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**New York State Fair**  
**2009 Youth Rabbit and Cavy Events**



**EXHIBITOR INFORMATION**

**4-H/Youth Rabbit EDUCATIONAL COORDINATOR** – Dana Palmer, 123 Morrison Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca NY 14853. E-mail: [dlp10@cornell.edu](mailto:dlp10@cornell.edu); phone: (607) 255-4706

**Youth Rabbit SUPERINTENDENT** - Judy Blodgett, 7257 Boston State Road, Hamburg, NY 14075.(716-648-0239; e-mail: [Lops2mops@aol.com](mailto:Lops2mops@aol.com))

**Youth Rabbit Events are held in the Youth Arena (near the 4-H Horse stalls and FFA building) -- NOT in the Poultry Building with the Open Show Rabbits. Become familiar with the State Fairgrounds map. See <http://www.nysfair.org/visitors/map.php>**

4-H educators submitting entries in New York State Fair Youth Rabbit and Cavy Events must ensure that each exhibitor and his/her family, volunteer leaders and any other persons supervising exhibitors, read and become familiar with the rules that follow as well as the rules and regulations published in the Youth Department 51 Animal Science Premium Book (specifically Section F). For a downloadable copy see: <http://www.nysfair.org/competitions> The premium book is listed under 4-H Youth Livestock, under General Information and Rules. Not knowing the rules will not be accepted as an excuse for failure to adhere to them.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Bring the "Day of Show Entry" form, filled out with you to the health check.
2. Public rabbit/cavy sales are not allowed. The State Fair requires sellers to have sales permits.
3. Negative public responses about breeding rabbits in or near the Youth Arena require us to strongly discourage the breeding of rabbits at the State Fair.
4. All exhibitors are expected to select and enter animals that are in the best condition at the time of the State Fair. There is **NO FUR CLASS**. **We will be using ear tattoo numbers rather than coop numbers this year, so please make sure some combination of numbers/letters can be easily read in the left ear, not necessarily permanent.**
5. Cavies will again be judged. If you have a cavy, please mark Class 715 on the entry form. There will be a "Day of Show" entry form available at the registration desk at the show. Each exhibitor is limited to 4 cavies. Cavies need tag numbers written on tape applied to ear. Please bring your own tape.

6. Each county with youth taking part in the Decathlon **is expected to provide 1 adult for every 5 youth participating. Volunteers** ask questions at the various stations throughout the contest. All volunteers are asked to remain at their station until all rounds are completed. Adults will also be needed to help record information on Show Day.
7. **Pet Care Class:** On your entry forms, remember that the Pet Care Class is for 4-H project rabbits that are of unknown or mixed breed origin and which, therefore, cannot be shown in any of the purebred classes. It is also open to rabbits with one or more disqualifications. Please mark "Pet Care Class" on your entry form if your rabbit qualifies for Pet Care Class.
8. **YOUTH BREED SHOW - THE FORM REQUIRES THE NAME OF THE BREED AND VARIETY=Color.**
9. **4-H RABBIT SCIENCE DECATHLON:** The top ten individuals scoring in each division (Novice, Junior and Senior) will receive special recognition ribbons. Teams may have 3 or 4 members. Only the top three scores will be added together for the team score. Up to 4 members of the top teams in each division will receive a rosette. Counties may combine to form teams. **The current quota is a maximum of 2 teams per division per county.**
10. **Good Sportsmanship is expected at all events. The superintendent may dismiss youth who show poor conduct or disrespectful behavior to any youth or adult.**

**There are 10 stations in the NYS 4-H Rabbit Science Decathlon: Participants are given approximately 4 minutes at each station to answer verbal questions.**

1. **Anatomy & Physiology** (involves questions about mammalian digestive systems, body parts, bones etc.) 3 divisions
2. **Nutrition** (involves questions about feed content, water and feed requirements, nutritional needs for different stages of development) 3 divisions
3. **Housing & Equipment** (involves questions about hutches, cages, floor space, nest boxes, feeders, ventilation, environment in general) 3 divisions
4. **Health & Diseases** (includes questions about any health problem, identification of symptoms, treatments) 3 divisions
5. **Terminology** (may include questions about breed standards) 3 divisions
6. **Reproduction & Genetics** (involves questions about sexing, responsible breeding practices, general inheritance patterns) 3 divisions
7. **Breed Identification** (all participants will identify 5 breeds of live rabbits. Novice will identify the breed only, Juniors will identify the breed and variety, Seniors will identify the breed, variety and class (4 or 6). 3 divisions
8. **Records & Project Evaluation/Management** (participants **MUST** bring a NYS 4-H Rabbit or Cavy Project Record to the station.) They are evaluated on what they know and have recorded. Records are downloadable from <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/4H/rabbits/index.html> and <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/4H/cavies/index.html>

