



ZICORBA celebrates its first anniversary with many successes under its belt



The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) marked its first anniversary this month with a number of achievements under its belt, making it one of the most successful and vibrant farming groups in country since independence in 1980.

Formed in July 2020 by a group of rabbit farmers, ZICORBA is the only collective voice of rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe. In just 12 months, it has struck strategic partnerships with a number of other rabbit farmers associations in Africa, including Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda.

ZICORBA has, in its first year of existence, wooed local businessmen to invest in what was previously a neglected sub-sector. This has turned rabbit farming into one of the most coveted and burgeoning enterprises in Zimbabwe.

At the behest of ZICORBA, private investor Raymeg Holdings Limited invested in Zimbabwe's first export certified rabbit Abattoir, which is one of the biggest in Africa. The abattoir has a capacity to process 2,5 tonnes of rabbit meat per day. And plans are afoot to set up rabbit pellet-making and rabbit skin processing plants in Harare.

ZICORBA's first President Regis Nyamakanga retraces the Association's foot-steps since it was launched in July 2020.

"When we launched ZICORBA, we were under no illusion that it was going to be a 'walk-in-the-park'. We knew that we had to contend with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Memories were still fresh in peoples' minds about the collapse of a rabbit association that had been formed in Zimbabwe a few years back. We also knew that the prevailing economic challenges in Zimbabwe would militate against our efforts at starting something new. But we were determined to forge ahead.

"Against this background, we took a deliberate position to craft a strategy of breathing life back into the rabbit farming sub-sector. The strategy anchored on three key pillars – Production, Processing and Marketing. We developed a detailed action plan that we have been implementing with sufficient gusto," the ZICORBA chief said.

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Regis Nyamakanga,
ZICORBA National President



Obert Nyakabau,
ZICORBA Vice President



Mrs Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo,
ZICORBA Secretary General



African rabbit producers salute ZICORBA



Maggie Lukowe,
Founder and President of
Buck and Doe Farmers,
Uganda



Elson Khoza,
Eswatini Rabbit
Farmers' Club



Akinola Ihnmikalu,
Chairman of the Plateau
Rabbit Breeders Association,
Nigeria



Edwardo Daveta,
President of Mozambique
Rabbit Producers' Association



Timbu Iris Ntjenje,
Chairman of Botswana's
Northern Rabbits Breeders
Association



Anton Gouws,
Gauteng Rabbit Breeders
Association



Peter Waiganjo,
President of Rabbit Breeders
Association of Kenya



Pastor Josephine Oyelami,
President of Nigeria's Oyo
State Rabbit Farmers and
Breeders Association

African rabbit producers have congratulated the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) on its first anniversary, saying the phenomenal growth of Zimbabwe's rabbit industry over the last 12 months under the direction of ZICORBA is an inspiration to other rabbit farmers on the continent.

The founder and President of Buck and Doe Farmers of Uganda, Maggie Lukowe, said: "We, at Buck and Doe Uganda, feel very inspired by the growth of ZICORBA and on this first anniversary, we celebrate with you and look forward to stronger collaboration with you as we grow this exciting industry of rabbit production and value chain across the continent. Congratulations ZICORBA".

Elson Khoza of Eswatini Rabbit Farmers' Club said: "It is unbelievable that ZICORBA is only a year old when one considers how much ground the Association has covered in developing your Zimbabwe's commercial rabbit production industry. You have profoundly inspired our rabbit club members in Eswatini. We derive vicarious pleasure from your successes and we look forward to further growth in our synergistic relationship as we strive to develop the rabbit industry in our respective countries.

"The saying goes 'The world always give way to those who know where they are going'. It is through the vision you have, good planning, hard work and focus that such monumental progress has been achieved in driving the industry to higher height. Hoping that your government and other partners will continue creating the most enabling environment for the Association to make the desired impact in the targeted communities of your country. Congratulations ZICORBA for your great achievements since you came into being a year ago. Keep Aiming High," Khoza said.

Chairman of the Plateau Rabbit Breeders Association in Nigeria, Akinola Ihnmikalu, said: "We congratulate ZICORBA as you advance to your new level. Happy anniversary to you! This is just the beginning! You will save the world ZICORBA".

