

# CONTACTING BREEDERS

*Provided by Blue Ribbon Rabbitry*

Perhaps you are wanting to buy a rabbit. Or maybe you just have a question for a breeder. What do you do?

How you appropriately go about contacting a breeder may seem simple, but too often I receive inquiries that range from very strange to downright rude. So I thought I would create this quick and easy guide to proper phone/e-mail etiquette that is tailored to inquiries about rabbits.

## **Method of Contact**

If a breeder lists both a phone number and an e-mail address, then you should feel free to contact that breeder using either method. In theory, if the breeder did not want to be contacted using a certain method, the breeder should not have provided their contact information for said method.

If the breeder lists only one method of contact, that is probably for a reason. If you scour a rabbitry website and only see an e-mail listed over and over again and no phone number, take the hint. E-mailing the breeder to ask he/she to call you is probably pointless.

## **Contacting via Telephone**

I recommend contacting a breeder by telephone only if the breeder has directly provided their phone number to you or if it is published on their website, business cards, etc. It is becoming more and more common for breeders to use e-mail as their primary (and sometimes sole) method of contact.

Normal telephone etiquette applies. Do not call too early or too late in the day. Leave a short and polite message if your call is not answered. Do not call the breeder excessively. Remember that raising rabbits is a hobby, not a business for most.

## **Contacting via E-mail**

Today I received an e-mail, which I include below in its entirety:

"do u have rabits [sic] 4 sale?"

After well over 15 years of raising rabbits, these e-mails no longer get responses. I have learned that they very rarely (if ever) lead to anything. I also feel that if you cannot type out a simple, polite and coherent e-mail, then you are probably not conscientious enough for me to feel comfortable letting my rabbits enter your care.

You do not have to write a book, but tell the breeder a little about yourself. Include your location, experience with rabbits and your reason for contacting the breeder. If you are wanting to purchase rabbits, include the breed, variety, sex and quantity desired.

Here is an example:

Hello,

My name is Kelly Flynn and I currently raise and show Tans in open class in the Indianapolis area. I am looking for a black doe that will help improve the depth and evenness of my tan factor. Do you currently have stock available?

Thanks in advance,

Kelly

The above example is simple, polite and to the point. You can certainly include more information about yourself, ask questions, etc. The point is just to be reasonably polite and not too vague.

### **What to do and what not to do**

- Look at the rabbitry website first, if available. Often most of your questions will be answered on a rabbitry website. It will save you and the breeder some time and you get to the important questions that are not covered more quickly.
- Don't write a novel. On the opposite end, sometimes people send very, very long, conversational e-mails. While I appreciate getting to know the individual interested in rabbits, sometimes when the e-mail is excessively long I have difficulty responding to each and every question contained within it.
- If the rabbits are for youth breeders, assuming they are not young children, let them contact the breeder! Unless a parent is contacting me on behalf of a young child, I want to hear from the kid, not the parent. It is nice to know the youth breeder is the one truly interested in rabbits.