



BUNNY WORLD

Issue No: 1



English Lop Rabbit



BUNNY WORLD

ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

#rabbitfarming

#zicorba

#letsmakeZicorbaGreat

ZIMBABWE RABBIT PRODUCTION POISED FOR MAJOR GROWTH

Zimbabwe rabbit production is poised to grow significantly this year, underpinned by a raft of strategies being crafted by the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA), which is the collective voice of rabbit farmers in the country.

President, Regis Nyamakanga, said over the past two months a number of strategic planning meetings had been held with a plethora of rabbit producers in various parts of the country aimed at developing solutions to the challenges that have dogged rabbit production in Zimbabwe for years.

"We have been taking an incisive look at all the challenges that have been choking the growth of rabbit farming in Zimbabwe for a number of years, with a view to coming up with actionable, measurable and sustainable solutions," Nyamakanga said in an interview with The Bunny World.

"It is an open secret that there are serious production related issues, processing challenges and marketing bottlenecks that have asphyxiated the growth of cuniculture in Zimbabwe. The farmers have now tasked us to address these challenges within set time-frames."

"On the production side we are looking at how to improve the breeding stock, the cost of inputs, housing, disease, training & extension support, and the general welfare of the rabbits."

"We are keen to ensure that rabbit meat is processed in facilities that are certified and approved by the veterinary authorities. In this regard, we are working on rabbit production and processing standards."

"By mid-year this year, we would like rabbit meat to be a regular feature on the menus of consumers of white meat in Zimbabwe and beyond and in this regard, we currently in discussion with a number of bulk buyers of rabbit meat in Zimbabwe, the greater Africa region and the Middle East," Nyamakanga said.



Regis Nyamakanga ZICORBA National President

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The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association, would like to inform all its valued members and stakeholders that our offices have been temporarily closed in line with Government's Corona Virus induced lockdown measures

Technical support will be available via 0774 061145 (Calls or WhatsApp) & also on our Facebook page

We urge all our members to be responsible and stay safe maskup, exercise social distancing and always sanitize

#covidisreal #letsmakezicorbaGreat #rabbitfarming

FROM THE SG's DESK



*Mrs Siphosethu Ncube Moyo
ZICORBA Secretary General*

Welcome to the New year, New Opportunities and New Possibilities.

The year 2020 has presented difficulties and challenges that we could never have imagined and probably will never forget. Through everything we have managed to carve out moments of joy and connection.

As we adjust to the new reality brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, our Association has shown great ability to not only adapt to the new normal but to use it as an opportunity to change how we operate. Many of these changes will outlast the pandemic.

Starting a new year is a good time for a deep exhale and to put aside some time to reflect on the year that has passed and acknowledge that our lives have been forever transformed. With this in mind, I encourage you all ZICORBA members to work towards these annual goals:

- 2020 set the precedent of conducting

meetings virtually. While we may go back to physical meetings sometime in the new year, I think we will always have online meetings. This has been great for members who travel out of town and it will be even easier to invite and engage new members to our meetings, both in person and online.

- Let's work on pushing for better rabbit breeding practices and production of best quality products from member farmers
- Increasing visibility of ZICORBA and rabbit farming
- Empowering communities with information and if possible, trainings on rabbit farming

In closing, you get out of ZICORBA what you put into it. So, let us make this year the year to be Involved in ZICORBA. And when you are involved, you have more fun.

COMMON RABBIT ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAINY SEASON

*** Pasteurellosis/ Snuffles.

It is a bacterial infection which affects the upper respiratory ailments.

Signs: Clear nasal discharge, rattling noise when breathing, watery eyes, sneezing and does may become sterile.

Prevention: Practice sanitary isolation. Cull chronically ill rabbits. Maximum hygiene must be exercised.

Treatment: Use tetracycline in feed during early stages.

*** Heat Exhaustion.

Caused by high temperatures and humidity above 70%, poor ventilation and crowding.

Signs: increased breathing rate accompanied by salivary discharge.

Prevention: Provide a frozen water bottles during a hot day, good ventilation.

