New York Rabbit & Cavy Breeders Association Inc.
Constitution

Article I: Name

The name of this Association shall be "The New York Rabbit and Cavy Breeders Association, Incorporated, .hereafter referred to as NYRCBA Inc.

Article II: Purpose

The NYRCBA shall operate as a non-profit association with its purpose to:

1. Promote, encourage, and develop the rabbit and cavy industry in New York State, in accordance with the aims and purposes set forth in this Constitution and by-Laws, and with the aims and purposes of the American Rabbit Breeders Association.

2. Promote and encourage public and private exhibition of rabbits and cavies in New York State by:

a: coordinating a state-wide calendar and publishing it to all members clubs.

b: Operating a state -wide Breed Display point system as set forth in this Constitution and by-laws.

c: Sponsoring and/or running an annual state-wide show in accordance with this Constitution and by-laws and

3. Help strengthen member clubs by providing a common bond for the sharing of ideas, Resources and assistance when needed.

Article III: Affiliation

The NYRCBA shall maintain an affiliation with the ARBA, Inc. by maintaining a charter with the American Rabbit Breeders Association, Inc.

Article IV: Membership

SECTION 1: Membership in the NYRCBA Inc. shall be open to any ARBA chartered local all-breed club, local specialty club, regional specialty club headquartered in New York State, or State Specialty club in agreement with this Constitution and by-laws.

SECTION 2- To become a member, a club described in Section 1 must submit a letter of application (including an agreement to abide by this Constitution and by-laws,) its ARBA charter number, membership list, officers, and its delegate and alternate to the Association, to the Secretary of this Association, along with 1 years membership dues. The Association Secretary shall than notify member clubs of the application prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Association, where the application shall be presented for discussion and action. At that meeting, a delegate from the club making application must be present to answer any questions and speak on behalf of the club. Failure of the applying club to send a delegate shall result in the application for membership to be postponed until such time as a delegate is in attendance at a meeting. Upon motion for acceptance from the floor, a vote shall be taken. A simple majority vote of those delegates present shall constitute acceptance and approval. Upon approval, the applying Club shall immediately be considered a member in good standing with full privileges.

SECTION 3: Membership in this Association may be denied to, suspended or revoked from any club who shall fail to abide by this Constitution and by-laws.

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ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

SECTION 1: The elected officers of the Association shall be President, Vice- President, and Secretary Treasurer. They shall comprise the Executive Board of the Association.

SECTION 2: All elected officers shall serve a term of 2 years, to commence at the installation in Conjunction with the Annual State Banquet.

SECTION 3: The President & Vice President of this Association may succeed themselves indefinitely by vote of the Association.

SECTION 4: The Secretary/Treasurer may succeed himself/herself indefinitely at the wish of the Association.

SECTION 5: Delegate (or Alternate delegate in the Absence of the delegate) duly elected by each member club and certified to the Association Secretary and President shall serve as Directors of this Association. Certification of delegates (and Alternate Delegates) must be filed with the Association Secretary prior to the opening of the meeting at which they are to vote. Such certification must specify the term of office, which shall not exceed two years. This is not to be interpreted as prohibiting member clubs from electing delegates for more than two years, but only that certification to the office cannot be valid for more than two years. No Delegate or (Alternate Delegate) may represent more than one member club at the same time. If at any time a Delegate (or Alternate Delegate) is so elected to represent more than one member club, only the first postmarked certification received by the Association Secretary shall be validated to represent that one member club; all others will be invalidated and returned to the member club(s) for resubmission of a new Delegate (or Alternate Delegate). In addition, no Delegate (Or Alternate Delegate) is allowed to carry a proxy vote(s) for any member club (s) at a meeting of this association. Only delegates (or Alternate Delegates) and officers of the State Association will be allowed to open and enter discussions at meetings of the Associations.

