

● Judging the Dwarf Hotot

Terry Fender, ARBA Judge

People new to rabbits may see a Dwarf Hotot for the first time and think... "Is that a Netherland Dwarf, or even a Polish, with eye markings?" No, it's a Dwarf Hotot...and it is its own breed!

Even though the Dwarf Hotot is famous for those eyebands, they carry only 15 points. Like so many breeds, general type carries the most points at 65. Thirty-five of those 65 points are allotted to the body. The Dwarf Hotot's body should be rather short, compact, and well rounded. The body should be uniformly wide from front to back. In other words, the shoulders should be just as wide as the hindquarters. When looking at the animal's topline, there should be a very slight, gradual curve from the base of the ears to the highest point over the hips. Don't try to force a tall arch like one might see on other breeds such as a Mini Rex. If you find an animal with a long neck, narrow shoulders, or pinched hips, these are all qualities that should be faulted. And please remember, Dwarf Hotots are one of the breeds in which a dewlap is a disqualification. Continuing under type, the head and ears each count for 15 points. Think bold when looking at the head. The head should be attached right to the body. You don't want to see any visible neck. The ears don't necessarily have to touch all the way up, but they should be erect and well set. The ears should be short and well furred; ears over 2 ¾ inches in length are a disqualification. How does one measure the ear length? Measure the length from the top of the head by placing a ruler between the ears while they are held together. Ears that are thin or poorly furred are a fault. Though there are no points given to feet and legs, a toe nail disqualification is listed here. Any color of toenails other than white or flesh colored is a disqualification.

Fur carries 10 points...so remember this is not a fur breed. It carries a roll back coat.

Color is worth 5 points. With the exception of the eyebands, the color is to be pure white over the entire body. I remember being told by a former breeder to remember to check for dark spots in front of the tail and under the front legs. Her advice saved me one time! These dark spots would be a disqualification.

Ok, under markings, 15 points are given to the eyebands. Currently black and chocolate eyebands are accepted. Both colors show together, not separate. These eyebands may be the distinctive feature of this breed, but please keep the amount of points allotted to them in perspective when doing your evaluation. The eyebands should form a complete outline around the eye. They should be narrow and well defined in color. Eyebands that are incomplete or heavily feathered are a disqualification. If the eyebands are slightly irregular or very wide, these are considered faults. Don't forget to check the eyes themselves. Wrong colored eyes, spots, or marbling are all disqualifications.

Condition is worth 5 points. Think icing on the cake!

The maximum weight for seniors is 3 pounds. Juniors carry a maximum weight of 2 ½ pounds and a minimum weight of 1 ¼ pounds. This breed does allow the exhibitor to step a junior up to the senior class if it exceeds the maximum weight for juniors. Of course, though, you may not show an older animal in a lower age classification...this means you can't show a 6+ month animal as a junior.

We don't see many Dwarf Hotots on a regular basis in Ohio, but it is a breed that I enjoy handling when given the chance. I think you'll enjoy them if you get the opportunity too!