***UPDATED 6/13/2013***

***General Market Rabbit Information***

 **Size of Cages?**

**Size of cage will depend on the number of rabbits you do put in it.  A normal size cage that will house 1 doe and 5 to 6 bunnies is 30" wide and 36" long made entirely of wire.  I would suggest a pen for raising just meat pen bunnies be 24" wide and 30" long with one door in the middle of the 30" side. This should be large enough to house 4 or 5 bunnies comfortably. I would also suggest that you have more than one pen. The reason being when you get close to fair time  you may have to separate the bunnies because of one gaining to much weight or one not gaining enough weight, that way you have some place to go with these bunnies.  Ideally I would make a coop that the over all width be 48" and the length 60 inches.  This would give you a coop with four compartments (24" X 30") in one unit.  You do NOT want to use wood, wood because of the moisture it will hold is a breeding ground for parasites and diseases.**

**Build your own cages or purchase them?**

**If you build your own cages you need to use the welded wire that is 1" X 2" for the side and the top. For the bottom you need to use the 1/2" X 1" welded wire. The bottom wire needs to be galvanized if you can find it.  TSC (tractor supply) use to carry rabbit pens also, they may not keep them in stock but they can order them for you.  They may even have the wire to build your own. Sterling Bryant from Channelview as a contact on cages he has been building rabbit cages for over 30 years and does an excellent job he also carries other rabbit equipment.  He use to show and sell Californian rabbits also (not sure if he still does). He may even have bunnies for sale.**

**BRYANT SMALL ANIMAL EQUIPMENT**

**15605 WOOD FOREST
CHANNELVIEW, TX
(281) 452-5794**

**~OR~**

**Another contact for cages and equipment is Garry Bartek from Heidenheimer, Tx. (near Waco) He also sells meat pen bunnies.**

**BARTEK’S BUNNIES**

**12150 LANDFILL RD**

**HOLLAND, TX 76533**

**(245) 982-4107**

**254-760-3071**

**~OR~**

**Another contact for cages and equipment is Bass Equiptment Co. This company manufactures the stack cages. After looking at their web site and talking to them, I was impressed by the various sizes of cages available, the quality of the cages and the price seemed very reasonable. The one cage that impressed me was a four stack cage set. Each coop was 36” wide by 24 inches deep and 14 ‘’ tall. This particular set is made to divide the 36” coop width into 2 coops. This gives you a total of 8 pens 18” wide 24” deep and 14” tall. I feel that each coop could hold 2 bunnies; however it would give you a perfect set up to house 8 bunnies (one bunny per pen). The complete set up which includes (4) 36’X24”X14” coops; (4) stack hutch kits; (4) removable metal urine and fecal pans; (4) urine guard sets; (4) caster wheels; 1-c ring pliers; 1# of 3/8” stainless c rings. Assembly is required by you. Everything is precut for shipment. The cost of the above is less than $400.00. This price does not include shipping.**

**BASS EQUIPTMENT CO.**

**Bassequiptment.com**

**1-800-798-0150**

**1-417-235-7557**

**How old the rabbits need to be when you take possession?**

**The bunnies need to be around 70-75 days old at fair time, even though we talk about age of the rabbit; weight is the most important factor. The weight limit at fair time is 3 to 5 lbs. A 70-75 day old bunny should weigh in right at 4.5 to 5 pounds. This of course depends on the nutrition it is given.  At the age of 30 to 35 days of age the bunnies should be eating enough 18% protein pellets to be able to be weaned from the doe.  This is the age range that you should be taking possession of the bunnies. (30 to 35 days of age) You need to plan to take possession of your bunnies about 4 or 5 days prior to the Tattoo/validation day.**

**How many to purchase?**

**If you plan to buy bunnies only, which are what the new rules allow, you can get by with 4, However, I suggest a minimum of *6* (per exhibitor) just to have more selection come fair time. Of course this # will also depend on the cost of each bunny. A lot of suppliers will sell them in lots of 4. So the # you purchase will depend on how many you feel you need to make your final selection from.  If you plan to purchase bred does from a breeder I suggest 2 or 3 bred does. (there are no guarantees that the does are bred)**

**What is the average price per bunny?**

**I have heard of people paying anywhere from $40 to $100 per meat bunny.**

**When should I contact a breeder?**

**The earlier you contact a breeder the better. Do not wait until it is time to validate and make entry to make contact with a breeder. A breeder has to breed the does approximately 105 days before the show. It takes 30 days for the gestation process, the breeder will feed the raise the bunnies for approximately 30 to 40 days after they are born leaving you 30 to 40 days to feed and care for the bunnies.**

**I hope this info helps you out.**