

ACBA: Cavy Show Fancy

HOW TO CULTIVATE CAVY BREEDERS IN YOUR AREA

By Peg Smith
JACBA Summer 2001

When I began breeding guinea pigs in Anchorage Alaska in 1990 there was no pure bred stock here in Alaska's largest city. I had no idea that my guinea pigs were called cavies. I just bought the piggies that were cute and had particular colors that I liked. I tried to look for pregnant ones as well so I could see what would be born. I had about 50 guinea pigs of all different coat lengths and types and breed them until May of 1992 when I learned that there were pure bred cavies that I could have shipped into Anchorage.

Within 6 weeks I had found homes for my pet pigs and had purchased over 75 Americans, Silkies, and Teddies. A Cavy breeder was born! Over the next year and a half I found a couple of other cavy crazy people who also shipped in pigs and we would meet at rabbit club shows with rabbit/cavy judges and the fever was on.

Over the last eight or nine years I have started some large and small breeders in my area. I have put up posters that asked if your love small furry animals and would like to be involved in raising them for

show give me a call. This brought on some takers but the best way I found was to bring the individual pet owner into your caviary and let them experience the amazement of all your lovely piggies. That is right- let them touch, hold and play with your pigs. Let them ask you questions and answer them all. Let them in on the chores and the pleasures, the new babies and cavy shows and the unwrapped babies and dirty cages. Share your books, share where the best food and bedding can be bought. Split bags of feed and hay bales with them. Be a mentor.

You may be thinking, but half of them will just quit in 3 months or sooner. Well your wrong, 5/6 of them will, but the 1/6 that stays with the cavies will be some of your best friends. They will share with you a closeness that is hard to explain in words, but each of you cavy breeders feel it in your heart. The love of the cavy.

Keep on Piggin!

Peg Smith

Except as specified below, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, including electronically, or transmitted by any means without permission in writing from the American Cavy Breeders Association (ACBA). Copying: Single copies of individual articles may be made for private use or research providing copies bear the ACBA copyright notice. Authorization does not extend to copies made or distributed for profit, commercial advantage, promotional purposes, to electronic storage or distribution, or to republication in any form. In all such cases, specific written permission from ACBA must be obtained. Permission for Other Use: Permission is granted for brief quotes with the customary acknowledgment of the source. To reprint a figure, table or other excerpt requires the consent of the ACBA. For permission contact: Lenore Gergen (ACBA Secretary), 16540 Hogan Avenue, Hastings, MN 55033. Opinions of individual authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the ACBA, its board or officers.