

# Argente Brun

The 49th ARBA recognized breed originating above the 49th parallel

Charmaine Waldrop

I recently received a letter from Ed White congratulating me for the ARBA acceptance of the Argente Brun as the 49th officially recognized breed. Ed White is the originating Canadian Argente Brun breeder from whom I imported my start-up stock. In his letter Ed writes, "it somehow seems appropriate to connect the 49th American Rabbit Breeder's Association newest approved breed with the world's longest friendly international border", the 49th parallel.

It has been a long journey with a number of unexpected turns along the way. My late husband Floyd and I bred Crème d'Argents, and previously Champagne d'Argents. We were considering other breeds when I happened across a website highlighting the Argente Brun. We began contacting people listed on the website looking for stock, which eventually lead us to Ed White. Ed is the man responsible for getting the Argente Bruns accepted into the Dominion Rabbit Breeders Association in Ontario, Canada.

We purchased our initial rabbits and began the COD application process. The ARBA criterion for acceptance of the Brun as a foreign breed was quite rigid, due to their similarities with the Champagne d'Argents. We scoured the internet for Standards of Perfection for any of the Argente breeds, thereby obtaining the SOPs from The British Rabbit

Council, The Dominion Rabbit Breeders Association, and the European Rabbit Society. The three of us, in conjunction with ARBA, exchanged several drafts over and again in order to produce a working SOP meeting the ARBA criteria. The Certificate of Development, (COD) was approved on Nov. 9, 2009. We were given 2 years to work with the breed, at which time we were eligible to present them for the first time at the 2011 ARBA Convention. With the COD being issued on Nov. 9th and the ARBA Convention (2011) commencing Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 2011, The time requirement of having possession of the COD for 2 years' date to date made it impossible to present at that time.

In March of 2010 my husband Floyd passed away. I continued with the COD process. As I worked with my stock interest continued to grow in the new breed. The Argente Brun breed name continued as part of our agreement with Ed in order to maintain worldwide consistency. In 2012, I married Rick Wardrop, a high school classmate and rabbitry neophyte. However, Rick was a quick study and helped me greatly in my efforts. At every challenge he supported me and encouraged me onward. In 2012, the Bruns were in beautiful shape. The lineup looked awesome. Then just a month before convention, my Mother died suddenly. I chose to take a fail on my first presentation as a result. That made the presentation in Pennsylvania a do or die situation,

because if they failed in 2013, the COD would have been nullified and I would be done.

Fortunately, 2013 convention was easier on me, although my heart felt as though it were going to beat right out of my chest during the judging. It was emotional to hear that we passed in Pennsylvania, despite the last minute substitutions. We had another year of working on areas with type where we wanted to see improvement. The committee judges saw it similarly. We focused on bone, which at this point in the development, is what the committee found as an area of weakness.

If you would have asked me where I thought the Brun line was in early 2014, I would have told you how disappointing "the whole lot of them" were. I heard this happens a lot when working on a COD. Sometimes the pairings produce disappointing results or the promising kits fail to thrive or that nice intermediate buck goes to sleep leaning on his water dish to never wake up. All the while the disappointments rack up, a small change can blossom in your herd and you become excited for the next presentation, as we were in Fort Worth. The Standards committee liked the improvements that came about and we were advised that the color could use more consistency.

All along we worked to produce rabbits with nice chocolate brown color. And to be honest we did not fully recognize it until we saw the cooped up rabbits ready for judging.

Then it hit us, in one full view we saw each rabbit next to the other with good color symmetry, body type and size. It turns out the Standards Committee and the ARBA board were as pleased as we were with the Argente Brun. The largest new rabbit breed recognized by the ARBA in 30 years. The 49th officially recognized breed. It is fitting that the name "American Argente Brun Rabbit Club" is selected which honors the breeders' north and south of the 49th parallel.

Good Luck all who venture into this realm, hoping those with interest will continue to produce outstanding Silvered Browns (Argente-Silvered, Brun- Brown). They are a wonderful breed that are generally very inquisitive and friendly. Our bucks will sometimes try to climb out of the cages and into our arms.

Members of the Argente Brun club celebrate the 3rd successful presentation



Charmaine completes her 1st successful presentation. The Bruns are on their way!



Argente Brun babies are born brown, the frosted surface coloring (silvering) develops as the animal matures.