9. **Handling & Evaluation** (participant handles, examines, poses and judges a rabbit in front of a proctor). Bring a rabbit that you can handle and one for which you know the breed standard requirements. This station resembles showmanship in other states. Show coats are not required. Expected attire at this station will include either a long sleeve show coat of any color OR a long sleeve collared white button shirt.

**Update in 2009 for Station 10 – Standards of Perfection.** Novice, Juniors and Seniors will have an opportunity to use a standard of perfection reference at this station. Participants should be familiar with body types and know the difference between full arched, semi-arched, commercial, compact, and cylindrical body types. Questions about judging a rabbit will also be asked.

**Top 15 Seniors Only** will have an opportunity to rank a live class of rabbits OR cull a young litter of bunnies. These Seniors will assess which rabbit would be judged higher on certain standard characteristics. These characteristics might include head, ears, general type, fur quality, color, markings, condition or disqualifications. In addition to choosing the correct rank order, the participant may be asked to state why the particular rabbits were selected.

To encourage 4-H'ers to work as a team before the day of the event, the NYS 4-H Rabbit & Cavy advisory committee has agreed to repeat a component in the decathlon contest for teams only. After each individual contestant has competed by county in the decathlon, team-mates will meet with a proctor to solve a problem scenario. Each team will receive points for their effort. These points will be added to the individual scores of the top 3 team members of each team in order to ascertain the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th place teams in each division.

Although other sources may be used, most questions will be taken from information obtained from the following sources:

1. Standard of Perfection 2006 - 2010, available from the American Rabbit Breeder's Association (ARBA)
2. Your Rabbit/Your Cavy - A Kid's Guide to Raising and Showing by Nancy Searle
3. Kansas State University 4-H Rabbit Curriculum
4. Rabbit Production by Cheeke, Patton, Lukefahr and McNitt (8th Edition)
5. Official Guidebook: Raising Better Rabbits & Cavies (2000), available from ARBA
6. 4-H Skills for Life Animal Science Rabbit Series, available from National 4-H Curriculum Supply Service <http://www.4-hmall.org>
7. Ohio State University Rabbit Resource Handbook for Breeding, Market and Pet Rabbit Projects Publication 4-H 228R, available from National 4-H Curriculum Supply Service <http://www.4-hmall.org>
8. Ohio State University Rabbit Learning Lab Kit, available from Ohio Curriculum Materials service. County 4-H programs may also borrow a kit from Cornell University Department of Animal Science.

## **Division Definitions:**

Novice competitors must be at least 8 and in 3rd grade by January 1 of the current year and less than 19 years of age on January 1 of the current year. This must also be their first time competing in the contest at state fair.

**New Rule Change made in 2007:** Senior Division includes all youths who are 15 and less than 19 as of January 1 of current year. Junior Division includes all eligible youths 14 and under as of January 1 of current year.

The Cavy Science Decathlon will have 2 Divisions. Junior and Senior. The rules concerning what division the competitor should enter are the same as the Rabbit Decathlon. This contest will be held on the same day as the Rabbit Science Decathlon. Every participant will be scheduled to go to each station just as they do for rabbits. Participants may judge a class of cavies only. Cavy participants may enter as teams or individuals. Novice (1<sup>st</sup> time participants) may enter Junior division.

## **THINGS TO DO PRIOR TO THE FAIR**

1. You and your animals must have been properly entered by **August 17, 2009**. PLEASE BE SURE TO READ THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT ANIMAL SCIENCE PREMIUM BOOK. There are three sections to review (pages pertaining to ALL youth entries, especially note exhibitor age requirements; Department 51 pertains to all animal science exhibitors; the Youth Rabbit (Section F) is specific to youth rabbit and cavy exhibitors).
2. **Request and obtain exhibitor passes and parking permits through your County 4-H office.** Parking spots for RV's may be available. Check with State Fair.
3. Plan a special rabbit exhibit for the public. Tables are available on a first come, first served basis.

