



# Otter Satins

By Al Lunde (re-printed from the Feb/March 2000 Satin News)

After working with the Broken Satin in the early 1980's, I didn't ever plan to tie up cages with another new variety again. However I'm almost always into new experiences and when the notion of an Otter Satin variety came up, I decided to try making some.

It was at the ARBA Convention in Tulsa 1994 that Randy suggested that Otters would make an interesting new color. By then the Otter Rex and Otter Dwarfs were already popular and an Otter Satin seemed a good next step. The Kalmer Family in Missouri had already made some crosses and expressed interest in sponsoring this new variety: I figured I could mess with them a little bit and maybe have something to show after they were presenting them to the ARBA Standard committee. They had intended to present them at the ARBA Convention in Louisville in 1995, but were not able to. I then applied for the certificate from the ARBA to work on Otter Satins, which meant the first showing would be in 1998.

I had gotten a Satin/Rex cross from the Kalmer's after the 1994 Convention. She was a normal furred doe bred to an Otter buck. I did manage to raise (or actually Jack Etnyre raised the litter and got them to me) a couple of normal furred Otters from this first doe. At this point I wasn't really trying to do much more than just raise one Otter Satin to see if I liked what the rabbit looked like; however I wasn't lucky with the small numbers and didn't produce anything, just more normal furred Otters and Blacks.

At this point I bought a real nice Otter Rex from Dennis Roloff. This buck was bred to Black Satin does and the first litter produced several very nice normal furred Black Otters. I saved four of these, all does, and mated them as soon as possible. All four does littered, average litter size about nine, not a single Otter Satin in any litter. Did get a real collection of rabbits from normal furred Otters to Satin Red. All four does were bred back and the next time managed to get two Otter Satins! Since some of my Satins are Broken, I then bred some normal Otters to Broken bucks and among plenty of meat rabbits came up with two Broken Black Otters. I should point out here my Black Satin tends to carry the Blue gene and at this point I started getting Blue and even a normal furred Blue Otter. Bottom line, I figured I raised close to 100 babies and kept four or five in this second generation.

One of the better Broken Otter does was mated with a Broken Black buck and this produced the Blue Otter buck I showed in Portland as a senior. He was the first Otter buck I produced that really pleased me for type and fur, shows up on most of my pedigrees now, Lunde's RCO.

I have taken two Otters to the National Satin in Reno and showed a couple at local shows. To have rabbits ready for the first showing in Portland to the ARBA Standards Committee, I had gotten up to about eight does and two Otter bucks with Satin fur, plus I still have some normal furred Otter around. I raised 75 babies with one or both Otter parents to pick from for this first showing as juniors. Luckily I ended up with a nice pair of junior Black Otters out of the RCO buck and a Black Otter doe named Rose. Even more luckily these seniors decided to look good in October 1998 so that the first showing in Portland went well and they passed.

For the second showing last fall in Louisville, I had about the same number of Otter does, but culled everything with normal fur. I went back to breeding several of the Otter does to solid bucks, both Black and

Blues so that the Otters would not be so closely related. Again some of these litters had no Otters at all; others were 75 percent or more. Although the Otter gene is basically dominant to the solid gene, luck and I think some modifiers, seem to result in less than half Otters as you cross them to solids. You get some Silver Marten colored rabbits with one or both Otter parents.

The second showing in Louisville also passed. Along with my entry there were several other Otters on display.

I should also note the original Roloff Rex buck turned out to carry the Chocolate gene. Up until this winter I had assumed I had not kept anything that carried Chocolate, as I hadn't raised any. However I now have a solid Chocolate doe with black Otter parents, so it is just a matter of time and luck and a Chocolate Otter should pop up somewhere.