SECTION 6: All Officers and directors shall maintain membership in the ARBA and a member Club of NYRCBA Inc. Directors shall maintain membership in the member club which he/she represents. Failure to maintain such membership shall be reason to remove such persons from the office they hold.

SECTION 7: Each elected officer shall have one vote at all meetings except the President, who shall only vote in the case of a tie.

SECTION 8: In the event any elected officer fails to fulfill the duties of the office, the association may, by a 2/3 vote of those delegates present at a meeting, declare the office vacant.

SECTION 9: When a vacancy occurs (by action of the Association in accordance with article V, Section 8 :(resignation, or other reason) in an elected office, the Association shall hold an election. The individual receiving a simple majority vote of those delegates present shall be declared elected. If the vacancy occurs in such a manner that the Association shall not meet for a time period exceeding 30 days, the President, with the approval of the Executive Board, may appoint someone to fill the office until the next meeting of the Association.

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SECTION 10: In the event that a member clubs delegate or alternate holds an elected office in the Association, that member club shall designate a new delegate or alternate.

ARTICLE VI: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1: The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association, make all committee *Chair* appointments ***with Executive Board written approval*****,** be an ex-official member of all committees, and perform other duties normally ascribed to the office.

SECTION 2: The vice-president shall act in place of the President and perform other duties assigned by the President. The V.P. shall act as Parliamentarian at all meetings of the Association.

SECTION 3: The Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct general correspondence of the Association, keep minutes of all meetings; maintain a list of member clubs with its members and officers, maintain a list of certified delegates, maintain a list of NYRCBA sanctioned shows, and provide a list of NYRCBA sanctioned shows to each member club 60 days prior to the beginning of each point year, collect all moneys due to the Association, maintain Association funds in approved accounts, pay all bills approved by the Association, report to all meetings of the Association and its Executive Board on the receipts and expenditures of the Association Funds. The Secretary Treasurer shall and is hereby authorized to expend funds of the NYRCBA for postage, stationary, office supplies, and incidental expenses of the office and of the office of the points Chairperson, and to maintain a petty cash fund of $50.00.

SECTION 4: The Display Points Chairperson, to be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Association shall receive reports from all NYRCBA sanctioned shows, forward funds received with the reports immediately to the Association Secretary/Treasurer for deposit, and maintain a record of the point standings as prescribed in the by-laws of the Association. he/she shall also compile a mid year report of all standings thus far, to be sent to the State Secretary by January 1 of said year. The State Secretary shall then forward mid year reports to all club Secretaries. The points Chairperson shall have all points calculated and sent to the State Secretary by August 1 of point season end. The State Secretary shall then forward final year end results to all club Secretaries. The final point totals with winners will also be posted on the NYRCBA website. The point Chairperson shall notify by mail, the following individuals when a clubs report is not received within 30 days of said date: the members club President, Secretary, and Show Secretary, and the NYRCBA President and Secretary/ Treasurer. If the report is still not received within 45 days of the show, repeat notices shall be mailed to the previously named officers, plus the ARBA State Representatives for their assistance. If after 60 days, o report is received from the local club, notices shall be made to the ARBA District Director and the ARBA Secretary for their action.

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Article VII: Meetings

SECTION 1: The Association shall meet two times annually: once in the spring, once in the Fall. Meetings are to be held away from the show sites at a centrally located meeting place, and are to be scheduled when there are no State sanctioned shows for that particular day.

SECTION 2: Special meetings shall be called by the President when three or more local clubs request such a meeting, when three or more delegates or when Executive Board members feel it is necessary. Notification of such special meeting must include purpose of the meeting and be mailed to all member club Secretaries, Delegates, and Alternates at least 30 days prior to such meeting. Such mailing shall constitute official notification of the meeting.

SECTION 3: Each member club is entitled to one vote on any issue that comes before the Association.

SECTION 4: Only Delegates of their alternates, certified to the Association Secretary in accordance with Article V, Section 5, shall be allowed to cast votes.