**Special needs participants** - Please inform the superintendent about participants with special needs. We do not wish to draw attention to these participants, but will offer special help in the areas where they need it. A short note describing the assistance needed on the exhibitor's entry form will help contest coordinators plan. Officials will do the best they can to accommodate if notified prior to entry deadline of **August 17**.

## **WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU TO THE FAIR**

1. Your rabbit(s) and cavies in appropriate cages!!
2. Your Day of Show entry form sheet filled out.
3. Feed, feed dish and water dish.
4. Grooming equipment
5. Show clothes. Show coats are not required. Expected attire will include either a long sleeve show coat of any color OR a long sleeve collared white button shirt.
6. Money for incidentals
7. County banner to hang near where your county is sitting in the bleachers.

## OVERNIGHTERS

1. Rabbits and Cavies may be housed overnight in the Youth Arena on Friday night and/or Saturday night. Please do not arrive earlier than 5:00 p.m. on Friday. No animals may be left in the Youth Arena Sunday night. You are completely responsible for your own animals.

## WHAT TO DO UPON ARRIVAL

1. Check in at the Pole Barn Arena. (Early arrivals must wait until 7:00 p.m. to check in on Friday). **UNTIL YOUR RABBIT\CAVY HAS BEEN HEALTH CHECKED, DO NOT PLACE YOUR RABBIT\CAVY IN THE BLEACHER AREA.** The "holding area" for unchecked rabbits is the Pole Barn Arena floor by the large doors closest to the horse rings.
2. **BRING COMPLETED ENTRY FORM TO HEALTH CHECK.**

### Rabbit health check-in times:

Friday, 9/4/09, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, 9/5/09, 8:00 - 9:45 a.m.

Sunday, 9/6/09, 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Ill animals will be isolated from others. Please consider bringing rabbits in separate carriers. Otherwise all animals in a carrier with ill animals will be isolated.

3. Each animal must be housed in an appropriate carrier with enough room for the rabbit or cavy and a **leakproof** tray under the carrier. The carrier must be tagged with the name of the exhibitor, county, where the exhibitor is sleeping (dorm, specific trailer, etc.) and breed(s) of animal. Be sure to place the tag on or near the carrier in a location safe from your animal's curiosity (and teeth!!).
4. If you are sleeping in the dorm in the Youth Building, check in as soon as possible after arriving at the fair. No exhibitors are allowed to sleep in the youth arena.
5. Show catalogs will be available on Saturday. Since this is a "day of show entry", the catalog will only contain a list of exhibitors. Remember, each exhibitor is allowed to enter up to (4) animals of each species - rabbits or cavies.

## OTHER INFORMATION

1. The Rabbit and Cavy Breed Shows will be on **Saturday, Sept 5**. Please check your State Fair Youth Animal Science Premium Book to find out whether your breed of rabbit is being judged in the morning or the afternoon. There will be 4 judges judging simultaneously. Stay alert!! Each class will be called **ONLY ONCE** so you must listen and watch when your breed is on the table.
2. **Only exhibitors are allowed in the show ring during any event.** Youth are expected to bring their own animals to the table for any contest/breed class. If they are already at one table during the breed show when a second animal of theirs is needed at another table, another youth should be asked to bring the second animal to the appropriate table.
3. **REGISTRATION** - Please note, **ALL** exhibitors for the Youth Rabbit and Cavy Show are expected to register between 8-9:45 am. Those not showing their animals until after 12 noon are free to see the fair! Plan to be back by noon so you will not miss your breed being shown!
4. Judging is planned in this order. Pet Class, Cavies, and Wool Breeds will be first. Then Commercial Breeds (most populous first) go to the next available judge, break for lunch, and Fancy Breeds (most populous first) will follow the lunch break to the next available judge.

**CARE OF ANIMALS**

1. All rabbits and cavies should be offered water throughout the day.
2. As always, youth are expected to treat their animals humanely.
3. Any perceived infractions should be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

**Enjoy the Fair!!**