



Rabbit Farming



- Broiler rabbit is one of the very important micro livestock that can be reared in the backyard to meet the increasing demand of meat in the NE region.
- As rabbit meat contains high protein and low calorie it can be explored as an alternative to poultry meat and our unemployed rural youths can easily take up rabbit farming as an income generating activity.

Advantages of Rabbit Farming

- Suitability to backyard production
- High production potential in short time
- Use of non-competitive feed
- Fast growth rate
- Good meat quality
- Fur Skin

Nutritional values of different meats

Meat	Protein%	Fat%	Calories(Kcal/Kg
Rabbit	20.80	10.20	795
Chicken	20.00	11.00	810
Mutton	15.70	27.70	1420
Beef	16.30	28.00	1440
Pork	11.90	45.00	2050

Varieties of rabbit



• **Soviet Chinchilla**



• **New Zealand White**

Housing

➤ **Cage System**

- The size of the shed depends upon the number of animals to be reared.
- The cages are arranged in rows either in single or tier system.
- The general size of the cage is 2.5 ft X 2 ft X 2.5ft made of welded wire net (16 to 18 gauze) with hole size of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.
- Cages for Kindling (delivery) should be little larger(4ftX3ft)
- Under each row of cages proper drainage system should be there to drain off dung, urine etc.



Hutch System

- It is self- contained cage, which can be moved from one place to another as and when required.
- The hutches can be fabricated locally with wooden structure or bamboo or iron frame.
- The roof may be of thatch grass, CGI sheet/polypoplin.
- The size of each compartment may be of 3.5 ft X 3 ft X 3.5 ft with welded wire mesh.
- In hutch there may be 2-8 compartments.



Floor System

- But the floor should be made of cement concrete as the rabbits have the habit of burrowing in earthen floor.
- The house may be partitioned to keep different types of rabbits like grower, fryer, adult male and female etc.
- The floor space requirement per rabbit is about 4 sq.ft.
- This system is not advised in this region due to high humidity and rainfall. Also there is less control over the feeding, breeding and management in this system of rearing.



Breeding

- Rabbits attain maturity at 6-7 months of age.
- For mating the female rabbit is to be taken to the male rabbit cage
- The pregnancy period in rabbit is 30 days.
- doe (female rabbit) will give birth 6-12 numbers of young ones with an average of around 6 numbers.
- Through proper planning 4-5 litters may be obtained from each female per year
- Male and Female ratio is 1:10.



Care of Newborn

- The newborn rabbits are devoid of any hair on their body and are blind up to 9-10 days.
- They start developing hair from 4th day.
- The mother feeds her babies from time to time.
- Except periodical checking for dead ones and cleaning the soiled bedding, the young ones do not require much care.
- From around 20 days the young ones start nibbling the feed.



Weaning

- Depending on their growth and capacity to take feed, the young ones can be separated from their mother called as “weaning” between 30 to 42 days.
- It is always advisable to keep all the young ones together for few days after weaning and then gradually separate them to individual cages.
- Sexing and numbering of the young ones are being done at the time of weaning.



Feeding

- Rabbits reared in the backyard with few rabbits may be managed with kitchen waste and other vegetable and forages available.
- But for semi-commercial and commercial farms where a large number of animals are kept, balanced concentrate feed is must
- 40-50% feed can be reduced by giving them good quality fodder, root crops, green legumes, rice bean, ground nut, stylosanthes etc.
- Half of the concentrate feed mixture is to be given in the morning and half in the evening.



Daily feed requirement by different age group

- Weaner (45-70 days) -----50g/day
- Grower (71-90 days) -----75g/day
- Grower (91-120 days) -----100g/day
- Adult (>121 days) -----120g/day



Health Care

- Good management and hygienic condition prevents occurrence of diseases.
- Regular cleaning of shed, cages, feeding and watering trough along with surrounding is very much important to keep the farm and the animals free from diseases.
- It is also advisable not to allow outsiders to handle the animals to prevent contamination of diseases.
- Some of the important diseases of rabbits are coccidiosis, ear canker, mucoid enteritis, snuffles and aflatoxicosis.
- Most of these diseases can be prevented through proper management

Slaughter for meat and fur

- Rabbits for meat are generally being slaughtered at the age of 90 days. At this age the rabbit weighs around 1.90 kg.
- The dressing % is around 65%.
- A mature rabbit, however, will weight between 2.5 and 4.0 kg and approximately 62% of it will be dressed meat.
- After slaughtering the rabbits, the skin so obtained can be processed to use as fur/pelt for making jacket, hand gloves etc.





THANK YOU

