

**ELKHART COUNTY
4-H RABBIT CLUB
HANDBOOK
2026**



4-H Pledge:

I Pledge:

**My Head to Clearer Thinking,
My Heart to Greater Loyalty,
My Hands to Larger Service,
My Health to Better Living, for
My Club, My Community,
My Country and My World**

4-H Motto:

“To Make the Best Better”

**Welcome to the Elkhart County
4-H Rabbit Club**

FACEBOOK:

Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club
(it is a private group, be sure to answer questions to join)

ELKHART COUNTY 4-H RABBIT CLUB EMAIL:

Ec4hrabbitclub@gmail.com

CLUB TEXTING ALERTS:

Under GroupMe App as Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club

Elkhart County 4-H Fair - 4hfair.org

Purdue Extension Elkhart County - <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/elkhart/>

Indiana State Fair - <https://www.indianastatefair.com/>

Please contact your Co-Leaders with any questions you may have.

ISRAEL STARK: 574-849-8823

TAMMY STARK: 574-849-8824

PARENTS AND MEMBERS

Welcome to the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club!! There is so much to learn about rabbits, and we want to make this the best learning experience possible. We want to encourage the entire family to get involved with activities, fundraisers, workshops and meetings. You will soon learn that the time and effort that you put into your project and club will be rewarding and educational.

To start out, please take time to read the member handbook in its entirety. Our goal is to make sure you are up to date as possible with the club.

It is never too late to get involved with Rabbit Club. We are always in need of helpers throughout the year. Without the assistance of volunteers, we would not be able to be the amazing club that we are. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions that you may have throughout the year. Thank you in advance for your time and dedication to the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club.

OBJECTIVES OF THE 4-H RABBIT CLUB

1. Develop leadership, initiative, self-reliance, sportsmanship skills along with many other valuable character traits.
2. Experience the pride and responsibility of owning an animal along with care, feeding and learning about the related cost.
3. Learn safety precautions so that injuries to you and other members, and the animals can be prevented.
4. Promote a love for animals and a humane attitude towards them.
5. Prepare citizenship responsibilities by working together, supporting community projects and activities. Remember this is your club.
6. Become aware of the opportunities for careers in the rabbit industry or animal field.

BREEDS OF RABBITS

4 CLASS RABBITS (32)

American Fuzzy Lop
American Sable
Angora (English)
Angora (French)
Angora (Satin)
Belgian Hare
Blue Holicer
Britannia Petite
Chinchilla (Standard)
Czech Frosty
Dutch
Dwarf Hotot
Dwarf Papillion
English Spot
Florida White
Harlequin
Havana
Himalayan
Holland Lop
Jersey Wooly
Lilac
Lionhead
Mini Lop
Mini Rex
Mini Satin
Netherland Dwarf
Polish
Rex
Rhinelanders
Silver
Silver Marten
Tan
Thrianta

6 CLASS RABBITS (20)

American
Angora (Giant)
Argente Brun
Beveren
Blanc de Hotot
Californian
Champagne D Argent
Checkered Giant
Chinchilla (American)

Chinchilla (Giant)
Cinnamon
Creme D Argent
Flemish Giant
Hotot
English Lop
French Lop
New Zealand
Palomino
Satin
Silver Fox

Wednesday Show Only:

The show order (by breed name) will be A to Z on Even Numbered Fair Years and Z to A on Odd Numbered Fair Years. With the exception of Meat Pens, Fuzzy Breeds, and Larger 6 Class Rabbits.

LIVE RABBIT EXHIBIT

Exhibiting at the Fair is NOT a completion requirement. If you do not own a rabbit, or an ARBA recognized breed, PLEASE see the section on completion requirements.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SHOWING A LIVE RABBIT EXHIBIT AT FAIR:

1. Rabbit must be an ARBA (American Rabbit Breeders Association) recognized Breed.
2. **Two (2)** purchased rabbits will be allowed. (Must be purchased by the May Meeting) All other rabbits must be raised by the member. Meat Pen Rabbits CANNOT be purchased since only 2 purchased rabbits can be shown. (Definition of RAISED: kits born on Rabbit Club Members property.
3. Each Member may enter **THREE (3)** Breeds of rabbits for the 4-H Rabbit Show.
4. Each Member may have up to **FIFTEEN (15)** Cages.