The President of Nigeria's Oyo State Rabbit Farmers and Breeders Association, Pastor Josephine Oyelami said she was enthused by ZICORBA's achievement in just one year. "We, in Oyo State, Nigeria, congratulate you on your first anniversary and wish you all the best in the future," she said.

Mr Anton Gouws from South Africa said: "Congratulations from me, the Gauteng Rabbit Breeders Association and the Rabbit Association of South Africa. May ZICORBA have plenty more birthdays to come."

The Rabbit Breeders Association of Kenya (RABAK) President Peter Waiganjo said: "We want to congratulate ZICORBA as you attain one year in this great industry of rabbit keeping. We are happy to be associated with you and look forward to continue working together. We are also impressed by your visionary President (ZICORBA) and the good work he is doing. We hope that our two associations continue to cooperate and share information".

Mr Edwardo Daveta, the President of Mozambique Rabbit Producers' Association (MORAPA), said ZICORBA is a force to reckon with in Africa.

"We, in Mozambique, have benefitted from ZICORBA's training, technical support and advice. Anyone who teaches you how to fish is the best teacher. We look to your continued support and pledge to work with ZICORBA for the greater good of rabbit farming in Africa," Daveta said.

Botswana's Northern Rabbits Breeders Association (NORBA), chairman Timbu Iris Ntjenje, congratulated ZICORBA for its resilience, having been formed in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We congratulate ZICORBA on its first anniversary. We know that it has not been easy to make it during this era of COVID-19 when business was literally shut. You took advantage of the new ways of doing business during a pandemic and you made it. We, at NORBA are inspired by your resilience and we look to greater cooperation and success of our industry," Ntjenje said.



ZICORBA and CARE International support rabbit farmers in Norton



ZICORBA member William Machona (left) handing over rabbits to Norton farmers

“The programme is being implemented in partnership with World Food Programme (WFP) with funding from European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation (EU/ECHO). It started supporting farmers with rabbit production in January 2021 under the Urban Food Security and Resilience Building Programme that started running from January 2021 to 30 June 2021. Subject to availability of funding the project could be extended.

“The main reason for supporting farmers in rabbit production is to assist beneficiaries to increase income, productivity and improve entrepreneurial skills, enhance their production and breeding capacity,” he said.

Fifty farmers from Norton in Mashonaland West Province have received breeding stock from Care International and the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA).

ZICORBA Secretary General Siphosethu Ncube Moyo confirmed in an interview that her Association had supplied 120 rabbit breeding stock to a project sponsored by Care International Zimbabwe.

“We are privileged to work with Care International on this auspicious project whose objectives are in sync with ZICORBA’s agenda to improve livelihoods of the majority of our people, create employments and contribute to the country’s gross domestic product,” Ncube-Moyo said.

CARE International Project Manager for Urban Resilience, Elias Dodo, said the project located in Norton Town in Wards 5,6,10 and 11 was expected to benefit a total of 50 households.



“The main reason for supporting farmers in rabbit production is to assist beneficiaries to increase income, productivity and improve entrepreneurial skills, enhance their production and breeding capacity,”

“This pilot project sought to strengthen the absorptive and adaptive capacities of households in Norton that have been benefiting from the cash voucher assistance that started in January 2020. The project worked closely with government extension departments, namely the Department of Crops and Livestock and the Department of Livestock & Veterinary Services in providing training meant to build the skills of the urban farmers.

Mr. Dodo said he government departments would closely monitor, offer technical advice and support beyond the project lifespan. “In turn, farmers will form marketing groups and CARE will encourage them to register themselves with associations that offer production and marketing technical advice,” he said.



ZICORBA celebrates its first anniversary with many successes under its belt



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“To date, we have established ZICORBA Chapters in each of the country's 10 provinces. Each ZICORBA Chapter has a seven-member executive lead by a Chapter President. At the national level, we have National Executive led by the National President. The national and provincial leadership were elected at the Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and in terms of our constitution, which was developed and approved by paid-up members of ZICORBA,” he said.

