

**BUTTE COUNTY 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
**4-H Rabbit Project Proficiency Program**  
**A Member's Guide**

<b>OVERVIEW</b>
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The **4-H Rabbit Project Proficiency Program** helps you learn what you need to know about your 4-H Project. Your 4-H Project Leader will assist you in setting and achieving your goals. Through your 4-H Project, you will learn animal care basics, good management practices and record keeping. You will also learn about the size and scope of the animal industry as it relates to your 4-H Project.

There are many resources to help you learn more about your project:

- The [4-H Publications Catalog](#) lists a variety of project materials and resources recommended for use in your project.
- The **4-H Educational Resources Lending Library** at the Butte County 4-H Office includes other books, videos and reference materials that can be checked out by members and leaders.
- Check to see if there is a breeders' organization in your community that conducts educational activities and shows. Local breeders are excellent sources of help and information.

There are five levels in the 4-H Rabbit Project Proficiency Program. You may choose how many levels you wish to complete:

**Level 1 – Explorer** You begin to learn about many different aspects of raising animals.

**Level 2 – Producer** You practice and refine the many skills involved in learning about and raising animals.

**Level 3 – Consumer** You become an experienced animal raiser.

**Level 4 – Leader** Allows you to show your own leadership potential.

**Level 5 – Researcher** You carry out a demonstration or experiment on some aspect of your project.

As you work through the 4-H Project Proficiency Program, your 4-H Project Leader will date and initial each skill item as you complete it. When all items in a proficiency level are completed, your 4-H Project Leader will notify the Community Club Leader. A 4-H Project Proficiency Program Pin and First Year Leg will be awarded for Level 1. Previous Year Leg will be returned when the next Level is awarded for Levels 2-5.

# RABBIT PROFICIENCY

## Level 1 – Explorer

*Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.*

Date Completed                      4-H Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_                      Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Identify and describe six breeds of domestic rabbits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Identify the external parts of a rabbit from a diagram or live rabbit. Name and point out the following parts of a rabbit: hindquarters, loin, dewlap, hock, saddle, shoulder, belly, chest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Describe the basic housing and equipment requirements to care for your rabbit on a daily basis. Describe a good type of hutch and the equipment that a beginner should have.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Explain the daily nutrition requirements of your rabbit, e.g., how, when, what, how much and what kind to feed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Explain how to determine the sex of a rabbit with the proper terminology.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Demonstrate the basic grooming techniques and equipment necessary for the daily care of your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Submit management records covering a minimum of 30 days that indicates how often you provided fresh water, clean feed, and money spent raising your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Explain how to tell if your rabbit is ill and needs veterinarian attention. Explain and demonstrate a simple health check.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Describe two safety issues associated with your rabbit and/or handling your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Attend any (does not need to be in the rabbit project) 4-H event outside of your Club.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Describe desirable characteristics of meat type rabbits: hind quarters, loin, saddle, and shoulders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Explain how temperature affects your rabbit and things you can do to alleviate it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Be familiar with rabbit showmanship techniques.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

# RABBIT PROFICIENCY

## Level 2 – Producer

*Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.*

Date Completed                      4-H Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Explain and demonstrate how to tattoo a rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Demonstrate how to clip your rabbit's toenails.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Describe and give control measures for at least three rabbit diseases and/or other related health and/or management problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Demonstrate competency in the showmanship of your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Attend and/or participate in one rabbit show.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Describe the characteristics of the four fur types.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Submit management records for three months that indicates how often you provided clean housing and grooming for your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Compare and contrast the conformation of at least three rabbit breeds with two different body types and fur types.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Describe how to choose your project rabbit (be breed specific).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Describe and/or demonstrate how and why you sanitize your rabbit's equipment and facilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Do something creative with your project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Participate in a community service activity with the Rabbit Project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Obtain contact information for the ARBA and identify at least two types of information you can obtain from them. Also identify and obtain contact information for two rabbit breeders and/or equipment suppliers.  
**ARBA, P.O. Box 5667, Bloomington, IL. 61702**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Participate in a 4-H event outside of your Club, i.e., County, Sectional, or State event.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Participate with your project in a competition in or outside of your 4-H Club, e.g., ARBA show, Fair, Presentation Day, or showmanship competition.

