

PET CARE SHEET FOR TANS

Provided by Blue Ribbon Rabbitry

Temperament:

Tans are a highly intelligent and active breed. While they are extremely friendly, they are not a "cuddly" breed though, and typically do not like to be held only because they hate sitting still. They love to run and play and once they get to know you they will come over to you for attention. Any rabbit of any breed can become a little snippy once they reach sexual maturity. To prevent this, consider having your rabbit spayed or neutered. There are many benefits including: not having unwanted litters, lower risk of cancer, longer lifespan, less aggression, etc.

Weight:

The weight range for a Tan is 4-5.5 pounds. However, most competitive Tans on the show circuit are around 4-4.5 pounds. Ours tend to fall in that range. If your rabbit is weighing 5 pounds or more, you should be concerned about obesity.

Feeding:

Rabbits should have access to unlimited fresh water. Water bottles or crocks alike work well. Rabbits should be fed a pellet diet based on their breed and size. Tans should be fed a heaping ½ cup of pellets daily. Unlimited quantities of timothy hay or another comparable should be provided regularly. Fruits and veggies are unnecessary. While they may sound healthy, the pellets and hay provide all the needed nutrients so anything else is extra calories they do not need or basically, "junk food." Some fruits and vegetables can cause diarrhea or even death. Abruptly changing the diet can easily cause stomach upset, which once again might result in severe diarrhea or even death.

Pellets can be purchased from local feed dealers and many farm supply stores (i.e. tractor supply). Avoid buying pellets from Wal-Mart, Pet Smart, etc. Those places carry cheap alternatives that are actually much more expensive than good quality pellets that you can buy in larger quantities at a feed store. We feed Purina Advanced Nutrition Show Formula, but any comparable high quality pelleted feed will do. Your rabbit came with pellets which should be used to gradually switch them over to the brand of pellets you will be feeding.

Housing:

Tans need at least a 24" X 24" size cage. Larger cages may be used if desired, but avoid smaller cages unless you plan on getting your rabbit out daily. Each rabbit must have his or her own cage. Rabbits are territorial by nature and unneutered/unspayed rabbits will not only mate, but they may fight and seriously harm one another. This applies even to rabbits of the same sex.

Bringing your rabbit home:

It is very tempting to play with your new rabbit and give them a great deal of attention in the first few days your rabbit is home. Instead, try to give your rabbit a bit of space and allow them to adjust to their new environment first. Rabbits are sensitive and easily excitable animals. Stress can cause illness or even death. Stress can cause a heart attack or stroke. Allow your rabbit time to get to know you and their environment.

Preventing stress:

Rabbits are prey animals and should be kept away from other animals they may view as a predator. We do not allow our dogs in our rabbitry so our rabbits are not used to being around other animals. Rabbits startle very easily. They should be housed in a quiet location free of loud or sudden noises. Sudden movements should also be avoided. Excessive cold should always be a concern, but rabbits tend to have more issues with hot weather than cold weather. If your rabbits will not be indoors, please research heat stroke and learn how to both prevent it and treat it.

If the pet rabbit is intended to be a child's pet, be sure they understand these guidelines. Supervise your child when they handle the rabbit. If your household is noisy and/or active, house the rabbit in a place away from the noise and the hustle and bustle. Keeping your rabbit in a calm, relaxing environment is crucial to their health.

Sources of Information:

American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) – You will receive a bi-monthly full color magazine, yearbook and guidebook with membership. Members include show breeders and pet owners alike. <http://www.arba.net>

American Tan Rabbit Specialty Club (ATRSC) – With membership you will receive the newsletter as well as a guidebook specifically about the breed. <http://www.atrsc.net>

Blue Ribbon Rabbitry – This is our personal rabbitry website. We maintain a blog and an articles page. <http://www.blueribbonrabbitry.com>