ZICORBA employs 14 full-time staff, including the National Coordinator; 10 Provincial Coordinators and Youth Ambassadors, a Communication Officer, a Webmaster and a Training Coordinator.

“Although our members pay joining fees and monthly subscriptions, we took a deliberate position, which was endorsed at the Association's AGM, that this money would not be used for the next two years. We convinced our corporate members, Raymeg Holdings Private Limited (Raymeg) and Midesha Private Limited (Midesha) to fund the Association's activities for 24 months,” Nyamakanga said.

The ZICORBA leadership negotiated with stock feed companies namely Agrifoods, National Foods and Capital Foods for discounts on rabbit pellets for the benefit of its members. This helped in lowering the cost of production.

Raymeg applied to the Government of Zimbabwe and acquired permits to import more than 400 pure rabbit breeds from South Africa under strict supervision and monitoring by the Depart-

ments of Veterinary Services in Zimbabwe and in South Africa. The idea was to improve the quality of the country's rabbit breeding stock

“The imported breeding stock is being bred locally and we expect that about 2 000 pure breeds will be distributed to ZICORBA members over a period of 12 months starting June 2021. ZICORBA founding members will receive the pure breeds for free while other ZICORBA members will pay a nominal fee to acquire the pure breeds.

“We also convinced Raymeg Holdings Group to invest into a rabbit abattoir. The company acquired a two and half acre plot in Harare where it built Zimbabwe's first export-approved abattoir for rabbit meat. The abattoir buys rabbits from farmers at prices determined by market conditions,” he said.

In addition, Raymeg signed trade agreements with the country's leading supermarket chains namely; Spar Zimbabwe, Choppies Zimbabwe and Pick 'n Pay to sell veterinary inspected rabbit meat in their stores, creating the much needed market for rabbit meat. Raymeg also sells rabbit meat through OK Zimbabwe, the biggest supermarket chain in Zimbabwe.

ZICORBA is a member of the Livestock and Meat Advisory Council of Zimbabwe (LMAC). Its agenda is to broaden the participation of the majority of Zimbabweans in rabbit production, improve livelihoods, create employment among youth and women in particular, and to contribute to the country's gross domestic product.

ZICORBA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



Obert Nyakabau
Vice President & Chapter President Mash West



Regis Nyamakanga
National President



Siphosethu Ncube Moyo
Secretary General & Chapter President Bulawayo



Sijabulile Mpfu
National Treasurer



Rejoice Nyamanhindi
National Membership Secretary & Chapter President Midlands



Shame Chilvongdza
National Marketing & Publicity Secretary



Godknows Guvamombe
Chapter President Harare



Kholiwe Kafungura
Chapter President Mash East



Simbarashe Chiwa
Chapter President Manicaland



Enias Chisauwa
Chapter President Masvingo



Pure rabbit breeds rollout begins

.....as ZICORBA celebrates its first anniversary

Raymeg Holdings Limited, a corporate member of Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA), this month started distributing pure rabbit breeds to ZICORBA members as efforts to improve the country's rabbit genetic stock gather pace.

The launch of the programme, which is expected to distribute about 2 000 pure breeds over 12 months, coincided with the first anniversary of ZICORBA, which is the only collective voice of rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe. ZICORBA was launched in July 2021.

To date, ZICORBA members in Masvingo, Mashonaland East and Midlands have started receiving the pure breeds. The pure breeds were imported from South Africa recently under a government approved and supervised programme.

Raymeg Executive Director, Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga told Bunny World that the distribution of the pure breeds would continue in Bulawayo and Matabeleland provinces.

"The programme is aimed at broadening the participation of rabbit farming amongst our people, to improve livelihoods, create employment and to contribute to the country's gross domestic product", Mrs Nyamakanga said

ZICORBA Vice President, Mr Orbert Nyakabau, thanked Raymeg for its continued support of the Association's agenda to improve country's rabbit breeding genetic pool.



