

Body Condition Scoring in Commercial Rabbitries

In commercial rabbit production, body condition scoring (BCS) has been proven as a non-invasive, efficient measure of nutritional status. Nutritional status in breeding does is a major barrier to the does' fertility. Optimal fat coverage of the spine, loin, and rump maximize the doe's fertility. BCS gives the producer the ability to maximize conception rates, and to determine the best reproductive schedule for their herd. To conduct a BCS, ensure that the rabbit is standing freely. Does should be scored 11 days post-kindling, or just before the next breed-back.



Score 1: Very Thin

- Hip bones, ribs and spine are very obvious to the touch
- No fat coverage over bones
- Loss of muscle in the loin
- Rump curves in toward the tail



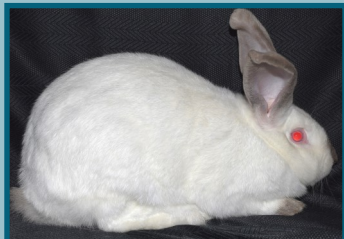
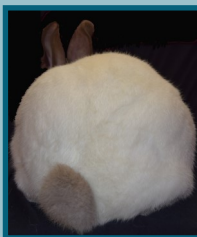
Score 2: Thin

- Hip bones, ribs and spine are easily felt
- Very little fat cover over bones
- Loss of muscle in the loin
- Rump is flat towards the tail



Score 3: Ideal

- Hip bones, ribs and spine are easily felt and are rounded
- Fat coverage is sufficient—ribs feel like a pocket full of pens
- No abdominal bulge, loin has obvious muscle
- Rump is flat towards the tail



Score 4: Over-conditioned

- Pressure is needed to feel the ribs, spine and hip bones
- Ample fat coverage over bones
- The rump is rounded out at the base of the tail



Score 5: Obese

- Very hard to feel the spine, hip bones—ribs cannot be felt
- Abdomen sags with obvious fat padding
- Rump bulges out at the base of the tail