

**Date:** February 24, 2025

**To:** 4-H Rabbit Project Members and Leaders

**From:** Kayla Mitchell, Program Coordinator - 4-H Youth Development

**Re:** 2025 Rabbit Project Important Information and Updates

This is a quick update on the events that will take place for the 2025 fair season within the rabbit department. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511. **Please note that the information contained in this letter is subject to change.**

**NEW for 2025**

- Skill-a-thon and interview will be combined into one evaluation class.
- We encourage all rabbits to be **loaded out** on Saturday, September 20 from 11:00 p.m. - 12 midnight to get the barn cleaned. If necessary, they may also be loaded out on Sunday, September 21 at 5:30 a.m. All livestock (and those with campers) must be done moving by 11:00 a.m. September 21 per the St. Joseph County Grange Fair Board.

**Reminders**

- Market pens must be **commercial breeds** that are raised primarily for meat consumption per ARBA (i.e. Californian, New Zealand, Silver Fox, etc.). Contact Emily Redmond, Rabbit Superintendent, if you are unsure whether a breed qualifies.
- **Countywide tattooing and registration** will be at the fairgrounds near the rabbit barns on Sunday, August 10, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and Wednesday, August 13, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. and All rabbit exhibitors must attend one of these dates with their rabbits.
- Each individual market rabbit must weigh **at least 3 lbs.** at fair check-in. Each pen must weigh a minimum total of 9 lbs. and maximum total of 17 lbs.
  - **Underweight and overweight** pens will be ineligible to exhibit at the fair and will be sent home. *Exception:* rabbits may be moved to breeding stock classes where appropriate.
- There will be an **“unofficial”** set of scales available for use prior to getting in line at fair check-in on Friday, September 12, 2025. Please remember that you may weigh your rabbits officially only ONCE at the rabbit barn entrance.
- All rabbit exhibitors are required to feed and water their own market and/or breeding stock rabbits each day between 6:00 - 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Exhibitors must clean under their cage **every morning**.
  - **Dress Code** for *Showmanship* classes: long sleeve white shirt, dark colored pants, and closed-toed shoes. Dress code for *CloverBud, Market, and Breeding Stock* classes: long sleeve shirt, dark colored pants, and closed-toed shoes.



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**Important dates, deadlines, and events**

<b>Event or Deadline</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Initial tattooing & registration	August 10, 10:00a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or August 13, 5:00 - 7:00p.m.	<b>Required for all exhibitors</b>
Barn set up	September 9, 5:30 - 7:00p.m.	See Job List for Club(s) responsible for 2025
Fair weigh-in/check-in	September 12, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.	
Evaluation	September 13, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Rabbit Barn
4-H Market & Breeding Stock Show	September 14, 9:00 a.m.	Henningsen Show Arena
4-H Small Animal Sale	September 18, 10:00 a.m.	Order of sale: goats, chickens, turkeys, rabbits
Market Animal Load-out	September 20, 10:00 p.m.	See Job List for club(s) responsible for 2025
Breeding Stock released & Barn Clean-up	September 20, 11:00 p.m. until done or September 21, 5:30 a.m. as needed	See Job List for club(s) responsible for 2025