Treatment: affected rabbits can be immersed in lukewarm water to normalize body temperature.

*** Warbles/fly strike

Caused by the growth of botfly larvae under the skin.

Signs: an enlargement under the skin with an opening.

Prevention: Avoid dampness in the cages and practice maximum hygiene.

Treatment: Remove the larvae without crushing it and treat the affected area with germicidal soaps.



RAYMEG ROLLS OUT BREEDING PROGRAM

Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) corporate member, Raymeg Holdings has donated 3 pure breed rabbits to Mrs. Grace Chengeta as it rolls out its breeding program aimed at ramping up commercial rabbit breeding in Zimbabwe.

Mrs. Chengeta who is a fully paid up ZICORBA member, received 2 does and one buck of the New Zealand White breed which was recently imported from South Africa by Raymeg Holdings.

In her speech during the handover ceremony, Raymeg Holdings Executive director Mrs. Paidamoyo Nyamakanga explained how other members from Zimbabwe's flagship rabbit breeders association would benefit from the pure breeds they recently imported from South Africa.

"When the rabbits give birth, we intend on collecting 2 kits from each doe which would be given to the next person.

At the end of the year or two we are hoping to have as many rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe as possible who are breeding pure breeds.

We also want to take advantage of the opportunities in the African Free Trade Area that was recently launched so that we tap into the African market and supply pure breeds from Zimbabwe." She said.

Approximately 100 fully paid up ZICORBA members are expected to benefit from this breeding initiative by Raymeg Holdings

"We are hoping to have as many rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe as possible who are breeding pure breeds"



Raymeg Executive Director Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga handing over pure breed rabbits to upcoming rabbit breeder Grace Chengeta

BRAIN TEASER



EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor : Lloyd Mangoh

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Regis Nyamakanga
Siphosethu Ncube Moyo
Shame Chibvongodze
Rejoice Nyamanhindi

All About Rabbits

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



BIG FEET
BUCK
BUNNY
BURROW
CARROTS
COTTONTAIL
DOE
FOREST

FUR
GRASS
HERBIVORE
JUMP
KIT
LONG EARS
MAMMAL
MEADOW

PET
RABBIT
RODENT
SOFT
TUNNEL
WARREN



ZICORBA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



Obert Nyakabau

Vice President & Chapter President Mash West

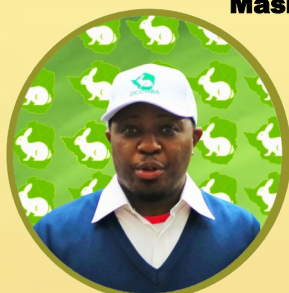


Regis Nyamakanga
National President



Siphosethu Ncube Moyo

Secretary General & Chapter President Bulawayo



Sijabulisiwe Mpofu
National Treasurer



Rejoice Nyamanhindi

National Membership Secretary & Chapter President Midlands



Shame Chibvongodze

National Marketing & Publicity Secretary



Godknows Guvamombe
Chapter President Harare



Kholiwe Kafungura
Chapter President Mash East



Simbarashe Chiwa
Chapter President Manicaland



Enlas Chisuwa
Chapter President Masvingo



KNOW YOUR BREEDS

* BREED : FLEMISH GIANT RABBIT

The Flemish Giant Rabbit affectionately known as the Gentle Giant, is a large rabbit that is popular for its **unusual large size** when fully grown. It is a domestic breed of rabbit that originated in Flanders, Belgium. It was mainly reared for its meat and fur. On average the rabbit weighs approximately **7kgs** with the biggest ones reaching **10kgs**

Distinct features : Extra large rabbit with short, dense glossy fur and comes in a wide variety of solid colours. They have a lifespan of 5-8 years and not prone to any specific diseases or health problems. These huge rabbits have no special diet but require access to clean water, fresh greens and nutritious food pellets like any rabbit. Given their size, they also require larger quantities of food, as well as slightly bigger rabbit cages.

RATING : * * * *

Join Zimbabwe's only collective voice of rabbit farmers and grow your business today



JOIN NOW AND BECOME A MEMBER



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Rabbit production a key component of Government's Livestock Growth Plan

Commercial rabbit production will be a key component of the government's multi-billion-dollar Livestock Growth Plan, a top government official has said.

