

summer heat; hence it is important to keep them preferably in a cool or sufficiently shady place during this season.

Good breeders (male and female) should be kept till the age of 4 or 5 years. The others may be killed from the ages of 7 to 8 months.

The practice of selecting animals most closely resembling the ideal type, especially for males, cleanliness of hutches and keeping litters always dry, are fundamental conditions for success in rabbit raising.

When a doe litters for the first time her nest must not be visited till the third or fourth day after littering, for the slightest disturbance or handling of the little ones might irritate the young mother.

To ascertain a rabbit's age requires a certain amount of practice or at least great attention. The inspection of the eyes, especially the eyelids more or less folded, quick movements, the length of the more or less curved claws, the development of the growth, are all useful points to go by.

## KILLING

The rabbit is hung up by the hind legs. While with the left hand the ears are moved aside, with a mallet in the right it is struck on the nape of the neck between the ears. There is another much more simple way. The animal is grasped in one hand by the hind legs and with the other it is struck a moderate blow downward on the nape of the neck. In both cases death is almost instantaneous. Some people bleed the rabbit by driving a knife into its throat, in the direction of the heart, others pluck out an eye.

In order to clear the bladder of stale urine, which would give a bad smell to the flesh of rabbits destined to be sent whole to the market, rather strong pressure is exerted on the lower part of the belly.

## SKINNING

After being killed and before cooling, the rabbit is tied by the hind legs, if this has not already been done, and hung to a nail. A side cut is made from the inside of the right to the inside of the left leg passing by the anus, then the skin of the thighs is drawn down as far as the head. In the toughest places, it may be loosened with a few light cuts.

The rabbit is dipped into cold water for about ten minutes to clean its flesh, while the skin is rolled on a board so that the back will be slightly stretched.