

# RABBIT PRICING 101

*Provided by Blue Ribbon Rabbitry*

Prices for rabbits vary greatly from breeder to breeder. There are many factors that influence pricing and I have explored these factors a bit below.

Please, *never* spend more than you can afford. At the same time, please try to have reasonable expectations. You cannot walk into a BMW dealership and demand a BMW for the price of a Ford Focus. Understand that with anything in life, you pay for quality. You cannot demand from a breeder a high quality show rabbit and also expect to pay pet store prices.

## **Supply and Demand:**

I will be the first to admit that economics was not my strong suit in school. However, it only takes a basic understanding to recognize how the principles of supply and demand affect sales. If a rabbit is in high demand, costs go up. Costs go up even more if the supply is also minimal. I think it is safe to say that generally speaking, high quality rabbits are more difficult to acquire.

## **Prices of Other Breeders:**

This also relates to basic principles of economics. If other breeders charge X amount for an animal of a certain quality, then it is beneficial to charge about the same price. If you charge less, people question the quality of your animals. If you charge more, buyers will go to your competition.

## **Notoriety of Breeder:**

A breeder with a good reputation will be able to get more for their animals than newer breeders. Ideally though, a breeder will not overcharge just because they can get away with it. More typically, I think more well known breeders are able to sell rabbits for a price that reflects their true worth, while newer breeders may sell rabbits for a bargain.

## **Cost of Maintaining a Herd:**

### 1. Equipment

A LOT of things fit into this category. Have you ever priced barns? While it is one time cost (unless you outgrow it!) barns are very expensive. I would be shocked if a breeder was able to pay off the cost of their barn with even a lifetime of rabbit sales. Cages are expensive and need to be replaced every so many years as they age and begin to rust. Here are a few other items you

might not consider: feeders, bowls, automatic watering systems, electricity, water, carriers, carts, grooming tables, fans, nestboxes, bedding materials, etc. The list is basically endless.

## 2. Health Care

It's expensive. Enough said.

## 3. Feed

Feed is a huge expense. We maintain a relatively small herd, but still spend more than \$100 a month on high quality feed. Many spend much, much more. For many, feed is easily the single biggest expense.

## 3. Shows

In order to be known as a breeder, you have to be active on the show circuit. Last year we attended approximately 16 local shows. We average costs of \$50-100 in gas for each local show we attend. Our entry fees for local shows average between \$40 and \$100 (more for double or triple shows). National shows are MUCH more expensive. Travel costs include airfare, cargo transport for rabbits, hotel, etc. National entry fees are much, much more expensive than local show entry fees.

Basically, A LOT of money goes into shows.

## 4. Miscellaneous

Club membership dues and website costs are a few of the many miscellaneous costs that spring to mind.

## **Quality:**

Yes, the rabbit world has its own economy. And yes, raising and showing rabbits is expensive. But something also needs to be said about the quality of an individual rabbit and how that affects cost. While quality is subjective, all breeds have a 100 point standard they are judged by. The closer an animal is to its breed standard, the more it is worth.

## **Bottom Line?**

While I cannot speak for other breeders, I know that we spend MUCH more on our rabbits than we make. We also have very high standards for the rabbits we sell and our prices are on par with other breeders who have similar or even lower quality rabbits. If anything, we price our animals a little low. I do not feel guilty for charging what I charge. I know that I sell beautiful animals that are well worth their price.

As a breeder, I am not offended when people are surprised (or even upset) because they feel that our animals are too expensive. I completely understand that everyone enters this hobby with

different expectations. My non-rabbit friends are always floored when they learn about how much show rabbits cost.

As a buyer, if an animal is out of my price range I simply thank the breeder and tell them I am going to pass. There is no need to make a comment about the price. It is their choice to sell the animal for that amount and it is my choice to decide to buy or not buy the animal.

My hope is that those reading this article walk away knowing that the cost of show rabbits does not equal the amount of money spent on maintaining the herd. You really do get a bang from your buck when buying a show rabbit.