Land, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement Minister, Dr Anxious Masuka, said recently that the plan focused on commercialization of small stock production through capacity building programmes for livestock extension officers.

In addition, he said the plan would support adaptive research to improve animal productivity; conservation and utilisation of genetic resources for development such as buck distribution to communities; and appropriate shelter and control of disease, especially internal and external parasites.

The Minister was responding to a request by ZICORBA president, Regis Nyamakanga, during a meeting with leaders of the livestock sub-sector, to include rabbit production in the commercialisation of small ruminants.

"The initiatives on small stock commercial production will be based on cluster models to ensure aggregation of produce and access to markets," Dr. Masuka said.



Dr Anxious Masuka

Min of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement

The Livestock Growth Plan is part of the Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy, which seeks to achieve an US \$8,2 billion agriculture economy by 2025 capable of anchoring and propelling Zimbabwe towards the Vision 2030 goal of an upper middle-income economy. The Plan was approved by Cabinet and launched by President Emmerson Mnangagwa recently.

RABBIT BREEDS AND PRODUCT PRICE CHECK

ZIMBABWE

Description/ Age	Breeding Stock	General Rabbits
	Pure Breeds	Mixed Breeds
Weaners 8 wks	8 USD	4 USD
12 WKS OLD	12 USD	6 USD
16 WKS OLD	15 USD	8 USD
20 WKS/+	20 USD	10-15 USD
24 WKS	25 USD	

SOUTH AFRICA

Cost of breeding stock

R 500 - 700

Cost of live rabbits

3 months old (1 – 2 kgs) R50 - 120
Mature R150 - 200

Costs of slaughtered rabbits

R50 - 75 per KG

R90 per KG (deboned)

UGANDA

New Zealand breed Ush 50 000
California breed Ush 55 000
Dutch Ush 45 000
Angora breed Ush 65 000

Cost of live rabbits

3 months old Ush 25 000
Mature rabbit Ush 30 000 – 50 000
Pregnant does Ush 80 000

Costs of slaughtered rabbits

Ush 30 000 – 35 000 per KG

KENYA

Cost of breeding stock

Chinchilla KShs 1500 to KShs 2000
New Zealand KShs 1500 to KShs 2000
California KShs 1500 to KShs 2000
Dutch KShs 1500 to KShs 2000
Giant Flemish KShs 1500 to KShs 2000

Cost of live rabbits

3 months old rabbits (1 – 2 kg) KShs 600
Mature rabbits (5 – 6 kg / 5 months+ KShs 3500

Costs of slaughtered rabbits

KShs 450 per kg (wholesale price)
KShs 550 – 650 per kg (retail price)

EGYPT

Cost of breeding stock

250 – 300 LE (Egyptian Pound)

Cost of live rabbits

Mature rabbit 200 LE

Costs of slaughtered rabbits

70 - 75 LE per KG

Jacfortunes Rabbitry promoting rabbit meat consumption in Zimbabwe



Jackson Yotamu (left) at his rabbitry with a customer

My name is Jackson Yotamu. I operate Jacfortunes Rabbitry. I started rabbit rearing at a tender age. At that time, I did it as a hobby. I was based in Mutare. I kept Zika rabbits known as magen'a or zvikondamoyo. I fed them on greens only and achieved weights mostly around 3 kg. I temporarily stopped rabbit rearing when I got a job in Bulawayo, which became home from 2007 to 2015 when I was transferred to Harare.

In 2016, I visited rabbit farmers in South Africa who were engaged in commercial rabbit production. This reignited my passion for rearing rabbits and armed with the knowledge that I acquired from South Africa, I imported my first batch of New Zealand Whites and Flemish Giants. Upon my return home, I joined Facebook pages and rabbit farming WhatsApp groups

where I met and exchanged notes with some established rabbit farmers.