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# RABBIT PROFICIENCY

## Level 3 – Consumer

*Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.*

Date Completed                      4-H Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_                      Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Judge a class consisting of a minimum of three rabbits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What are the causes, symptoms treatment and prevention of:  
a. Snuffles   b. Weepy Eye   c. Sore Hocks   d. Ear Mites (ear canker)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Name five internal organs and the function of each.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Describe and differentiate between at least ten faults and disqualifications; pick either general or breed specific faults and disqualifications and specify the breed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Describe and explain a positive breeding program including equipment, gestation, terminology, and choosing mates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Describe the development of a rabbit from birth to adulthood and how and why you care for the rabbit at each stage (include care of the dam while the kits are still with her).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Describe the type of rabbits shown in commercial, fancy, and meat pen classes. Name at least two breeds from each class and identify the body type of each.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Choose and design a lesson plan for your project and implement it in your Rabbit Project with the appropriate materials.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Assist younger members in the design of project needed materials and/or equipment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Prepare and give a speech or demonstration relating to rabbits outside of the project group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Start a reference library for your project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Explore local, state and/or national affiliations and opportunities associated with the project, i.e. breed organizations, ARBA.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Continue to demonstrate skills in record keeping by submitting records including feeding, cleaning, grooming, and breeding records for pedigrees.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Participate in or organize a community service/citizenship activity related to your Rabbit Project.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Assist in organizing a County, Sectional, or State event. The focus here is on learning the process of organization.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Complete one year as a Junior Leader in any project.

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# RABBIT PROFICIENCY

## Level 4 – Leader

*Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.*

Date Completed                      4-H Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's Initials                      4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_                      Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Describe two commercial processes related to rabbits in detail, i.e., how to dress out a meat/broiler rabbit, how to tan a hide, how to collect and process rabbit's wool, and laboratory research uses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Describe genetics as it relates to raising your rabbit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Describe the type of rabbit that should be sold to a commercial processor, a laboratory, and a pet market and why.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Describe nutrient requirements of your rabbit using proper terminology as it relates to your project specialty, e.g., breeding, showing, meat pens.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Discuss how the rabbit's head skeletal structure, including jaw and teeth, relates to the wild rabbit diet and habitat. Discuss the genetic concerns for the fancy rabbit breeder as it relates to breeding for specific head types.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Explore some aspect of the project through the historical perspective. Explore career and industry related options.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Explore the economic and consumer impacts of an aspect of raising rabbits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Prepare and present a presentation about rabbits to a group outside of your local 4-H Club.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Learn courtesy and appropriate etiquette by inviting and introducing a speaker on a project related subject. Describe five things to consider when inviting, introducing, and thanking a guest speaker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Design or improve some aspect related to your Rabbit Project (marketing, equipment, educational materials, record keeping, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Complete one or more years as a Junior or Project Leader including the development of a special activity related to the project area. Create a plan, chart progress, analyze successes and problems and report results.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Prepare a project related item that will be provided to the County 4-H Council/ 4-H Office for use County-wide as a resource (video, record keeping forms, educational activities, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Participate in planning a 4-H County, Sectional, or State event.

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# RABBIT PROFICIENCY

## Level 5 – Researcher

*Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.*

Date Completed                      4-H Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader's Initials                      4-H Club: \_\_\_\_\_                      Project Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Prepare teaching materials for use at project meetings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Develop and put on a demonstration or judging event or train a junior team for a judging activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Research and speak on a project-based subject before an organization other than your 4-H group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Assist at a show as a clerk, secretary, recorder, assistant to the judge, ring master or with set up, registration, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Teach younger members about learning a specific topic in the project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Prepare a paper of 300 words or more on one of the following subjects. Orally summarize report at project meeting or other educational event.
  - Management of rabbits
  - Feeds, feeding and nutrition
  - Diseases, prevention, control and general sanitation
  - Markets and methods of marketing
  - Reproduction, breeding and genetics
  - Fur preparation for market, how marketed and used
  - Keeping and using records as a basis for improving your rabbit project

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## ***REQUIREMENTS:***

For members to qualify for proficiency awards they must complete all the requirements below and give a 4-H presentation during the 4-H year.

- Have up-to-date and complete enrollment packet and enrollment fees on file at the 4-H office.
- Attend 80% of club and project meetings or meet requirements of a county-wide project.
- Members must provide 4-H Records to the club leader for project completion verification.
- Records must include **Personal Development Report** and **Annual Project Report** form for each project a member is applying for a Proficiency Award, and the completed Proficiency Form.

*Developed by the Butte County 4-H YDP Livestock Committee (9/2013). Adapted from Lassen County and Lake County publications, which was adapted from DNAR North Region Publication No. NR-PP-001*