COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
LARIMER COUNTY EXTENSION

1525 Blue Spruce Drive
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524-2004
(970) 498-6000
FAX: (970) 498-6025
www.larimer.org/ex

January 20, 2026

2026 Rabbit Project Letter

This letter contains the highlights of the Rabbit Project guidelines. Once the Fair Book & schedule are posted online, each member and leader is responsible for reading, understanding and abiding by all rules and regulations. 4-H and Open Class | The Ranch, Larimer County Fairgrounds & Events Complex (treventscomplex.com).

From: 4-H Youth Development/Livestock Agent
To: All 4-H Rabbit Project Members and Leaders

Key Leader: LaRae Bishop & Bea Veca

4-H Project Completion Requirements

To complete the Rabbit project, members must meet these minimum requirements. Please be aware that some clubs may have additional requirements.

- Participate in a 4-H related (subject matter or audience) demonstration or other speech presentation.
- Participate in a 4-H sponsored community service activity.
- Complete county level requirements such as a record book, Club meeting attendance, etc.

Meat Quality Assurance Program

Meat Quality Assurance Program (MQA) - All 4-H Rabbit (including Pet Rabbit) members must have completed the Meat Quality Assurance Program requirements to exhibit at the Larimer County Fair and participate in the Jr. Livestock Sale. **All animals must be outside the withdrawal period before participating in the Junior Livestock Sale.**

Premises ID

Same as 2025: All animals are REQUIRED to have a valid Premises ID prior to the fair entry date of July 8th, in order to show at the Larimer County Fair. This does apply to breeding animals. In the instance that a family needs to move an animal from the premises ID that is on file to an alternative premises, the Extension Office must be notified immediately and the new premises ID needs to be recorded. Members who house their animals at the same location will share a premises ID. If you have a lease animal please check with the land owner, stable, dairy, etc to see if a Premises ID or Federal Identification has been established.

Did you show an animal at the 2025 Larimer County Fair? This means that you already have a Premises ID number and do not need to reapply for one unless you are housing your animal at a different location. If you don't remember your number, you can call the number below and they can provide it to you or you can contact the Extension Office for your number. If you did not show an animal last year, you will need to obtain a Premises ID. Your fair entries will not be approved until your Premises ID is uploaded to 4-HOnline. You may need to call the Extension Office for assistance if you have already completed your enrollment. It's easy (and free) to obtain a Premises ID. You can register by calling 303-869-9130 or go to: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/aganimals/colorado-location-identification-lid-registration-premises or call 303-869-9130.

Animal Care and Housing Form

This form is intended for any members participating in the Livestock or Horse Projects that keep an animal at a location other than the address documented on 4-HOnline. This includes any location where the animal may reside for an extended period of time. This form needs to be uploaded under "other documents" to 4-HOnline and a hardcopy must be turned into the Extension Office. Microsoft Word - AnimalCareForm.doc (colostate.edu).

Educational Workshops

- February 21st- Rabbit Orientation & Basic Care- Livestock Field Day (McKee, 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.)
- February 21st- MQA (McKee Building Exhibit Hall, 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.)
- May 2nd- Managing your Project Animal (Origin Arena classroom, 10 a.m. to 12p.m.)
- May 15th- MQA (McKee Building, Exhibit Hall, 4:00-7:00 p.m.)

Record Books

For this 4-H year, record book checks will take place before the County Fair. Families can choose between four different dates (in July) and two different locations (The Ranch or ARDEC) for the record book checks. In order to show at Fair, members will be required to sign up for a time on one of the dates and complete a record book interview. Members must have their record book up-to-date by the time of the interview. In the event a member fails to have a complete record book they will have until 4p.m. Monday, July 20th to make changes. In the event a member is not able to make any of the record book check dates, families can make an appointment with me by July 1 to set an alternate date for the record book check. Please note that if an exhibitor fails to schedule an appointment with the office and does not attend one of the record book checks, they will forfeit their livestock and equine entries for the Larimer County Fair.

We are implementing this change to the record book process for a few reasons. First, it will allow record book reviewers an opportunity to complete a more thorough and consistent assessment of the record books to verify that they meet expectations. Record book reviewers will be able to interact more with the youth member by discussing their project, which can hopefully reinforce or add to lessons learned by the member.
Below are the dates and times for the record book checks. A sign-up list will be sent out this spring for families to register for a location, time slot, and date.

Record Book Dates and Times

1. July 7th, McKee Building-4p.m. to 7p.m.
2. July 9th, CoBank Center at ARDEC- 4p.m. to 7p.m.
3. July 14th, CoBank Center at ARDEC-4p.m. to 7p.m.
4. July 16th, McKee Building-4p.m. to 7p.m.

If a member wants to enter their project record book in the Record Book Contest, books must be turned in to the club/project leader and delivered to the Extension Office by 4:00 p.m. September 15, 2026. Individual Clubs will have a deadline for members to turn in record books .

2026 County Fair Information

Ownership and Check-In

All rabbit exhibits must have been raised or purchased by the exhibitor on or before May 31, 2026..
Exceptions: Meat rabbits shown in the meat pen class may have been born after May 31, 2026. For meat pens the exhibitor must have owned the dam prior to May 31.
Note: At Fair check-in, all breeding rabbits (except pet class & market rabbits) must present a pedigree if they are in the breed shows.

