

Raising Rabbits for Sustainable Urban Agriculture



Why Rabbits in Urban Agriculture?

Rabbits can help urban farms recover nutrients, reduce waste, build healthy soil, and make better use of resources already available on the farm and in the community.

What Rabbits Contribute:

FOOD & ORGANIC WASTE RECOVERY



Rabbits can consume certain surplus produce, vegetable trimmings, and other appropriate food scraps that might otherwise be discarded. This creates another use for edible plant material while reducing the amount of organic waste leaving the farm.

WEED & CROP RESIDUE MANAGEMENT



Some weeds, cover crops, and leftover plant material can be harvested and used as supplemental rabbit feed. This gives growers a productive way to manage vegetation while turning materials already growing on the farm into a useful resource.

NUTRIENT CYCLING



Rabbits create a link between what the farm grows and what returns to the soil. Plants take nutrients from the soil, rabbits consume plant material, and their manure returns organic matter and nutrients to the growing system—helping close the nutrient loop.

MANURE FOR SOIL HEALTH



Rabbit manure can be used as a soil amendment to add organic matter and nutrients. Regular additions can support soil fertility, biological activity, water-holding capacity, and soil structure while reducing reliance on purchased fertilizer.



ST. LOUIS, MO



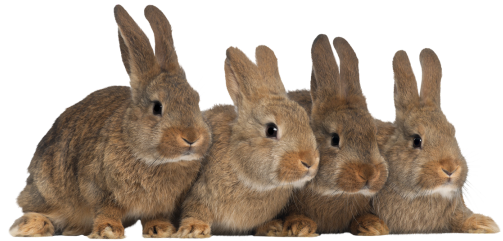
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Creating a Closed-Loop Urban Farm System

Rabbits turn materials that might otherwise be discarded into a resource for growing food.



WEEDS, SURPLUS PRODUCE,
& APPROPRIATE RESCUED
FOOD SCRAPS



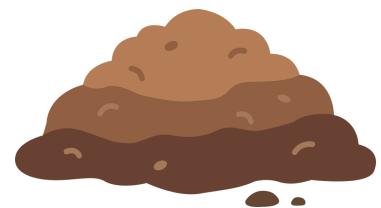
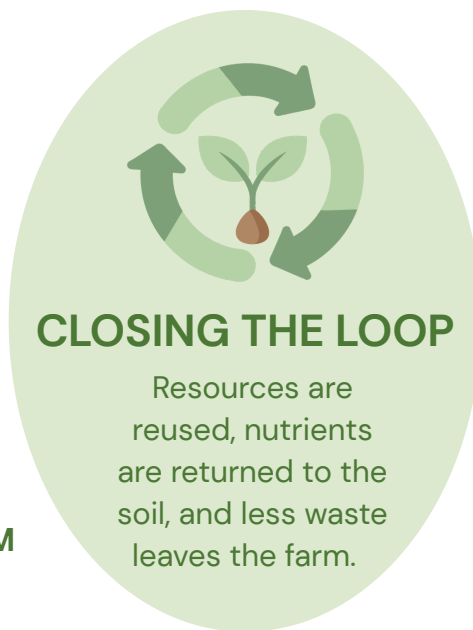
RABBITS



PLANT MATERIAL
RETURNS TO THE SYSTEM



CROPS



MANURE



HEALTHY SOIL

Getting Started with Rabbits

Before bringing rabbits onto your farm, make sure you have the space, equipment, and time to care for them year-round. A successful rabbit operation starts with healthy animals, secure housing, good nutrition, and a plan for managing manure.

1.) Check Local Regulations

Before getting rabbits, research your local rules for keeping livestock. Requirements may address the number of animals allowed, housing, sanitation, or where rabbits can be kept on a property.

2.) Plan for Safe Housing

Rabbits need a clean, dry, well-ventilated, and predator-proof space with protection from rain, wind, direct sun, and extreme temperatures. Housing should provide enough room for rabbits to move comfortably and allow for easy cleaning and manure collection.

3.) Prepare for Heat

Rabbits tolerate cold better than extreme heat, making summer heat management especially important on urban farms. Provide shade, ventilation, plenty of clean water, frozen water bottles or chilled ceramic tiles to lie on, and other cooling measures during hot weather.

4.) Provide a Balanced Diet

Rabbits need consistent access to clean water, fiber, and balanced nutrition. Timothy hay should make up the bulk of their diet, with pellets or other feeds used as appropriate. Farm scraps, weeds, and surplus and rescued produce can supplement—not replace—a balanced diet.

5.) Start Small

Begin with a manageable number of rabbits while you learn their daily needs and behavior. Starting small makes it easier to develop routines for feeding, watering, cleaning, health checks and manure management before expanding. Acquire your initial stock from a reputable breeder and ensure rabbits show no sign of illness.

6.) Create a Manure Management Plan

Decide how manure will be collected, stored, composted, or applied to growing areas. Ensure manure collection trays are emptied and cleaned every 4–7 days to prevent strong urine smells and insect attraction.

7.) Monitor Health Daily

Get to know what is normal for your rabbits. Check them each day for changes in eating, drinking, behavior, manure production, breathing, and physical condition. Identify a veterinarian or other rabbit-care resource if needed.