SECTION 5: Member clubs are expected to be represented at the meetings of the Association, but each member club must be represented at one meeting per year Failure to do so will result in loss of State Sanction until such time as the offending club has been represented at one (1) of two (2) state meetings.

SECTION 6: The executive board shall be empowered to act on behalf of the Association between meetings when a special meeting cannot be called. The Executive Board shall be limited to $200.00 expenditures of the Association funds

SECTION 7: A club Delegate or Alternate may, throughout the year, be asked to correspond, discuss and vote by e-mail or letter to the State Association Secretary on any subject that is significant to the NYRCBA. Any vote taken in this manner will be considered passed and approved by a 2/3 majority of all Club Delegates.

ARTICLE VIII: AUTHORITY

SECTION 1: The Association shall make any laws, rules and regulations it deems necessary, providing they are not in any conflict with this Constitution and by-laws or the ARBA, Inc.

SECTION 2: All matters, except amendments to the Constitution and by-laws, shall be Carried by a simple majority of those members present at any duly called meeting of the Association.

* **SECTION 3:** Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall be the final authority on all matters not specifically covered in this Constitution & by-laws.

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ARTICLE IX: LIMITATIONS

SECTION 1: All laws, rules and activities of the Association shall be in strict accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association and of the ARBA, Inc.

SECTION 2: In the event any activity, section of this Constitution or by-: Laws shall appear in conflict with the ARBA Inc. an immediate interpretation shall be sought from the ARBA. If found in conflict, then such shall be declared null and void.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to this Constitution and by-laws shall be presented in writing, to the Association Secretary and its Constitutional Committee, in sufficient time to allow the mailing/emailing of said proposals to all club secretaries, Delegates and Alternates prior to a meeting of the State Association. In addition, the Constitutional Committee is also permitted to propose amendments and shall review all other proposed amendments and make recommendations regarding those amendments whether to approve, disapprove, revise, or substitute any of the proposed amendments presented. The approved amendments shall then be forwarded by the Association Secretary to all clubs Secretaries, Delegates, and Alternates for further discussion. At the next meeting of the Association, these proposed amendments shall be moved by the Constitutional Committee, seconded by a club, discussion held on the floor with no revisions permitted, and a 2/3 vote required for approval; and if so approved, the amendment shall take effect immediately.

ARTICLE I: QUORUM

A quorum for a duly called meeting of the Association shall be a majority of delegates (Or their alternates) from member clubs.

ARTICLE II: DUES

Annual dues for membership in the Association shall be $15.00 per club, due and payable on or before July 1, yearly. In addition to the yearly dues, clubs are required to submit a Renewal Charter listing all club members, delegate/alternate and officers to the Association Secretary. Renewal Charter applications will be sent to all club secretaries by May 1 of each year. Any club not submitting their renewal charters and dues by July 1 of each year, will no longer be considered a NYRCBA Chartered Club, and must reapply to the State Association for membership. Each state club must pay their portion of the State's annual insurance liability policy. This must be paid by each all-breed and Specialty club regardless of if the club holds a state sanctioned that year or not. The only exception that will be made to a club for not carrying insurance is if the club can show proof to the state secretary by July 1st of said year, that the show site carry's their own liability insurance that covers the club and its members and does not hold the State Association responsible for any liability or damages that may incur at show or meeting site. ***

ARTICLE III: SALARIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1: The Secretary/Treasurer shall receive an annual salary of $75.00, and be reimbursed for approved expenses.

SECTION 2: The Display Points Chairperson shall receive $25.00 plus 5% of the point fund. He or she shall also be reimbursed for approved expenses.

SECTION 3: No other officer shall receive monetary reimbursement except for approved expenses.

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ARTICLE IV: DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1: Any officer or director of this Association, having a charge of misconduct in office preferred against him/her by three (3) or more directors will be suspended pending a hearing by the Delegates. If said officer or Director is exonerated of such charge, (by a majority vote of directors) he/she shall be immediately reinstated. If found guilty of the charge, his or her position shall be declared vacant.