All rabbits are subject to health inspection upon check-in at the County Fair. Sick/diseased and parasite-infested rabbits will be disqualified at the discretion of the Superintendent(s) and/or Veterinarian(s) and will not be allowed to show.

Ages of rabbits are figured as of August 1, 2026. No rabbits under 12 weeks of age may be exhibited, excluding meat pen rabbits. No nursing does with kits will be allowed. With the exception of pet class entries, all rabbits (including meat pens) must have a permanent, legible ear tattoo in the left ear prior to County Fair.
Each exhibitor is allowed a maximum of 5 rabbits (a meat pen counts as 1 rabbit) to be displayed

for the duration of the show. Only rabbits pre-registered as participating (or substitutes for pre-registered rabbits) will be allowed to check-in. All rabbits must meet the minimum junior weight requirement of the breed standard to show at the Larimer County Fair.

Regarding rabbit meat pens: Must consist of 3 rabbits of the same breed and variety. All breeds may compete. All market rabbits must meet the standard of perfection. Age limit is 10 weeks (70 days). Minimum weight per rabbit - 3 ½ pounds; Maximum weight per rabbit - 5 ½ pounds. Meat pen does not necessarily have to come from the same litter, but meat pens must be bred and raised from the exhibitor's own breeding doe(s), which must have been owned by the exhibitor at breeding time.

Single Fryers – Not over 10 weeks of age. Minimum weight of 3 ½ pounds. Maximum weight of 5 ½ pounds. Fryers are to possess the same qualities as described in the meat pen section, rule, #7 (in Fair Book), but, judged as a single rabbit on its own merit.

The rest of this letter relates to Market Projects Only. (Meat Pens/Meat Rabbits)

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Affidavit

This affidavit, mandated by the United States Department of Agriculture, will be required for all market rabbit youth this year (market refers to meat pens and meat rabbits). This form will be available when you check your rabbits in at the Fair. Each youth will be required to read, complete and have appropriate youth and parent signatures on these forms, and they must be turned in at the County Fair.

What is COOL?

The USDA mandated Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) on September 30, 2008. Therefore, all cuts of beef, pork, lamb, goat, poultry, and rabbits must have documentation as to the origin of the animals to be marketed in the U.S. and international meat industry. So, what this means to us…Every 4-H youth showing market animals (beef, sheep, swine, goat, poultry and rabbit) must complete the "Country of Origin Label Declaration" form. 4-H youth can use one form for all species. The form documents the seller's basic contact information (in this case, the 4-H youth), the animal ID (tag #) for each individual animal in the transaction, and validation of what country(s) the animals were BORN and RAISED in. It also requires a youth and parent signature. According to USDA, this document must be kept on file for one year (in this case, by the Sale Committee). It is also very important that the 4-H youth keep adequate records and similar documentation in your own personal files regarding the purchase of your animals and all buying/selling transactions.

Jr. Livestock Sale Information

1. **Wholesome Meat Animal Assurance Program** - Market rabbits consigned to the Junior Livestock Sale may be screened for illegal use of drugs or chemicals. Anyone found guilty of illegal drug or chemical use will be barred from future Larimer County Fairs. All 4-H members with meat animals are required, along with a parent/guardian, to sign a "Certificate and Statement of Disclosure" assuring the animals have not received illegal drugs or chemicals. The statements must be turned in at the County Fair. (purple sheet). We encourage you to keep your animals as free as possible of any and all drugs. If you use any drugs or feed containing antibiotics, be sure to follow the correct withdrawal times. If your animal becomes sick prior to the Fair and you must use antibiotics, please notify the Sale Committee or the Extension Office. Be sure to put this information on the "Certificate and Statement of Disclosure" form. Also, be sure to list all vaccines, antibiotics, insecticides, and feed additives given to your project animal and date administered.
2. All members wanting to sell an animal in the Larimer County Junior Livestock Sale must have an official photograph taken with their animal. Members who do not have pictures taken will not be allowed to sell an animal. Pictures will be taken following the market beef classes. For members who have more than one livestock species, the last picture taken will be the species that is sold. Also, the Champion and Reserve Champion market animals are required to sell in the Junior Livestock Sale. Check with your Superintendents with questions about pictures.

All animals must be outside the withdrawal period before participating in the Junior Livestock Sale.

Rabbit Schedule (Tentative)

Rabbit Barn Set-up
Thursday, July 30 4:00pm-6:00pm

Check-in of All Rabbits
Friday, July 31 3:00pm-5:00pm

Judging All Rabbits & Showmanship
Saturday, August 1 10:00am-2:00pm

Showmanship & Dress-a-Bunny
Sunday, August 2, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p,m.

Rabbit Awards Night
Monday, August 3 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Rabbit Check-out
Tuesday, August 5, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Colorado State University Extension is an equal opportunity provider. | Colorado State University does not discriminate on the basis of disability and is committed to providing reasonable accommodations. | CSU's Of ice of Engagement and Extension ensures meaningful access and equal opportunities to participate to individuals whose first language is not English.

Colorado State University Extension es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades. | Colorado State University no discrimina por motivos de discapacidad y se compromete a proporcionar adaptaciones razonables. | Of ice of Engagement and Extension de CSU garantiza acceso significativo e igualdad de oportunidades para participar a las personas quienes su primer idioma no es el inglés. Col.st/ll0t3