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ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY **Keep Rabbits Healthy with Good Biosecurity** (10 June 2020)

Biosecurity is protecting animals and humans from infectious diseases. Good biosecurity practices help keep out germs animals have not been exposed to, as well as minimize the impact of existing pathogens. Rabbit owners can take simple steps every day to keep rabbits healthy.

People, Equipment, and Environment

- Always wash hands before and after caring for rabbits.
- Before caring for rabbits, wash hands and change into farm dedicated clothing and boots.
- Minimize visitors to rabbit housing areas.
 - Provide disposable foot covers and gloves to visitors handling rabbits.
- Do not share equipment with other rabbit owners.
- Clean and disinfect equipment, waterers, feeders and other items that come in contact with rabbits regularly. Then rinse waterers and feeders before filling.
- Remove manure regularly.
- Control rodents and insects.
- If possible, avoid traveling to areas experiencing a disease outbreak.

Animals

- Monitor rabbits daily for signs of illness.
- When possible, vaccinate animals against disease.
- Minimize exposure to insects.
- Prevent contact with wild rabbits and areas where wild rabbits roam.
- Do not purchase rabbits from unknown or untrusted sources.
- Isolate new rabbits and rabbits returning from a show for at least 30 days and monitor for signs of illness. To protect against rabbit hemorrhagic disease, isolate for 60 days.
 - Care for isolated rabbits only after caring for other rabbits. Practice proper hygiene after caring for rabbits.
- Do not release domestic rabbits into the wild.

Feed, Water, Bedding

- Obtain feed from suppliers with quality control programs.
- Do not collect and use wild plants as a food source.
- Store feed and bedding in tightly sealed containers to prevent contamination.
- Provide clean water.

Wild Rabbits

If you see multiple dead wild rabbits, report it to the Indiana State Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife at: (812) 334-1137

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