

# Meat Rabbits

*Oryctolagus cuniculus* · Meat breed (e.g. New Zealand White)

**DIFFICULTY** Easy

**TYPE** Small livestock, kept for meat

**PRODUCTIVE LIFE** Processed at 8–12 weeks



SPACE

**0.5–0.7m² hutch per rabbit, larger for breeding does**



DIET

**Rabbit pellets + hay + fresh greens**



WATER

**Fresh daily via bottle or bowl**



TEMPERAMENT

**Generally calm, individual housing preferred**

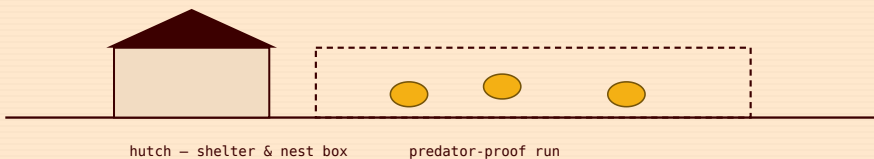


LIFESPAN

**8–12 years if kept beyond meat age**

## 01 Small space, fast turnaround

Rabbits need comparatively little space and reproduce quickly, making them one of the most space-efficient meat animals for a small [homestead](#).



## 02 Housing & setup

|         |                                                                                                |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SHELTER | Predator-proof hutch, raised off the ground with a solid nest box for breeding does.           |
| FENCING | Fully enclosed hutch/run rather than open range — rabbits dig and are vulnerable to predators. |
| BEDDING | Straw or hay in nest boxes, changed regularly, especially around kindling.                     |

## 04 Health & problems

- **Respiratory infection (snuffles)** — from damp, poorly ventilated housing; keep hutches dry and airy.
- **Sore hocks** — from wire floors; provide a solid resting area.
- **Predator loss** — even hutch-raised rabbits are vulnerable; ensure housing is fully secure.
- **Overheating** — rabbits are heat-sensitive; ensure shade and ventilation in summer.

## 06 Compatibility & considerations

GOOD WITH

Small-space or urban-fringe homestead setups

AVOID KEEPING WITH

Open range without predator-proof housing

NOTE

One of the most efficient meat animals for feed input versus space required — worth considering even on a smaller block.

## 03 Daily care

- Feed a consistent ration of pellets, hay, and fresh greens.
- Keep hutches clean and dry to prevent respiratory and foot problems.
- House breeding bucks and does separately except for planned mating.
- Handle regularly to keep animals calm and manageable.

## 05 Production & harvest

|                |                                                                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PROCESSING AGE | 8–12 weeks for standard meat breeds.                                             |
| YIELD          | Roughly 1–1.5kg dressed weight per rabbit.                                       |
| BREEDING       | Does can produce several litters a year, making this a fast-cycling meat source. |
| STORAGE        | Fresh in the fridge a few days; freezes well.                                    |