

**RABBIT HUSBANDRY IN NORTHERN SRI LANKA :
AN ON FARM INVESTIGATION**

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A questionnaire survey was conducted in the Northern Sri Lanka which included all the reported farmers by the area field officers. The predominant breed in the area was New Zealand White (NZW) and its crosses. One half of the farmers reared pure NZW as well as its crosses (51%) and the other half of the farmers reared (49%) only cross bred rabbits, mainly with New Zealand blood. The average (\pm SD) herd composition was as 1.84 (\pm 1.2) does, 1.31 (\pm 0.81) bucks and 4.62 (\pm 3.76) fryers. The Measured production parameters such as number at birth, number at weaning, age at weaning, weight at weaning, age at marketing, weight at marketing, kidding interval, were sub standard to the reported values under intensive management in Sri Lanka¹ and elsewhere².

The major constraints for the husbandry were inbreeding, marginal level of or lack of concentrate feeding, improper breeding management and inadequate provision of water. The market potential was not a limiting factor for the rabbit production in the region and possibility for expansion of the rabbit husbandry in the region was high.

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2. Cheeke, P.R., Patton N.M., Lukefahr, S.D. and Mc Nitt, J.I. (1987). Rabbit production. The Interstate-printers & publishers, Inc, Danville, Illinois. pp.51, 84, 155, 190, 297-317, 437.