MEAT PEN

As part of the **FIFTEEN (15)** Cages, each member may exhibit **ONE (1)** six-class Meat Pen, and/or **ONE (1)** four-class Meat Pen. (Meat Pen shall consist of **THREE (3)** rabbits of the same breed and variety) Which must be displayed in **ONE (1)** Cage. **NOTE:** Six-Class Meat Pen Rabbits **MUST** weigh a minimum of **THREE (3)** and **HALF (1/2)** pounds and a max of **FIVE (5)** and **HALF (1/2)** pounds each and be under 70 days old. The age limit is 10 weeks. (Unless ARBA standard is changed) Four-Class Meat Pen Rabbits are **ONLY** a 4-H Fun Project! If you want to enter one of your rabbits from your meat pen as a pre-junior class, you **MUST** decide at check-in which one you will enter for the 4-H Show!

4-CLASS RABBITS

Meat Pen - 70 days
Senior Buck - Over 6 Months Old
Senior Doe - Over 6 Months Old
Junior Buck - Under 6 Months Old

6-CLASS RABBITS

Meat Pen - 70 days
Senior Buck - Over 8 Months Old
Senior Doe - Over 8 Months Old
6/8 Buck - 6-8 Months Old

6/8 Doe - 6-8 Months Old
Junior Buck - Under 6 Months Old
Junior Doe - Under 6 Months Old
Pre. Jr. Buck - Under 70 Days Old
Pre. Jr. Doe - Under 70 Days Old

NOTE: Many breeds have weight limits for Juniors and 6/8 (Intermediates). Consult the ARBA Standards for weight limits on ALL ages and breeds. It is your responsibility to know your breed(s) of rabbit(s) weight limit(s).

5. The rabbits **MUST** be in **good health** to show. If any health problems occur with any of your rabbits at any time during the duration of Fair week: AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER AND A BOARD MEMBER MUST BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY!
6. All rabbits **MUST** have a **permanent ear tattoo in their LEFT ear**, BEFORE entering the Fairgrounds. THE TATTOO MUST BE CLEAR AND EASY TO READ, or the Rabbit could be disqualified by the Judge. (There will be opportunities to have rabbits tattooed at some of the club meetings before Fair Week. There will be a limit of 6 rabbits per member per meeting to be tattooed.) THE CLUB AND THE PEOPLE WHO VOLUNTEER TO TATTOO RABBITS WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR INJURIES TO RABBITS DURING THE TATTOOING PROCESS.

EXHIBITING AT THE FAIR

1. **Record Books** and **Skill Books** MUST be turned into the 4-H Rabbit Club by the June Meeting. (Unless stated otherwise by the Leaders)
2. **Animal ID MUST** be completed online by **MAY 15th Deadline!!!** Untattooed kits must be added to Animal ID with an assigned tattoo number. Only the Gender of kits can be changed at Check-In. All tattoos must match the Animal ID Registration at Check-In NO EXCEPTIONS!
3. **YQCA / Quality Assurance Class** Requirement MUST be completed by **JUNE 15th Deadline!!**
4. Rabbits MUST be on exhibition by 7:00pm the Thursday before the Fair begins. There will be only ONE (1) Check-In Day. There will NOT be any Friday Check-Ins. All Rabbits MUST be weaned. Rabbits must be Checked out by 3:00pm the last Friday of Fair after Auction Release! The Rabbit Club WILL NOT be responsible for the safety and well-being of any rabbits remaining in the barn after the check-out time.
5. ANY RABBIT THAT HAS A STAR, OR OTHER SYMBOL, IN ITS EAR, MAY NOT BE BROUGHT TO THE LOCAL 4-H FAIR OR THE STATE FAIR FOR EXHIBIT. A registration tattoo is an exception to this.
6. Any Animal showing signs of illness or disease may be sent home.
7. **Medical/Treatments of Animals** must have veterinarian prescription paperwork on file with the Livestock Leaders!
 - a. First Violation: Warning, file the paperwork
 - b. Second Violation: Falls under the fraud, deceit/cheat policy already in the 4-H Handbook as part of the grievance process.
8. Each member is responsible for the feeding and watering of their rabbit(s), and cleaning under the cages daily.
9. **Grooming Rule** Each Member is responsible for grooming their rabbit(s). The 4-H Member MUST be present if the animal is to be groomed at any time! Anyone can assist with the livestock grooming as long as the 4-H member is actively participating in the process as well
 - a. First Violation: a warning is given.
 - b. Second Violation: Falls under the fraud, deceit/cheat policy already in the 4-H Handbook as part of the grievance process.

