

# 10 Reasons NOT to House a Rabbit in a Hutch



- 1. Winter** Rabbits can freeze especially if they are solitary and can't snuggle up together. Rabbits also can suffer frostbite especially on their ears.
- 2. Summer** Rabbits can overheat and die in temperatures over 85° F
- 3. Predators** There are plenty of documented cases where a predator manages to break into a rabbit hutch including bears, raccoons, feral dogs or cats (or family pets), foxes, coyotes and humans. Even if the predator cannot get into a hutch, the rabbit can still die from shock.
- 4. Wire floors** Most hutches have mesh wire floors with trays under them. Wire floors make it easy for a rabbit production business to clean cages. A condition known as "sore hocks" is aggravated by the wires that cut into the rabbit's feet. Rabbit feet are not padded like cat or dog feet! Rabbits require a resting board or a litter box at the very minimum to avoid sore hocks.
- 5. Obesity** If a rabbit is confined to a hutch and receives no daily exercise, it can become overweight. This causes many health problems. Cecotrophs (the soft mucus covered waste) may not be redigested because they fall through floor wires. It can result in poor nutrition. The cecotrophs are essential to the health of a rabbit since they contain important nutrients that need to be redigested.
- 6. Bone & Muscle Problems** Without exercise and confined to a small place a rabbit may develop bone and muscle deficiencies. Their bones will break easier when handled.
- 7. Boredom & Depression** Rabbits are very gregarious, social animals! *Oryctolagus cuniculus* (domesticated rabbits) in the wild naturally live in warrens with many other rabbits. They need social interaction. A rabbit in a hutch may be forgotten outside except for feeding time. Rabbits kept like this can become aggressive since they are not socialized to people or other rabbits.
- 8. Toxic Building Materials** Hutches are sometimes made with redwood (toxic to rabbits) or treated wood materials. Rabbit will naturally gnaw any wood within their reach.
- 9. Poor Construction** Most hutches and cages are not large enough for a rabbit to really stretch out completely and stand on its hind legs without hitting the ceiling. Some rabbits can even escape hutches with simple latches.
- 10. Out of sight Out of Mind** How can anyone notice when a rabbit is listless or sick if the bunny is out of sight.

**The Best Reason:** House Rabbits can live an average of 8 to 13 years while a Hutch Rabbit has an average lifespan of 2 years! You get to enjoy your rabbit's company for a long time.