Joseph Chipanga from Mash East province (right), receives pure breeds from Raymeg Holdings Executive Director Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga (centre)



Lydia Chimbari from Masvingo province (right), receives pure breeds from Mrs Nyamakanga (left)



Tatendaishe Ukama from Midlands province (centre), receives pure breeds from Mrs Nyamakanga (left)



Pure breed Carlifornian rabbits ready for distribution

1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS : WHAT A JOURNEY



ZICORBA

Congratulatory Message

The ZICORBA National Executive, Provincial Coordinators/ Ambassadors and the membership at large would like to congratulate ZICORBA National President Mr Regis Nyamakangwa on his appointment to the Board of Governors of the Livestock and Meat Advisory Council (LMAC) of Zimbabwe.

His appointment is an endorsement of his great leadership qualities as well as another feather added on the ZICORBA cap.

The Rabbit Industry is set to benefit immensely from this well deserved appointment.

Congratulations Makorokoto Amblope!

Zimbabwe's only collective voice of rabbit farmers

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National Youth Day 2021

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Rabbit Breeding is in Safe hands

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BUNNY WORLD NEWSLETTER

ZICORBA Zimbabwe's only Collective Voice of Rabbit Farmers

Issue No: 1

ZIMBABWE RABBIT PRODUCTION POISED FOR MAJOR GROWTH

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

President, Regis Nyamakangwa, 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 holistic 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, sustainable and sustainable solutions," Nyamakangwa said in an interview with the Daily News.

"It is an open secret that there are serious production related issues, processing, handling and marketing bottlenecks that have impeded the growth of commercial rabbit production in Zimbabwe. The farmers have now had to sit down to address these challenges within set timeframes."

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

FREE BUNNY WORLD

Inside this issue:

- From the CEO Desk
- Partnership with Interdigging
- ZICORBA National Executive members
- Rabbit production a key component of Government plans
- ZICORBA DATES
- Disclaimer/Note

ZICORBA
ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Technical support will be available via 0774 861 185 (08:00 to 18:00hrs) or via our Facebook page. We urge all our members to be responsible and stay safe.



WCW
Women Crush Wednesday

ZICORBA

Nothando Ncube
Garden 33 Kwekwe

"We do traditional brais and spit brais and we recently introduced rabbit meat on our menu. This idea came about after we were encouraged by ZICORBA to venture into rabbit farming. We saw this as an opportunity to introduce variety to our menu and this has paid off. Grilled rabbit has proved to be our most favoured dish because of its taste and cost."

Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association

Hamandishe riding the crest of the success wave in membership recruitment



Shamiso Hamandishe,
ZICORBA Masvingo Chapter Provincial Coordinator

Following her sensational exploits in regards to membership recruitment, Bunny World (BW), decided to approach Masvingo Chapter Provincial Coordinator Shamiso Hamandishe (SH) for an interview to try and understand what makes her tick.

BW: Who is Shamiso?

SH: I am the current ZICORBA Masvingo Chapter Provincial coordinator tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the Association's affairs run smoothly in the province. My rabbit farming journey began at a tender age when I just used to keep rabbits as a hobby. The entrepreneur in me later realized that there is money to be made in rabbit farming after I sold a few and that's when I decided to turn my hobby into a profit-making project. I can safely say it's one of the best decisions I have ever made.

BW: How has ZICORBA influenced you as a young rabbit farmer?

SH: Mentorship and inspiration are the most notable things that I have

acquired from the Association. Established female rabbit breeders like Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga and Mai Sigauke, just to mention a few, have given us the zeal as young farmers to do more. Because of the exposure and most importantly trainings, I am now a well-equipped and focused young commercial rabbit breeder.

BW: Given your success in recruitment of new members, what would you say is your secret?

SH: Much credit should go to our Marketing and Publicity Department, for ensuring visibility of the ZICORBA brand on various social media platforms as well as print media. This has made my job as a Provincial Coordinator a bit easier as most farmers are now aware of our existence. My secret however, which I refer as the "Shamy factor", is to simply generate conversation about rabbit farming with friends, acquaintances or even strangers. The idea is not to force ZICORBA on anyone, but to make them understand what who we are, what we stand for and how all this might enhance their rabbit farming project. It is then up to the farmer to register or not. All the same I enjoy conversations on rabbit farming.