10. All Members are to have the remark card(s) turned in at Check-In for the 4-H Show on Wednesday.
11. All Members are responsible for seeing that their rabbit(s) are brought to and from the show tables. (If they need help, please see the Jr. Officers for assistance or Board Members)
12. NO Rabbit breeding will be allowed on the Fairgrounds at any time!
13. For Sale signs will not be allowed to be hung on the members cage(s) or posted in the barn any time during Fair Week. There will be a binder located at the office for members to advertise in. The members will be responsible for keeping their information up to date.
14. All Members will be allowed to display above their cages the rabbits cage card, Open Show and 4-H Show Ribbons during Fair Week.

4-H RABBIT CLUB COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

DISPLAYING A RABBIT AT FAIR

- MUST be enrolled in 4-H Online by Fair Office Deadline
- MUST have entered Rabbit(s) in Animal ID by May 15th Deadline
- MUST have YQCA or Quality Assurance Class Completed by June 15th Deadline
- MUST have Record Book and Skill Book turned in by June Meeting (unless stated otherwise by Leaders)
- MUST have Rabbit(s) checked in by 7pm on Check-In Day

NOT DISPLAYING A RABBIT AT FAIR (DOING A POSTER)

- MUST be enrolled in 4-H Online by Fair Office Deadline
- MUST have Poster entered in Fair Entry and Displayed in the ECCC Building by Deadline
- Skill Book Turned in by the June Meeting

PARENT AND MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

1. Each member and **ONE** (1) parent per family is required to work a complete shift in The Bunny Hut. Parents are important to help supervise the running of The Bunny Hut. We need to have 4 members and 2 parents working at each shift to keep our Bunny Hut running smoothly. We can't run the Bunny Hut without the help of our Parents and Members. Thank you in Advance for volunteering your time!
2. Each member and **ONE** (1) parent per family is required to work a complete shift in the Rabbit Barn. We need to have more supervision to keep our Rabbit(s) safe during Fair Week! Thank you in Advance for volunteering your time!
3. Parents are needed to help with an overnight shift in the Rabbit Barn. We will provide you a cot to sleep on, and a Free treat from the Bunny Hut in the morning as a Thank you. Hours are 10:00pm – 8:00am (see Leaders if interested)
4. Each member and **ONE** (1) parent per family is required to work a 2-Hour shift on a Workday.
5. If you cannot make the shift, you signed up for. **YOU** need to find a replacement before the beginning of the shift. **YOU** need to let the Advisory Board Member know who that person will be in advance.

RABBIT CLUB DUES

The Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club fee is \$20.00 for the 1st child and \$15.00 for each additional child. These fees will be due by the May meeting. The fees help cover the cost of running the Club. This is in addition to the fees required by the Purdue Extension for 4-H Enrollment. ALL 10-Year Rabbit Club members' dues will be waived!

RABBIT POSTER EXHIBIT

The 4-H Rabbit Poster project is open to any 4-H member and is not limited to exhibitors of 4-H Rabbits. Members can show a rabbit AND complete a poster. 4-H'ers may also use their 4-H Poster as a part of their Illustrated Talk and Action Demonstration Contest during Fair Week. "The purpose shall be to visually demonstrate 4-H Rabbit Poster knowledge and to demonstrate to others the 4-H Rabbit Poster possibilities."

The 4-H Participants will be grouped in the following categories:

Level 1: 3rd, 4th, 5th Grade

Level 2: 6th, 7th, 8th Grade

Level 3: 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th Grade

Requirements:

- Use a white 22 x 28 poster board to be displayed horizontally with stiff backing and the front covered with clear plastic sleeve. Leave a space in the lower front right-hand corner for a 3 ½ x 4 ¼ name tag. The name tag will be filled out when the poster is checked in. The entry date is determined by the Elkhart County 4-H Fair Office. (use can purchase the sleeve from the extension office while supplies last)
- Each poster **MUST** have been made by the 4-H member enrolled in the current year 4-H program.
- Proper footnoting should be used for any reference materials. You **MUST** attach a 3 x 5 file card to the back of the poster listing all references you used for this poster.

Standards of Evaluation: 100 points total

- Content and information (accuracy and completeness) 40 Points
- Originally and Creativity (attracts interest and encourages thought) 25 Points
- Overall appearance (neatness, arrangement, background, detail) 15 Points
- Suitable subject and age appropriate (match 4-H'ers age/ability) 10 Points
- Conveys message/accomplishes purpose 5 Points
- Meets exhibits requirements 5 Points

Entering Date:

The entry date is determined by the Elkhart County 4-H Fair.

