



# I . A . G . A . R . B .

---

---

## I.A.G.A.R.B.

### WHO WE ARE....

In April of 1987 a small band of German Angora Rabbit breeders convened in Idaho and founded the International Association of German Angora Rabbit Breeders. This organization was separate and unaffiliated with the American Rabbit Breeders Association. The German Angora breeders felt a need to separate from this large U.S. club. Why? The answer lies in the history of the ups and downs of the angora industry in the U.S. In the 1930's a commercial angora industry was just forming in this country when World War II and the popularity of synthetic fibers put an end to it. Today there is no commercial spinnery in the U.S. willing to deal with angora, and thus no easy market to support large commercial angora herds. The only 100% angora yarn must be imported or handspun. So the angora breeds in this country (predominately French and English) developed not under the selective pressure to produce large quantities of wool, but in the hands of hobbyists and show people.

In Europe, on the other hand, there is a commercial market for angora, and products such as angora long underwear are very popular. The Germans developed a Standard that reflected the kind of rabbit needed to supply this market - a very densely woolled rabbit with high wool production. Testing

stations measured their yearly progress toward this goal, and provided the impetus to improve the breed. When these animals were first imported to this country, many American breeders were astounded by the difference in wool production. These rabbits produced 3 to 4 times the amount of angora per rabbit for the same amount of feed and cage space. They were eager to have the A.R.B.A. accept this "new" angora breed. Serious angora producers needed a high production angora rabbit and the German Angora was the logical choice. Unfortunately, the rabbit breed that was finally accepted by the A.R.B.A. had changed from the German Standard, in favor of a show animal. Obviously there was a need for an organization that would serve and develop the commercial aspects of the U.S. angora industry, as well as preserve the standard of the German Angora Rabbit. I.A.G.A.R.B. was born.

Today, I.A.G.A.R.B. serves a diverse membership in the U.S. and Canada, dedicated to the preservation of the German Angora and the development of a commercial angora market in this country. Progress has been slow. The onslaught of Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease in Europe has meant the cessation of further imports of rabbits, and the importation of inferior, cheaper foreign angora has further weakened the domestic market. China presently leads the world in angora production. The recent influx of angora blend sweaters comes mainly from this area of the world.

For cottage industries, however, the American market holds great potential. Many of our members are enjoying success in this arena. I.A.G.A.R.B. members range from people with one German Angora rabbit, to breeders who maintain herds of 250 rabbits. They sell breeding stock, angora wool and yarns, roving and batting in various blends, and finished woven, felted and knitted goods. Some use their angora only for personal use, others have thriving businesses. Some are also members of A.R.B.A. and enjoy showing the Germans as "Giants."

I.A.G.A.R.B. seeks to support its membership by promoting the German Angora rabbit, finding processors for angora and searching for commercial outlets for angora wool. Since its inception, I.A.G.A.R.B.'s Tariff Committee has been working to establish a protective tariff, so our domestic breeders can have a chance to compete and grow. I.A.G.A.R.B. publishes a quarterly newsletter to inform the membership of coming events, the newest developments in Germany, as well as articles on breeding, health, etc. As we look to the future, we are planning on developing at least one Testing Station at a University or college, with the goal of improving wool production here in the U.S.

At present, I.A.G.A.R.B. holds its annual meetings at Fiberfest, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. This year there will be a judging workshop, registration of German Angoras, and a Z.D.K. style show, where rabbits are judged on the point system, rather than directly against each other. Come see the difference. We think you will be impressed.

- Susan Wiley

GERMAN & GERMAN HYBRID ANGORA RABBITS	LUXURY FIBER BLENDS ANGORA WOOL
<i>Windsor Farms Rabbitry</i> Visit Us At <a href="http://members.aol.com/angoralady/index.htm">http://members.aol.com/angoralady/index.htm</a>	
GAIL SMITH 207-445-4362 ANGORALADY@AOL.COM	REED ROAD R.F.D. 1, Box 3410 WINDSOR, MAINE 04363