

## The Joy Of Showing Cavies

**Cavies, also known as guinea pigs, make wonderful pets and can introduce their owners to the world of showing.**

*By Valerie Jump*

The cavy, or guinea pig, was first imported from the Andes mountains of Peru to Europe in the 1500s; it arrived in the United States about the mid 1700s. The early breeds were primarily kept as agricultural stock for food, and efforts at improving the guinea pig as a food source continue to the modern era.

In the United States, United Kingdom and other countries, various competitive breeding organizations were founded by cavy fanciers. Cavies became popular in the show ring in the last part of the 1800s in the United States.

In 1910, the National Pet Stock Association organized and started sanctioned shows for rabbits and cavies. The organization was later renamed the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA). At that time, there were only three recognized breeds of cavies: American, Abyssinian and Peruvian (sometimes called Angora). All breeds come in a variety of colors. A standard of perfection for all the breeds of rabbits and cavies can be purchased from the ARBA.

Presently, the ARBA and ACBA (American Cavy Breeders Association) recognize 13 breeds of cavies.

For the full article, pick up the 2010 issue of Critters USA or [click here](#) to buy the issue.