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The Chinchilla



The Chinchilla Rabbits (Egypt)

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SUMMARY – A description of the Egyptian adapted breed of rabbit, Chinchilla, is carried out. Items that have been dealt with are: (i) a general description; (ii) climate and main features of its farming; (iii) performance; and (iv) stress resistance.

Key words: Chinchilla, description, performance.

RESUME – "Les lapins Chinchilla (Egypte)". Cet article présente une description de la race Chinchilla de lapins adaptés à l'Egypte. Les éléments suivants ont fait l'objet d'études : (i) une description générale ; (ii) le climat et les principales caractéristiques d'élevage ; (iii) les performances ; et (iv) la résistance au stress.

Mots-clés : Chinchilla, description, performances.

1. Breed name

- (i) *Breed name synonyms:* Chinchilla.
- (ii) *Strains within breed:* none.

2. General description

2.1. Population data

2.1.1. Herd sizes (Table 1)

Table 1. Herd sizes of Chinchilla rabbits in Governmental and Small-scale farms

	Governmental farms	Small-scale farms
Mean		
Adult animals	15	3
Young Animals	70	10
Range		
Adult animals	10-25	1-5
Young Animals	50-100	5-20

2.1.2. Situation with regard to danger of extinction

Endangered, since the total number of breeding rabbits is less than 500.

2.2. Use of the breed in a descending order of product importance

This breed is a medium-sized breed and is used mainly for meat production.

2.3. Colour

The real Chinchilla has a dark slate blue under-colour at base; the intermediate portion is pearl – and should be as light as possible. The top edge has a very narrow black band, above this is a very light band brightly ticked with black hairs, either wavy or even ticked to make the beautiful Chinchilla surface colour.

2.4. General-type

2.4.1. Body parts

Body parts of this breed are well-rounded hips with well-fitted loin and hips. The body is of medium length, with a rather compact and chubby body as shown in Table 2. The top body line rises in a gradual curve from the base of ears to the centre of the hips and then falls in a smooth curve downward to the base of the tail. The back has a slight gradual arch starting at the ear base. The skin is smooth.

Table 2. Body measurements (cm) in Chinchilla rabbits at 12 weeks of age

Trait	Mean	Range
Body length	27.6	25.7-29.5
Chest circumference	16.2	14.7-18.4
Loin width	5.9	5.6-6.2

2.4.2. Head: convex

2.4.3. Eyes: black

2.4.4. Ears: erect

2.4.5. Feet and legs: medium in length

2.4.6. Tail: straight

2.5. Basic temperament (for males or females): docile

2.6. Special characteristics of the breed: moderately adapted to hot climate

2.7. Nest quality: pooled

3. Pattern

3.1. Climate

3.1.1. Elevation and topography: valley and well drained

3.1.2. Favourable climate: temperature from 15°C to 30°C and relative humidity from 40% up to 75%

3.2. Main features of farming

3.2.1. *Socio-management system*: extensive system in batteries (production starts in September and ends in May), on the floor or underground cells

3.2.2. *Mating method*: natural mating

3.2.3. *Nutrition*

- (i) *Concentrates*: pelleted or mash.
- (ii) *Water*: available free all year-round.
- (iii) *Seasonality of nutrition*: Berseem (*Trifolium alexandrinum*) available from November to following May, while Darawa (Fodder maize) is used in summer.

3.2.4. *Housing*

- (i) *Cages*: wired cages, indoor rabbitries.
- (ii) *Photoperiod*: variable periods.

3.3. Common diseases and parasites

Pasteurellosis, coccidiosis, enteritis, feet and ear mites.

4. Performance

4.1. Reproduction (Tables 3 and 4)

Table 3. Semen characteristics of 8-month bucks in Chinchilla rabbits

Trait	Mean	Range
Reaction time (seconds)	23	
Ejaculate volume (ml)	0.69	0.51-1.06
Sperm concentration per ml (10^6)	424.21	408.12-495.35

Table 4. Fertility and fecundity traits in Chinchilla rabbits

Trait	Mean	Range
Conception rate (%)	52.2	50.4-54.0
Number of services per conception	2.4	
Kindling interval (days)	48	42-65
Gestation length (days)	30.8	30.3-31.5
Litter size		
Total at birth	6.2	4.4-7.5
At weaning (4 weeks)	5.2	4.6-5.9
Litter weight (g)		
Total at birth	310	220-376
At weaning (4 weeks)	1558	1191-2052

4.2. Mortality rate per litter (Table 5)

Table 5. Mortality rate in Chinchilla rabbits

Trait	Mean	Range
Stillbirths (%)	5.0	3.8-7.5
Pre-weaning (4 weeks) (%)	24.6	14.2-36.3

4.3. Post weaning body weight, gain and food utilisation (Table 6)

Table 6. Post weaning growth traits of Chinchilla rabbits

Trait	Mean	Range
Body weight (g)		
Weaning (28 days)	413	320-506
Post weaning		
6-weeks	607	
8-weeks	900	833-968
10-weeks	1094	
12-weeks	1319	1221-1417
16-weeks	1712	1564-1860

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