

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**INFORMATION SERVICE**

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release

**DOMESTIC RABBIT MEAT
IS ALWAYS IN SEASON**

The meat of domestic rabbits, unlike that of wild rabbits, can be eaten at any time of the year and is just as nutritious and palatable in hot weather as in cold, advises the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

"Hutch-raised domestic rabbits are always in season, the same as chicken," says Frank G. Ashbrook, in charge of the Service's Fur Resources work. "The domestic rabbit is produced under conditions that favor rapid growth and is ready for the table when it is 2 months old. However, rabbits that are 3 to 4 months old make even better eating, but they cost more to produce.

"It is unfortunate that some people believe the domestic grain-fed rabbit is the same as the wild animal, such as the cottontail and the hare. There is no comparison. The meat of the domestic rabbit is all white, like the breast of a chicken, and both in color and in flavor is so superior to wild rabbit as to seem an entirely different article of food."

With meat supplies continuing to be short, the home dweller with a small backyard rabbitry can be assured of a year-around supply of delicious meat which will not require ration points. Each doe can produce about 4 litters a year, of 7 to 8 each. Fryer rabbits at 2 months will dress about $2\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and slightly more than 77 percent of the product is edible. Older and heavier rabbits—those beyond the fryer age—are splendid in a fricasseo or roasted. Meat markets in many sections of the country can supply rabbit meat for families unable to raise their own. Housewives will find it an excellent summer meat.

For the benefit of housewives who hesitate to cook rabbits for fear of contracting tularemia, Mr. Ashbrook states, "Hutch-raised rabbits do not get tularemia. No case of the disease has ever been recognized in commercial rabbitries."

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