

SMOKE PEARL

jewel of the Fancy

By **Chas Petts** (President,
National Smoke Pearl Rabbit Club)

These Smokes won't damage your health but you could well become addicted, for once you have them in your rabbitry you'll not want to part with them. A really docile breed, easy to handle, a joy to see, but sometimes given a raw deal on the judging table.

As to the breed itself, the standard has 40 points for coat, to be soft and dense, about one inch in length, silky to the touch, not to be short and fly-back, undercoat to be dense and full.

Colour gets 45 points and is probably the hardest part to get right as we require a smoke colour on the saddle shading down to pearl grey beige on the flanks and chest. Now the difficult part is that we want a graduation of colour, not a saddle of one colour stopping abruptly and going to another colour, but a gentle shading down from smoke to beige-grey. A former President once tried to interpret the standard to breeders in Italy and they did literally come up with a grey rabbit with a darker saddle in the middle of the back. So really what we want is an almost unseen saddle that graduates from colour to colour, without any demarcation lines, patches or blotches.

Type to be neat, moderate length of body, slightly arched back, medium bone, legs straight, weight five to seven pounds.



Martens carry the white underside, triangle, eye circles, inside legs and feet. Siamese colour to be pearl grey under and of course no white patches.

Faults, drooping or lopped ears, harsh or flyback coat, lack of dense undercolour, and of course, the rabbit should be put on the table clean, no sign of soiling even on the pads.

You prefer a Rex coat? Fair enough, we have that as well, in Siamese or Marten pattern in both standard and mini. Colourings are as for Normals, plus a deep plush rex coat, and that is important.

So give the breed a try, and I think you'll really come to love it once you do.