BW: This month, Zicorba celebrates its first anniversary. How do you feel about this milestone?

SH: I am so excited about our first anniversary as this is a major milestone for ZICORBA as an Association. Our arrival on the rabbit farming landscape was met with mixed feelings from farmers, with some saying the association was doomed to fail. We have managed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that we are a sound and professional association which is here to stay afloat.

BW: What are your parting words to the farmers in Masvingo province as well as all the other rabbit breeders who will read this publication?

SH: To all rabbit Farmers in Masvingo I say to you BRAVO and keep up the fight, my dream is to make Masvingo the hub of commercial rabbit breeding which is currently being dominated by Harare. To all other rabbit farmers out there let us all put more effort in producing quality rabbits which should translate to more dollars into our pockets. As the popular saying goes, "*kurima tsuro kurima mari*".





Botswana's NORBA forges ties with ZICORBA



NORBA chairperson, Timbu Iris Ntjenje

Botswana's Northern Rabbit Breeders Association (NORBA) has agreed to work with the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) in a number of strategic areas as African rabbit producers continue to forge closer cooperation.

Recently ZICORBA and the Buck and Doe Farmers of Uganda (BuDoFa-U) agreed to cooperate in the area of training, exchange of technical information and breeds. Both ZICORBA and BuDoFa-U work closely with the Rabbit Breeders Association of Kenya (RABAK).

NORBA chairperson Timbu Iris Ntjenje said her Association was keen to commercialise rabbit production in Botswana, where rearing of rabbit is being done informally as a "hobby" yet poten-

tial for growth is abound.

"Rabbit production in Botswana is very low as most people do not do it as business but as a hobby. Another challenge that we face here is lack of good breeds, expensive feed and inadequate support from the veterinary authorities," she said in an interview with Bunny World.

"...Our desire is to commercialise our activities as the potential for growth remains untapped,"

Ntjenje said the 83-member Association recently agreed to step its activities in readiness for an uptake in rabbit production in a land-locked Southern African country of 2,3 million people. The Association was formed in 2017.

"We are looking to cooperate with our sister Association, ZICORBA, in the areas of training, exchange of technical information and quality breeding stock. We do not have a rabbit abattoir in Botswana and we would like to explore the possibility of joint ventures in setting up a slaughter facility for rabbits in this country.

"Because of lack of processing facilities, the uptake of rabbit meat in Botswana has been somewhat low as most people in engage in backyard slaughter of their rabbits. Our desire is to commercialise our activities as the potential for growth remains untapped," the NORBA boss said.

ZICORBA president Regis Nyamakanga pledged his Association's commitment to working with NORBA, saying the future of rabbit production in Africa lied in greater cooperation between producing countries.



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For those who cannot access our offices, we will link you with our provincial representatives who will assist you online.

It is as simple as that !

Once you are convinced that ZICORBA is the right place for you as a serious rabbit farmer, you fill in our simplified registration form.

For any grey areas, our representatives will be available to give clarity.

On completion of the form, the ZICORBA executive will do due diligence on the applicant.



Upon successful vetting during the due diligence process, the successful candidate pays the requisite membership and subscription fees and you are good to go.

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Chef Pablo



Special 1st Anniversary Issue



RABBIT DISH

INGRIDIENTS

Rabbit, olive oil, garlic, coriander, salt, pepper, chilli, potatoes

HOW TO PREPARE RABBIT DISH:

Place the rabbit on a baking dish and season with salt, pepper, nutmeg, chilli, chopped coriander and the unpeeled crushed garlic. Let marinate about one hour.

Drizzle the rabbit with the olive oil and bake until golden brown slightly, about 1 hour. Occasionally, drizzle the rabbit with the sauce.

Meanwhile, cook the unpeeled potatoes in a saucepan with water seasoned with salt. When the potatoes are cooked, drain them with a skimmer and let cool slightly. Peel the potatoes and fry them in hot oil until golden. When the potatoes are fried, place them on a plate with absorbent paper.

Serve the rabbit with the potatoes.


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