



Rabbit Showmanship

Rabbit showmanship is unique in that you, the 4-H exhibitor, are being judged on your presentation to explain how well you can show and judge the quality of your rabbit, rather than the animal involved. This means that you need to make sure you know about your breed, your rabbit, and how it matches breed standards. Remember you will also be judged on how you carry your animal to the table. Your rabbit should be tucked in a football-like hold with its head under your arm and your arm supporting its body and hind legs.

Remember to relax and smile while giving your presentation! Plan to practice your presentation before the contest. Be aware of any time limits that may be used for the specific showmanship contest. Maintain good eye contact. The rate at which you speak should not be too fast or choppy. Speak clearly and loud enough so that the judge/audience may hear you. Breathe. Organize your presentation so that it has a good flow and moves from one point to the next. Be confident and have fun!

Remember to check the dress code for the show before attending.

1. Walk up to the table carrying your rabbit in the proper manner. Pose the rabbit on the table in front of the judge. Pose based on what is best for your breed of rabbit.

2. Start your presentation by introducing yourself. What is your name? Age? How long have you been in 4-H? Then, introduce your rabbit. What's its name? Breed? Age? Tattoo number? If you are showing a crossbred rabbit, tell what breeds it descends from and what characteristics it shows from each breed.

3. Present your animal in a systematic manner. Start on one side and work your way around the animal. For each view of the rabbit, show how it meets breed standards, that the animal is healthy, and any potential problems.

4. Right and Left Side Views:
Show the ears. Are they free of mites? Clean? Straight? Lay correctly? Tattoo number?
Show the eye. Is it clean, clear and free of discharge?
Show the front foot. Is it properly placed?
Show the hind foot. Is it properly placed?
Show the body type – head, shoulder, rump and back of the animal. Do they follow breed standards? Is there good balance?

5. Front view:
Show the ears, nose and eyes from the front view. Nose – any discharge or snuffles?
Show your rabbit's teeth. Do they look healthy?
Straightness/alignment of teeth?

6. Rear view:
Show the tail. Is it straight?
Show hocks. Are they free of sores or abscesses?
Show the rump. Is it rounded?
Show the fur. What type of fur does your rabbit have?
Do your rabbit's coloring and markings agree with breed standards?

7. Flip your rabbit onto his back.
Show his back and front legs. Are they straight? Well furred?
Show the chest and abdomen. Is it free of sores, abscesses or growths?
Show the sex of the rabbit. Is the vent area free of any abnormalities? If the rabbit is a buck, are both testicles present?
Show that it has all its toes and toenails. Note if the toenails are the proper coloring or if any are broken or missing.

8. Finish up with a final pose of your rabbit. Ask the judge if they have any questions. Remember to answer to the best of your ability. You may not know the answer to every question and it is ok to say "I don't know."

It may help to include some facts about your breed or tell the judge something unique about the breed. Know the parts of the rabbit, how you cared for and feed your rabbit, and possible diseases a rabbit can get. Use the ARBA Standards of Perfection to determine how well your rabbit conforms to the breed standard.

