nest box is removed from the hutch. Change bedding when it becomes wet or contaminated with urine or droppings. Dispose of all used nesting material.

Cleaning and disinfecting

Clean all manure and dirt from equipment. Scrub it with hot water and detergent. A stiff bristled brush, scraper and elbow grease are the secrets of proper cleaning.

Visitors

Keep your animals as isolated as possible from people and strange animals. They bring diseases and disturb the breeding stock unnecessarily.