State Fair:

There will be ONE (1) poster from each level that will be chosen by the judges to represent Elkhart County at the State Fair in August, unless the judges feel none are worthy of State Fair Exhibit.

RABBIT AUCTION RULES

On the **LAST** Friday of the Fair, each member has the opportunity to auction **ONE** (1) Rabbit that has been exhibited during the week of Fair. Members are **NOT** required to Auction. If you cannot be at the Auction, you **MUST** make arrangements with another 4-H Rabbit Club member to take your rabbit to the Auction ring. The Club will **NOT** be responsible for finding your rabbit and getting it into the Auction ring.

At Check-In, the Rabbit(s) to be auctioned will be "flagged". It is possible to flag more than one rabbit(s), however, the final decision **MUST** be made by the 3:00pm **DEADLINE** after the 4-H Rabbit Show on Wednesday during Fair Week. The member (Parent or Guardian) **MUST** make the Advisory Board Vice President aware of their final decision and pay the \$5.00 Transaction fee by the previously mentioned deadline.

If **YOU** choose to keep your rabbit, you may buy it back from the Club for \$5.00 after the Auction is over and the paperwork has been received at the Rabbit Barn from the Fair Office. Whoever buys the Rabbit at the Auction **MUST** have a receipt to pick up the Rabbit.

Rabbit(s) who are buyers retained or have been bought back from the Auction will have a specially designated tattoo placed in the **RIGHT** ear prior to being released. These Rabbit(s) will **NOT** be allowed to be shown at the Elkhart County 4-H Fair in the future!

There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS** for missing the 3:00pm **DEADLINE** for Auction. The chance to Auction will be forfeited.

****Please don't forget to send your buyer a handwritten "Thank you" note. Buyer information will be included in your check from the Fair Office****

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

During the judging process, we ask that everyone please use the seating provided area to watch the shows. **ONLY** 4-H Members, Leaders, Advisory Board Members and Show Workers will be allowed in the roped-off area. We need to keep the aisles free and clear so the 4-Hers can bring their rabbit(s) to and from the show tables. During the shows only 4-H members may put the rabbit(s) on the show table. There will be older members available to help the younger members if they need help.

JUNIOR OFFICER POSITIONS/JUNIOR ADVISORY BOARD POSITIONS

The Rabbit Club encourages the members to become involved with the club as much as possible. One way is to become a Junior Officer. To be eligible for election you **MUST** turn in an application (available from the Leaders) and fill out a questionnaire. These forms **MUST** also be signed by a parent or guardian. **FORMS MUST BE TURNED INTO THE LEADERS BY 8:00PM THE LAST THURSDAY OF FAIR.** Club Officers are expected to be a positive role model for the club and its members. To work cooperatively with other Officers, members, Leaders and the Extension Office. Promote a positive atmosphere at meetings, 4-H functions and in the community. Help at workshops and participate in club meetings. We ask that you attend at least 5 of the 7 Club meetings in order to hold your position. The position can be removed at any time if you cannot fulfill your obligation or failure to follow the rules. The following positions are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Devotions, 2 Photographers, 3 Junior Advisory Board

ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to serve as a governing body that will assist the Leaders of the 4-H Rabbit Club Program. It is the responsibility of the board to uphold and demonstrate the 4-H Values. The Advisory board is made up of 14 people, (3) Jr. Advisory Board, (9) elected Advisory Board Members, (2) Organizational Leaders. The (9) elected members serve for a 3-year term on the Board and a 3-Year Position on the Board. They can do two consecutive terms then will have to take one year off before they can run again. The Advisory Board is voted at the banquet by the parents/guardian of the current active member. The Advisory Board meets on the 1st Monday of every month all year long. We ask that you attend at least 10 of the 12 meetings. If you are interested in becoming an Advisory Board member, please see the Co-Leaders for more information. Names **MUST** be turned in by the June meeting. There will be an interview with the Extension Educator, and a background check will be performed.

ARBA

American Rabbit Breeders Association, Inc.

ARBA is the world's leading domestic rabbit breeder's organization. The Standard of Perfection is a published guide. It represents the standards of all the recognized breeds, from the breed description, fur, color, classes, weight limits, markings, conditions, and disqualifications. This publication is subject to revision every 5 years. We highly encourage you to visit their website ARBA.net. You can also download their app to any electronic device. It is the members' responsibility to know their breed standards. We will have these available for purchase at our regular Club meetings.

