

Standard Operating Procedures
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
Rabbit Unit

I. Overview of the Rabbit Unit.

The main objective of the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Farm Rabbit Unit is to provide rabbits for the teaching needs of students and professors at our University, and at the same time to produce breeding stock for those buyers interested in adding some of our genetics to their breeding programs. The TAMUK Rabbit Unit's breeding herd consists of an average of 20 New Zealand White does, 7 New Zealand White bucks, 20 Composite does and 7 Composite bucks, with numbers varying depending on teaching needs and/or demand of breeding stock. The Facility is 80 feet long and 17 feet wide and holds more than 120 galvanized wire cages.

II. Biosecurity.

1. - Individuals who have been in contact with rabbits at other locations must have had taken a shower before entering the unit.
2. - All visitors must use footbaths placed at the entry points of the unit.
3. - Buyers and/or visitors are not permitted to handle rabbits. Only after a rabbit is sold is the buyer allowed to handle and inspect the rabbit.

III. Breeding herd management.

Breeding management includes first matings at 5 months of age. Does that produce four or fewer kits twice consecutively are culled. A 14-30 day breed-back system is utilized depending on teaching needs and/or breeding stock demand.

IV. Feeding procedure.

Rabbits consume a commercial feed once per day with rations based on the following amounts:

- a. - Small rabbits (2-3 lbs.) 2-3 oz. per day.

- b. - Medium rabbits (3-6 lbs.) 3-7 oz. per day.
- c. - Large rabbits (6-10 lbs.) 4-10 oz. per day.
- d. - Does with kits: ad libitum.

V. Treating sick rabbits.

Treatment of sick animals is recorded in a treatment log maintained in the Farm Managers office.

VI. Sale of animals.

- a. - Price of breeding stock is \$35.00/animal.
- b. - Price of fryers is \$9.00/animal.
- c. – Payments are made with check or money order made out to “TAMUK”.
- d. - All buyers must receive a sundry receipt in order to take rabbits from farm. the

VII. Animal disposal.

All deceased animals are to be disposed of and buried in the death pit according to USDA and TAMUK IACUC rules and procedures.