

SOME THOUGHTS ON FUR

A well written standard is one that gives a complete description, is easily understood and is not ambiguous. Most smooth coated rex are judged by a general points standard and vary in colour and/or markings, in this group are both the orange and fawn rex rabbits.

Forty points are allocated for Fur and the standard states that it should be approximately half an inch in length. Not a short coat, not a long coat, approximately means – nearly right, - fairly exact. Its not 'a lovely short coat' this should be penalized as much as a long coat, half an inch is correct and the highest points will go to the coat which is nearest to it.

FUR is generally accepted as that part of the pelt which is used by the Furrier. This is known as the 'sleeve' and would be the whole body from just behind the ears to the base of the tail, head and legs. Head and legs would not be included. Our perfect length would be half an inch all over this area and if this were so there would be no penalty for length.

The feel of a good rex coat often baffles the newcomer to the fancy, but by direct comparison with other rabbits the feel of the coat is soon apparent. A true rex coat is when the hairs stand at ninety degrees to the skin, it is comprised of a very dense coat of soft downy fur supported by a profusion of guard hairs which must be of slightly shorter length. The guard hairs give life and a plush like feel to the coat, but they should not be seen or felt above the softer hairs. The fur should be **INTENSELY DENSE**, jam packed, impenetrable and when blown into, no skin should be seen. The top level of fur should be **FINE SILKY TEXTURE** free from **HARSHNESS** and **WOOLINESS**. Run the palm of the hand lightly over the coat from the tail to the head, it should glide over the fur with little trace of resistance. Guard hairs will give a rough touch and woolliness will cause the hand to drag. Many ermines have a woolly coat and this is because the soft downy hair has outpaced the guard hairs and little groups of them tend to cross and matt. To test for firmness press the palm of the hand flat onto the coat,

there should be a definite springiness with plenty of resistance to pressure.

There are no disqualifications for fur, but there are FAULTS. These are not serious faults or minor faults, they are just 'faults'. They are, thin or curly triangle at the nape of the neck i.e. behind the ears, lack of density, harsh, wavy or curly coats. Faults of course must carry a penalty and this is left to the judge's discretion. It is fairly obvious that a rabbit with a complete curly coat would lose more points than one with a curly chest. Do not hesitate to exhibit a rabbit with faults, they all have them but some will not be penalized as much as others. A great deal can be learnt when exhibiting and comparing your stock with that owned by other fanciers.

Why not check your forty fur points?

1. OBSERVATION. Is the fur SMOOTH and LEVEL over the whole body. Has it a LUSTROUS SHEEN. Is it DEVOID of projecting GUARD HAIRS. Moulty rabbits are normally patchy/.
2. LENGTH and DENSITY. Blow into the fur all over the body, is it the correct length, is it INTENSELY DENSE. Are the hair shafts straight, kinks or curl is a fault.
3. TEXTURE. Has the fur a SILKY TEXTURE free from harshness and drag, is it FIRM to the touch with plenty of spring and resistance.