BUNNY HUT

The Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club has a concession stand open for food sales during the Fair. This is the biggest fundraiser for the Club. The Bunny Hut is located near the main entrance of the Fairgrounds. It is staffed by Rabbit Club Volunteers, members, and their families. Rabbit meat is used in various items in the Bunny Hut. Rabbit meat is obtained first from members and then from outside sources if the members cannot fulfill the need. Processing dates will be announced throughout the year. Sign-Up Genius will be an opportunity to sign up for the required work shift. There will be laptop available to use at Club meetings to sign up for a shift. Each member and **ONE** (1) parent per family is required to work a complete shift in The Bunny Hut. Parents are important to help supervise the running of The Bunny Hut. We need to have **FOUR** (4) members and **TWO** (2) parents working at each shift to keep our Bunny Hut running smoothly. We can't run the Bunny Hut without the help of our Parents and Members. Thank you in Advance for volunteering your time!

BARN SUPERVISION

Each member and **ONE** (1) parent per family is required to work a complete shift in the Rabbit Barn. We need to have more supervision to keep our Rabbit(s) safe during Fair Week! During the barn supervision you will be responsible for walking the aisles asking the public nicely not to pet, touch, or poke the rabbits. Sweep the walkways and turn over any bedding as needed. If any issues arise, please see an Organizational Leader and/or Advisory Board Member. Sign-Up Genius will be an opportunity to sign up for the required barn shift. There will be laptop available to use at Club meetings to sign up for a shift. Thank you in Advance for volunteering your time!

****If you cannot make the shift, you signed up for. YOU need to find a replacement before the beginning of the shift. YOU need to let the Advisory Board Member know who that person will be in advance. ****

THE MARVIN J. YODER 4-H RABBIT CLUB SCHOLARSHIP

The Marvin J. Yoder Scholarship has been created to say "WELL DONE" to our senior members in the Elkhart Co. 4-H Rabbit Club. These members have worked hard and participated in the growth and function of the club. We would like to be a partner with them and show our support as they pursue their post High School education. Marvin J. Yoder was a long-time resident of Elkhart Co. His contributions to the community were many. As a member of the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club Advisory Board, Marvin served as a Fair Board Representative. Marvin had a love for learning and competition. Out of that love came a desire to support the youth in Rabbit Club through generous gifts of time and money. Each year at the 4-H Auction, young people could count on Marvin's bid. On more than one occasion, he purchased prize-winning animals to reward the hard work that a 4-H'er had put forth. On August 18, 1995, Marvin J. Yoder died after a hard-fought battle with

cancer. Although he will no longer be there to bid on 4-H livestock, his competitive spirit and love for learning can live on through this scholarship.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS: Every eligible senior who applies and has met the requirements will be awarded the scholarship. The application will need to be returned to the Advisory Board Treasurer. Scholarship money will be sent directly to the school of enrollment.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Be a completing member for at least 5 years in the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club
- Earned at least 3 Gold Achievement Ribbons
- Complete at least 5 approved activities
 - Action Demonstration Contest
 - Ambassador Contest
 - Breed ID
 - Club Jr. Officer
 - Costume Contest
 - Illustrated Talk
 - Jr. Advisory Livestock Board
 - Knowledge Test
 - Parade Float
 - Rabbit Club 4-H Queen Representative
 - Rabbit Poster Exhibit
 - Rabbit Round Robin Showmanship
 - Showmanship
 - State Ambassador Contest
 - Workshops (Breed ID, Processing, etc.)

Funding: This scholarship is an endowment fund set up by the Yoder Family and the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club. Donations consist of endowment funds and immediate monies. The Rabbit Club will be making contributions through fundraising programs, and we will be accepting donations from the community members who also believe in our youth and would like to help them pursue their dreams. If you are a Senior member of the Elkhart County 4-H Rabbit Club, Scholarship applications forms are available from the Advisory Board Treasurer. Scholarship money will be sent directly to the post-secondary school/trade school upon completion of the recipient's first semester. Transcripts will be required as proof. Please Email to ec4hrabbitclub@gmail.com Along with the following name and address of the financial aid office at their school, the name and student id # of the student and a contact person at the Financial Aid office.

Revised 9/28/2025 TS