

# Breeding rabbits

Rabbits are very prolific animals and can give birth to an average of 30 rabbits per year if she is well managed. However, their productivity does not depend only on what they eat , they also need good management and reproductive practices for them to produce so that you can sell for a good price.

## Selection for breeding

The male should be highly performing and have well developed testicles, be at least 6 to 8 months old and weigh 2 to 3 Kgs. The female rabbit should have 4 pair of tits, be healthy and have high birth rate, be 6 to 7 months and weigh 2 Kgs.

Inbreeding a bark and doe from the same family should be avoided as it can cause infertility and deformed reproductive organs on the offspring. To avoid early mating, the young bark and doe should be separated from 3 months of age.

## Rabbits health

The doe and bark should be in good health, poorly performing barks should be replaced with high performing ones. Breeding barks from another farm should be isolated to avoid any spreading of diseases. A doe in good health moves in her hatch without diarrhoea, shows no signs of scabies, or parasites.

## Mating

When the vulva of the doe has red colour, the doe is on heat and can be mate with a bark. To mate the rabbits, the doe should be taken to the barks cage in the morning or evening. Experienced doe should be mate with an inexperienced bark.

If the doe refuses to mate one should not insist to avoid injuries on the barks reproductive organs. If the doe agrees

mate them twice before removing the doe from the cage to increase chances of breeding success.

## **Pregnancy check**

Pregnant is checked after 12 to 14 days by weighing, mated barks can be brought and feeling the belly. Sudden or rough handling can cause abortions. The day of birth is written on follow up sheet.

A nest box in the cage should be prepared before the mother doe gives birth. The box should be kept clean with disinfectants.