SECTION 2: Any NYRCBA Officer, Director or member of a NYRCBA chartered club who willfully and maliciously uses any instrument of communication, such as social media, emails, blogs, group sites, to slander, harass, bully, or defame this Association, its Officers, Directors, Chairpersons, Committees or chartered club members, may have a written complaint signed and filed against them by three (3) NYRCBA chartered club officers or members with the Secretary of this Association. If the Executive Board determines that such written complaint is sustainable, they shall in writing contact the accused and so request a response to the filed complaint. If the accused fails to respond in thirty "(30) days" or provides insufficient grounds for his/her actions, the Executive Board shall:

1) Send a letter of reprimand warning the accused of what penalties can be applied if they fail to immediately end such malicious behavior; and if the accused fails to do so;
2) Shall forward the complaint to the Board of Directors of this Association for a 2/3's vote on whether to discipline the accused member of a NYRCBA chartered club. If such charges are sustained by the Board of Directors the accused shall lose all their sweepstake points for that show year. Additionally, the accused may also be removed from any position held within this Association and be denied the right to serve in any office or capacity within this Association for a period of one year.

ARTICLE V: SHOW CIRCUIT RULES

SECTION 1: All member clubs must file a written request with the State Secretary, for a show date the following show season, 60 days before the NYRCBA Inc. Spring meeting. NYRCBA member clubs may request show dates no more than 4 show seasons in advance of the current show season. The State Secretary shall compile a list of requested show dates and shall mail same to all member club secretaries, delegates, and alternates, 30 days before the spring meeting. Each club must have a delegate or alternate in attendance at the spring meeting in order for their show date to be confirmed and /or to resolve conflicts in dates with other clubs. Any conflicts that remain unresolved shall be placed on the agenda for the following State meeting. Clubs that have a long standing and consistent show date shall be given preferences over clubs wishing to move their dates or who show a tendency to float around the calendar.

SECTION 2: Clubs making application for membership in the Association may request a show date at the time of application pending approval of membership.

SECTION 3: All local all-breed clubs shall be permitted one (1) sanctioned show date per year. On that date the sponsoring club may hold more than one show if they so desire. A second show date may be granted, if applied for in accordance with Article V: Show Circuit Rules: Section 1, if the Association feels it is advisable and that it will not be detrimental to other member clubs shows. A second show date shall NOT be limited to

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one open and one youth all-breed show. Specialty clubs affiliated with the NYRCBA will be granted three sanctioned shows per point year.
NYRCBA member Specialty Clubs may not hold a show with a non-affiliated all-breed club, if the date is the same as a NYRCBA member All-Breed Club.

SECTION 4: Any NYRCBA chartered club desiring to host, manage, and sanction with the ARBA for a New York State county fair rabbit/cavy show, may do so without jeopardizing their allocated number of shows under the provisions of By-Law Article V: Show Circuit Rules: Section 1, if applied for in accordance with said By-Law.
Any such New York State county fair shows must be held during the opening and closing of the regular annual county fair season. Exhibitors from an All-Breed NYRCBA chartered club who show at these shows shall be eligible for Sweepstakes Points, provided that the $0.15 per entry is paid to the NYRCBA Trophy Fund with full report submitted to the Chair of the Sweepstakes Committee. Such county fair shows shall not be counted in the show circuit year's required 30% number of shows needed to qualify for Sweepstakes awards.

SECTION 6: All sanctioned shows must advertise their NYRCBA sanction in their catalog and be held within the state of New York.

SECTION 7: Two shows sponsored by the mutual consent of two member clubs on one week-end using the same location and facilities must both receive a NYRCBA sanction and the exhibitors have the option of exhibiting at either one or both shows with a separate entry fee for each show.