My first sale of New Zealand White at three months old was very smooth as all the 12 rabbits on sale were snapped up. My customers commended my rabbits for good weights, growth-rate and breed. Since then I have never looked back. I expanded my rabbitry by increasing the number of my breeding Does and current I have 18 Does and 4 Bucks. My monthly income has greatly improved from sales of weaners.

I have done workshops in Mutare and donated rabbits to some schools in Manicaland. In addition to site visits by other rabbit farmers, representatives of a leading stock feed company toured my project. This motivated me further and I visit other farmers in various parts of the country to share my knowledge and experience with them.

In 2021 I hope to double the stock at my rabbitry and generate more income from it.

My Motto is Rabbits to the Nation, Nyama kuvanhu.

Mai Sigauke minting cash through rabbit production

I am Lydia Chimbari alias Mai Sigauke. I work at Gaths Mine in Mashava. I started my rabbit project as a sideline in March 2020 when I bought 5 Does that, I named Viscoid, Biggy, White, Brown and Silent. I also bought 2 bucks that I named Territory and Brahaman. I feed my rabbits with pellets every day and I also give them greens twice a week.

When I started this project, I did not have enough knowledge, so I had to read documents that people would have posted on rabbit WhatsApp groups. I researched about rabbit rearing on the internet.

By adopting the recommended techniques on production, record keeping, cleanliness and feed, I managed to consistently produce between 10 and 12 litters from each Doe. During the past nine months to December 2020, my rabbits increased to 389 and I managed to sell 286. The balance of 103 is made up of Chinchilla Giganta, Carlifonia and Dutch.



Champion Rabbit Breeder Lydia Chimbari

I cross breed my rabbits in order to have good quality rabbits in terms of weigh and bone to meat ratio. I always give my rabbits the recommended medicine. I also give stress pack to weaners. I am looking forward to growing my project with a target of 30 Does in production.

Pamberi nekuchengeta Tsuro!



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Exporting rabbit meat could mean big bucks for small SA farmers. Here's advice on how to get started.

Jay Caboz

With a startup investment of R35,000 farming rabbits could be a great way to get into small-scale farming, an economist says.

Over 80% of the rabbits bred in South Africa are destined for the export market, mostly China.

Rabbit farming is cheap to get into, is less demanding than farming other livestock, and requires less land and resources than other types of farming.

Farming rabbits could be a way for small scale South African farmers to get into exports for just R35,000 in startup costs.

This is according to Pertunia Setumo, agricultural economist at First National Bank's business unit, who believes investing in rabbit farms could provide food security for small-scale African farmers while also generating cash.

"For a small-scale unit of 150 does and 30 bucks, a start-up investment is estimated at R35,000. This would cover setup costs such as breeding stock, feed, labour and other variable and fixed inputs, for the first month. This excludes structures (which require capital investment depending on the size of the operation) and adhoc fixed costs," said Setumo.

Over 80% of the rabbits bred in South Africa are destined for export. The meat is mostly destined for China, which has a huge demand despite being the largest producer of rabbits.

According to Setumo, demand has more than doubled since 2013, led by strong consumption. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), an esti-

mated 1.2 billion rabbits are slaughtered annually.

There is also potential in the South African market. Rabbit farms are less demanding than farming other livestock being easier to maintain, and requiring less land and resources than other types of livestock farms. Maturation periods are short with about 51 days to reach a marketable weight of 2.2 kilograms and ideal weights of 3.5 kilograms achieved in three months.

Setumo says it costs about R55 to feed a bunny to maturation stage, consuming a mere 9.2 kilograms of feed on average.

South Africans could also benefit from eating a lot more rabbit meat. Rabbit is considered to have a lower calorie count per serving and a high protein concentration compared to beef, lamb, chicken, fish, and pork, yet it is still a relatively unpopular dish in South Africa.

"Locally, the retail market is still immature owing to a lack of knowledge in terms of nutritional benefits and accessibility. The meat is available in gourmet restaurants, wildlife butcheries, informal markets and some selected retailers."

"Farmers who are starting out are also advised to partner with various rabbit farming clubs and associations across the country," says Setumo.

