

# Management of Rabbit

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## Pregnancy

- The gestation period in rabbit is 30-32 days.

## Pregnancy diagnosis

- Test mating(Layman's method)
- Palpation

# False pregnancy

- In case doe doesn't conceive after mating, sometime she may develop false pregnancy.

# Management of Pregnant Doe

- During last 10 to 15 days pregnancy feeding plain of doe must be gradually increased by 20 to 25 gm additional allowance to fulfill growth of embryos and development of mammary glands.
- Proper feeding is also helpful to increase birth weight of bunnies and milk production of mother to nurse baby rabbits.

# Kindling care

- Kindling usually takes place in the night. Before kindling does become restless, moves to and fro, jumps and licks the genitalia.
- Normally there are no problems during kindling, provided does is left undisturbed and has bedding material to make nest.

- After delivery of young rabbits, mother licks them and dries with allowing them to suckle.
- Baby rabbit are borned with **blind eyes** and weigh around 70gm.
- After kindling doe be provided 180 to 200g of concentrate along with **100 -200 g Lucerne**.

# Cannibalism

- In some cases it can be observed that doe, may intend to eat her new born, which is called as cannibalism.
- The regions may be shortage of drinking water before kindling, improper bedding or nest conditions or disturbance during the process.
- Parasites.
- Vices.

# Management of young Rabbit

- First 2 to 3 weeks **only on mother's milk.**
- Watched every day to ensure that young ones are well fed and comfortable.
- **If baby rabbits are hungry** or feeling too hot, they **start climbing the nest** with restlessness to come out of nest box.

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- Adequate feeding and suitable environment young ones sleep quietly in nest box.
  - From **15 to 20 days** young rabbit start chewing grass and eating concentrate.
  - **4 to 5 litters** of water/day during this period.

# Fostering

Taking bunnies to another doe for rearing is fostering.

1. Real mother of **bunnies** may die.
2. Litter size is more than 8.

# Hand rearing

- In case of non-acceptance of new born by foster mother, they can also be reared by hand feeding of cow's milk.

# Weaning management

- Weaning separation of litter from mother doe with stoppage of suckling is done between 4 to 7 weeks.

# Management of Rabbit Farming

- Weaning
- Sexing
- Weighing of Rabbit
- Tattooing
- Castration

# Selection of Rabbits for Breeding

## Selection of Buck.

- Breeding records(Pedigree).
- Good physical condition.
- Its growth must be good but devoid fattiness.
- Weight 2.8 to 3 kg.
- A buck from reliable breeder can also be purchased.

# Selection of Doe

- A breeding doe should have minimum 8 teats (4 pairs).
- Good physical condition, healthy and well grown.
- Body weight is around 2 to 2.3 kg.

# Patterns of breeding

1. **Extensive breeding** : In back yard rabbitry farmer aim to produce about 4 litters/doe/year.
  - Weaning 7 weeks
  - As breeding cycle completion takes about 85 to 90 days, around 4 litters may be produced in a year.

## 2. Semi-intensive breeding

- Rabbit keeper in this pattern aim to get 5 to 6 litters/doe/year.
- Weaning 5 weeks.
- Breeding cycle is completed within 65 to 70 days.
- The system is suitable for small commercial rabbitries.

## 3. Intensive breeding

- Large commercial rabbitries follow this breeding pattern.
- Weaning is done at two weeks.
- In the third week from kindling doe is mated and within 45 to 50 days breeding cycle is completed.

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- This pattern can produce more than 7 litters/doe in year, but puts doe under big stress.
  - It should only be practiced by professionals maintaining skills, quality nutrition and standard management.

# Management of breeders

- Managing breeding buck.
- Managing breeding does.
- Managing broiler Rabbits.
- Managing wool Rabbits.

# Productivity Features of Rabbitry

- Pre-weaning and post weaning **mortality %**. Lower is better.
- Interval between two litters(Less).
- Rate of occupancy of breeding cages. Higher rate indicates fast breeding and production of more litters.

- No. of rabbits produced/breeding cage/y more is better.
- Feed conversion ratio. margin over feed expenses/year

**Thanks**