



Black Satins

By J. Leo Collins, Salem, Ohio

The Black Satin has established itself as one *of* the most popular varieties *of* the Satin breed. The intense color is enhanced by the transparent characteristics of the Satin fur shaft to provide a remarkably attractive animal.

Black Satins usually rank right behind the White Satins in numbers shown but they have a Best Satin winning record at National Shows far ahead *of* their proportionate numbers. This reflects the quality of the Black Satins produced as well as the natural tendency of the Black to display the Satin sheen to its best advantage. I am very *fortunate* in having been able to maintain a winning show herd *of* Black Satins *for* almost 20 years. My first Black Satin Best of Breed came in 1976 and my first Black National wins were at the 1978 ARBA Convention with all three Black Satin buck classes. In 1983 my Black 6-8 Doe was Best Satin at the National All Satin in Sedalia, Missouri. The 1995 National All Satin in Randolph, Ohio was a good one *for* my herd. I did win Best Satin with the White Junior doe but my Blacks were very strong with both junior class wins.

It would be fun to be able to write that I developed this long standing Black Satin show herd *from* some 4-H bunnies and that I have maintained a pure Black line that is now better than ever. It just doesn't work that way. My first Best *of* Breed Black in 1976 was a purchased daughter of Hal Kiggins Best Black buck at the 1976 All Satin in Ohio. This start did get me my first National wins but I added some Best in Show standard Californian blood to continue winning in the early 1980s.

Mike D'Amico used some of this Black stock to get going with his outstanding show herd of Californian Satins. He has done very well winning Best Satin at the 1985 ARBA Convention in Houston and again at the National All Satin in 1986 even though I had both the Best Black and Best White Satin on the table against him.

Mike has repaid me many times *for* that start with a constant exchange of animals between our herds. Mike's main interest is still the Californian Satin. Some Blacks cross well into the Californians and vice versa. However, some do not. Mike gave me his Best Black *from* the National All Satin in Springfield when it kept producing only Blacks not Californians. This doe was the mother of two Black 6-8's at the Randolph National. One was my second place 6-8 doe and one was its littermate which Marc Hunter raised *from* an 8 week old bunny into his Black 6-8 Best Opposite Satin.

Winners produce winners. Randy Shumaker let me have a Black Broken brother to both the Black Broken Best Satin and the Best Black at the 1994 AREA Convention in Tulsa. This buck produced my winning Black Junior doe in a class *of* 57 at the Randolph National.

There are advantages to keeping a line of Black Satins pure Black. Careful culling to rid yourself of white toenails, white *foot* pads, poor eye color and stray white hairs will save *you* a lot of pain, and *you* will have six showable bunnies when *you* wean six. However, if *you* then have to cull the six showable bunnies because they have type *or* fur faults that will not win, than *you* haven't gained much.

Winning Satins produce winning Satins. If *you* can stay within your variety and produce winners, that's great, but don't be afraid to use Blacks with any color background if they have the winning type and fur *you* need.

Breeding and showing Satins is a great hobby and the Black Satin is an excellent variety if you like to win.