

# **Effect of housing system and castration on the behaviour of domestic rabbits**

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## **Summary**

The aim of the study was to analyse the impact of housing system and castration on the behaviour of domestic rabbits kept as companion animals. The work is based on a survey in which 388 respondents (rabbit caretakers) took part. The survey questions included basic information about the rabbit, i.e. age, sex, breed, castration or not, and housing conditions (cage-free, cage with opportunity to leave the cage, or closed cage). Another group of questions related to the behaviour and general environment of rabbits (sex and age of the caregiver, place of residence, the presence of children around the rabbit and their age, and the presence of other animals). Statistical analysis of the survey results was performed by calculating the correlations between housing conditions and castration and the rabbit's behaviour. Housing conditions were found to influence the occurrence of aggression and the appearance of stereotypical behaviour in rabbits, while castration was shown to significantly affect the relationship between the animal and the caregiver.

**KEY WORDS: rabbit, housing conditions, castration, behaviour**