SECTION 8: All State sanctioned shows shall be assessed fifteen cents, ($0.15) per rabbit and cavy exhibited. Such funds will be used to establish a Point Fund for the purchase of awards.

SECTION 9: Any show sanctioned by NYRCBA, regardless of whether or not the $0.15 fees have been paid, should get points, if an official report is given to the Point Chairperson of the Association. No further sanctions will be granted until all money due the Association is paid in full.

SECTION 10: Each State sanctioned shows Secretary shall file with the Association point Chairperson a complete report, within 30 days after their sanctioned show. In the event such report is not filed, the Association Point Secretary must follow Page 3, Article VI, and section 4 of the Associations Constitution.

SECTION 11: Every effort is to be made by the Association officers to assist member clubs in submitting reports on time. In all cases of late reports, extenuating circumstances are to be considered before taking any disciplinary action.

ARTICLE VI: STATE DISPLAY POINT RULES:

SECTION 1: The State Show Circuit point's year will run from July 1 to June 30.

SECTION 2: To be eligible for point awards, a single exhibitor or members of a group of two or more exhibitors must be members of a NYRCBA ALL BREED CLUB.

SECTION 3: All points shall be calculated on the same basis as Display points (ARBA) and by Breed.

SECTION 4: Best of Breed winner shall receive one (1) times the number exhibited in the breed. Best Opposite Sex of Breed shall receive one half (1/2) times the number exhibited in the breed.

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SECTION 5: The Annual State Convention Show shall receive double points.

SECTION 6: At the Annual State Banquet, awards shall be presented to the top point winners in each breed and to the first and second runners up in each breed.

SECTION 7: Awards shall also be presented to the top five (5) exhibitors, all breeds participating.

SECTION 8: Any exhibitor, to be eligible for awards, must compete in at least 30 % of the NYRCBA sanctioned all-breed shows. The points shall be compiled under the name shown on the state point reports. Except for marital status, no changes in names will be allowed during the show year. It shall be the responsibility of the exhibitor to notify the Points Chairperson of any changes in the name under which rabbits are being exhibited that would affect the accurate compiling of state points.

SECTION 9: Points accumulated from Breed Specialty shows shall count in that breeds points only. They shall not count in the All-Breed Display Points. Points accumulated from cavy breed Specialty shows shall count in the cavy All-breed Display Points.

ARTICLE VII: ANNUAL STATE CIRCUIT SHOW

SECTION 1: The State Circuit Show will be held in October or November, and shall be known as the New York Rabbit and Cavy Breeders State Convention.

SECTION 2: It shall be the responsibility of the State Show Committee to plan and operate the annual State Circuit Show.

SECTION 3: There shall be an award for each breed exhibited.

SECTION 4: The State Circuit Show may be a two (2) day show with the State Convention Show on Saturday and other events on Sunday.

SECTION 5: All Expenditures incurred pertaining to the NYRCBA State Convention must be approved by a majority vote of the Show Committee before payment.

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS

SECTION 1: Any member wishing to run for the office of President, Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer shall submit a written petition naming the office which he or she is declaring candidacy and bearing the signatures of at least ten (10) members in good standing in the ARBA and a member club in the NYRCBA, to the Association Secretary no later than July 1 of an election year.

SECTION 2: Ballot shall be prepared and mailed by the Association Secretary to each member club's Secretary no later than August 1. Mailing shall include an official embossed ballot and an addressed envelope marked "ballot", in which the ballot is to be returned to the Ballot Committee Chairperson.

SECTION 3: Only official ballots, received in official ballot envelopes and postmarked by September 15th shall be counted.

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SECTION 4: The Ballot Committee shall open, count and record the vote at a meeting of the Committee. The ballots shall be kept on file for a period of one year by the Association Secretary.