Source, Business Insider SA

Rabbit breeding raises incomes in Egypt

Cairo, Egypt – Once a week, Om Ahmed prepares a dish of mallow greens with rabbit for her family of eight: her husband, Abdel-Maksoud, her elderly mother-in-law and her five children. This is the main source of animal protein in the family's diet, which consists essentially of rice, bread, pasta, vegetables and beans.

Om Ahmed lives in a two-room house in the densely populated shanty settlement of Zawyet Abu Musallem, only 3 kilometres from the great pyramid of Cheops, on the outskirts of Cairo. On her husband's meagre salary, she has struggled to raise her children and put them through school.

"I want my children to have an education that will enable them to find good work," she says, "which is why I was interested in joining Dr Hatim Abdel-Salaam's rabbit breeding project. Thanks to this initiative, I have learned to look after the rabbits, which have multiplied many times over, and now I can sell some occasionally to supplement our family income."

The project, launched with a grant of US\$10,000 from TeleFood, FAO's campaign to raise awareness and funds to fight hunger, initially involved 20 families in Zawyet Abu Musallem. The primary objective was to transform participants into rabbit breeders and help low-income families achieve a measure of food security.

At the outset, the participants were provided with three female rabbits and one male, a two-level rabbit breeding battery, rabbit feed to last several months, medicines and vaccines. Dr Abdel-Salaam, chief researcher at the Animal Production Research Institute of the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and the project coordinator, trained the participants in rabbit breeding and explained the use of vitamin and mineral supplements, and the administration of medicines for various conditions. The Ministry of Agriculture provided books and training manuals,

but most of the participants are unable to read and must rely on their children to help them.

Now in its third year, the project has a high success rate -- 18 of the original 20 families have stuck with it and are making good progress. After reinvesting their earnings, some families now operate as many as six batteries housing several dozen rabbits.

Dr Abdel-Salaam visits the families regularly to check on their progress and provide encouragement, additional training and supplies, as necessary. As the rabbit owners gain experience, he gradually reduces the assistance provided until they become fully self-reliant.

"Of the first four rabbits, three died within a month," says Om Ahmed. "It was a difficult time for us, and we feared that we would have to abandon the project. But Dr AbdelSalaam offered us another rabbit, which we bred, and from which all 30 of the rabbits we currently own are descended." An average female rabbit can start breeding at five months of age and produces around 30 offspring per year. Om Ahmed keeps only the females of each litter, selling the males at two months for LE15 to 20 each (1 Egyptian pound = approximately US\$0.17 at current rates).

With her earnings, Om Ahmed bought an additional rabbit breeding battery to house her growing rabbit population. She intends to enlarge the space allocated for them on her rooftop, where she also keeps hens and geese, and purchase another battery. "Some of our neighbours now have six rabbit batteries and are raising hundreds of rabbits, which they sell in the market," she says. "My goal is to increase my sales, reinvest and enlarge my activity. In this way, I need not rely on my children's work and can ensure that they remain in school."

Source: media-office@fao.org



Tuscan Rabbit with pancetta and rosemary

INGREDIENTS

- 1.6kg whole rabbit, jointed
- 2 tablespoons plain flour, seasoned
- 1/4 cup (60ml) olive oil
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 6 slices flat pancetta (see note), chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped

- 1 cup (250ml) white wine
- 1/3 cup (80ml) balsamic vinegar
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400g can cherry tomatoes
- 2 rosemary sprigs, leaves chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Cooked soft polenta, to serve

METHOD

Step 1

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Step 2

Dust rabbit in flour, shaking off excess. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a frypan over medium heat and cook rabbit, in batches, for 2 minutes each side or until golden. Place in a baking dish. Heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil and cook fennel, onion, pancetta and garlic, stirring, for 3-4 minutes until soft and golden. Add wine and half the vinegar, and simmer for 3-4 minutes until reduced by half. Add tomatoes and rosemary, season and bring to the boil. Pour over rabbit, cover and cook for 1 1/4 hours or until rabbit is tender.

Step 3

Stir in remaining 2 tablespoons vinegar and scatter with parsley. Serve with polenta.

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