

# **STANDARD CHINCHILLA RABBITS**

## **TYPE AND COLOR**

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**WHAT IS IT** that catches the eye of so many people that they fall in love with the Standard Chinchilla rabbit? Everyone has got their own opinion and reasons for raising the Standard Chin but the breed as a whole has many features that make it a popular rabbit for meat, fur, and show.

The meat qualities of the breed are accentuated by the cobby type called for in the Standard. You will find that the does are good mothers and raise nice uniform litters of 6-8 young. Not all rabbits are destined for the show table or breeding herd, therefore the culls will furnish a supply of meat for your family. These fryers are noted for their consistently high dressout percent and due to their cobbiness, will be plump fryers with well-filled loins and hind legs.

The disposition of the Standard Chin is one of its strong points. Here is a rabbit that with a little handling can be gentle enough for young children and women. Some breeds are known for their excitable antics in the hutch and on the show table but the Standard Chin is noted for its docile, inquisitive temperament. Also you will find that the bucks are aggressive breeders and seem to know the job that is required of them.

The size of the Standard Chin is a definite plus in its favor. They fall into the upper end of the small breed category. They are not so small that they are unable to be used for fryers and also at the same time not so large as to require huge hutches for housing. Also, you will find that they require less feed to maintain their condition and weight. All these factors make for a very economical overall breed to raise.

Now this brings us to the Standard Chinchilla fur and color which is the most renowned feature of the breed. This is what attracts more people to the Standard Chinchilla rabbit than any other feature.

In the Standard of Perfection, it calls for 50 points divided evenly on color and quality of fur. This stems from the fact that the breed's original purpose was to serve as a commercial fur breed when pelts were of upmost importance, and herein lies the value of the chinchilla.

**The Standard says that the color of this rabbit should 'resemble its prototype, the South American Chinchilla rodent (of the species, Lanigera). The object of the rabbit breeder is to produce a hair shaft that is as close an imitation of real chinchilla in banding and pigmentation as possible. Chinchilla rabbit fur differs from real chinchilla in a number of respects, notably, the greater weight of the leather, thickness of the hairshaft, and length of the guard hair. To secure a closer resemblance to real chinchilla, the longer guard hairs are sometimes removed by furriers from the rabbit skins.**

**The undercolor of the Standard Chinchilla should be a rather dark slate blue at the base. The deeper or darker the color of the base the more helpful it is for the other portion or ring color (intermediate pearl and black edging) to be contrasted. This undercolor should cover the entire body, legs, and feet, but undercolor on belly may be white. Sometimes if there is too much blue undercolor on the belly, it may result in a Chinchilla that is too dark in color and lacks definition.**

**The next color is the ring color which is made up of an intermediate light pearl gray band with an outer black edging. This pearl band should be narrower in width than the undercolor. The closer the intermediate pearl band gets to white the more desirable it becomes. This is what gives the fur its definition the contrast between the undercolor and black edging with the pearl band in between. When blowing into the fur the contrast should, be such that rings stand out in a definite circular pattern. The definition of the animal is more pronounced when the line of demarcation between the undercolor and pearl ring is straight and well-defined.**

**Next comes the surface color which is the most beautiful crowning feature of the chinchilla rabbit and yet the hardest upon which to get total agreement. The Standard states that after the black edging of the pearl band proceeding outward comes another very light band brightly ticked with black hairs, either wavy or even ticking permissible to make the beautiful Chinchilla surface color.**

**Neck fur is allowed to be lighter in color than the body but strictly confined to the nape of the neck and in the shape of a triangle (i.e., wider at the base of the ears and tapering towards the middle of the shoulders). Also the chest should be lightly ticked with a uniform shade of pearl, slightly lighter than the body. When the animal is in a typical show pose the surface color should be carried down the sides of the animal as far as possible so the lighter shade of the underneath parts cannot be seen. This will give the animal an appearance of an even surface color all over.**

**There should be small well-defined, light pearl eye circles around the eyes. This tends to set the eyes off and gives them a bright, bold, and healthy appearance. The color of the eyes should match and any color is permissible with the preference being for brown.**

**The front legs and feet, and the outside of the upper part of the hind legs should be ticked with a uniform shade of gray to match the body as near as possible. The gray color on the front legs should extend right to the toes on the top and outsides of the legs and there should be held to a minimum signs of light strips running across, known as "barred feet." On the hind foot the gray runs down a narrow strip on the outside of hind foot (or hock) with the top of the hind foot being a white surface color with a blue undercolor.**

**The tail color on the side of the tail, which is a continuation of the back of the rabbit, is black and sprinkled with white hairs. The opposite side of the tail is white.**

**The finishing touch to a beautifully colored Standard Chinchilla rabbit is its jet black ear lining around the outer edges of the ears.**

**This I hope has given you an idea of what is being looked for in color or type on the Standard Chinchilla rabbit. Breeding and raising Chinchilla rabbits for exhibition is an intriguing hobby and presents a challenge for the true fancier who is striving to perfect the breed.**