SECTION 5: The candidate receiving the most votes for the office of President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer shall be declared the winner.
SECTION 6: No candidate for elected office shall serve on the ballot committee.
SECTION 7: Elections shall be held in even years.
SECTION 8: All officers-elect shall be installed at the annual Banquet held following their election and shall assume office at that time.
SECTION 9: The following oath shall be administered by the Chair of the Constitution Committee to the officers-elect at their installation to assume office:

> "I, _____, do solemnly swear or affirm, that I will adhere to the constitution of the New York Rabbit and Cavy Breeders Association; and will to the best of my ability faithfully perform my duties for the well being and advancement of this Association."

ARTICLE IX: GENERAL

SECTION 1: All bills, approved by the Board of Directors, shall be paid by check bearing the signature of two of the following officers: Secretary/Treasurer, President or vice-president.

SECTION 2: The expenditures of the Association shall not at any time be over the balance in the Association Treasurer.

ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES:

SECTION 1: The Standing Committee of the NYRCBA shall be Youth Activity Committee, Sweepstakes Award Committee**,** Ballot Committee, Constitutional Committee, State Show/Banquet Committee, Outreach Coordinator Committee and Youth Scholarship Committee.

SECTION 2; Committee Chairpersons shall be appointed by the President from the elected Delegates and Alternates *with Executive Board written approval*, unless otherwise specified. Each Chairperson *is asked to solicit members for their committee from the member clubs of this Association that may be* appropriate *in* size to carry out its duties; *and to submit a list of its committee members to the Secretary of this Association.*

SECTION 3: The Show Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Assistant Show Secretary, and three (3) certified Delegates or Alternates and be responsible for planning and operating the State Show and Banquet. It shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the Executive Board. The Chairperson shall be a duly elected and certified delegate, alternate or elected officer, and shall serve as Show Secretary. The State Secretary shall keep judges booked 4 years in advance for the New York State Convention Show.

SECTION 4: The Ballot Committee shall consist of three (3) delegates or alternates. It shall be their duty to receive and count all ballots for voting purposes, in accordance with Article VIII, Elections, Section 4: of these by-laws.

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SECTION 5: The Awards Committee shall be responsible for obtaining Prizes/Awards for the winners of the State Point Displays.

SECTION 6: The Youth Activity Committee shall be responsible for the promotion and encouragement of youth activities throughout New York State. It shall work with 4-H programs, Clubs and agents in New York State as well as other Youth Organizations. Its Committee Chair shall be appointed by the President with Executive Board written approval, and will endeavor to solicit regional based members from across New York State's regions: Western, Central, Southern, Northern and Eastern (suggested 5 regional volunteers), especially seeking to recruit youth members as well; reporting a list of committee members to the Secretary of this Association.

SECTION 7: The Outreach Coordinator Committee will be responsible for getting information to 4-H Clubs, adult and youth groups, etc. regarding.the State Association and its All-Breed Club and Specialty clubs. They will also be responsible for attending and conducting seminars and workshops teaching rabbit breeding and care, as well as encouraging membership in the State Association.

SECTION 8: The Constitutional Committee shall be responsible for the interpretation and carrying out of the Constitution and by-laws of the NYRCBA. It shall continually review said documents and propose to the Association any changes it feels necessary.

SECTION 9: Youth Scholarship Committee: The Committee will abide solely by the NYRCBA Inc. Youth Scholarship guidelines set forth and approved by the NYRCBA Delegates. All changes to these guidelines will be submitted in writing to the delegates at a meeting of the Association and voted on before any changes will take effect. **A separate account will be established named "The NYRCBA Youth Scholarship Fund" and be maintained by the Association Secretary/Treasurer. Fund raising will be organized and carried out by the Youth Scholarship Committee throughout the year. Each year two (2) Youth Scholarships may be awarded by the Committee for a maximum amount of $500.00 per award, or in the event the fund falls below $1,000.00, the fund may be evenly divided if there are two (2) recipients.

ARTICLE XI: ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business at all meetings shall be: Call to order, Roll call of Officers and Delegates, Report of Officers, reports of Committees, Unfinished Business, New Business.

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