



Zimbabwe's second rabbit abattoir set for Bulawayo



Zimbabwe's second rabbit slaughter-house is set to be opened in the country's commercial city, Bulawayo, within the next 12 months, ZICORBA President Regis Nyamakanga, has said.

Nyamakanga said this is part of a plan to open satellite rabbit slaughter-houses in various parts of the country, to bring the market closer to a plethora of cuniculture producers dotted across Zimbabwe.

Construction of Zimbabwe's first rabbit abattoir, which is built to export specifications, was completed in Harare in July 2021 at a cost of nearly \$1 million. The Harare based abattoir, which is owned by Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, a corporate member of ZICORBA, is one of the biggest rabbit abattoirs in Africa.

"We are currently in discussions with a number of investors to open the country's second abattoir in Bulawayo, which will serve farmers from Matabeleland regions. Land for this purpose has already been identified. Our business partners have also identified land to build other satellite abattoirs in Manicaland, Masvingo and Mashonaland West provinces," Nyamakanga said.

The ZICORBA chief said the plans to open a rabbit abattoir in Bulawayo and more slaughter houses in other parts of the country are part of the resolutions of the Association strategic planning meeting that was held in Zimbabwe's second largest city on 4 and 5 September 2021.

He told Bunny World on the side-lines of the strategic planning session that ZICORBA leaders from Zimbabwe 10 provinces had reported a sharp increase in rabbit production across the country. It has been agreed that more abattoirs needed to be opened to bring the market closer to the producers.



ZICORBA President Regis Nyamakanga addressing delegates during the strategic planning meeting in Bulawayo

ZICORBA unveils sweeping proposals to bolster rabbit production, consumption



ZICORBA Secretary General Mrs Siphosethu Moyo Ncube addressing delegates during the strategic planning indaba in Bulawayo

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has unveiled sweeping proposals to ramp up rabbit production and popularise rabbit meat consumption in the country as interest in cuniculture continues to surge.

Secretary General, Siphosethu Ncube Moyo, said the resurgence of commercial rabbit farming in Zimbabwe needed to be supported with “effective and deliverable” strategies to ensure sustainable growth.

Moyo told Bunny World in an interview after a two-day ZICORBA strategic planning retreat held in Bulawayo this month that one of the key resolutions that came out of the meeting was to create a sustainable market for rabbit meat in the country.

“We are at an advanced stage of agreeing with potential investors to set up retail outlets across the country for white meat, in particular rabbit meat. The first such outlets will be opened in Bulawayo within the next six to nine months.

“In addition, we are currently engaging with boarding schools, hospitals, hotels, top restaurants and eateries to make rabbit meat their preferred dish. Apart from the well documented health benefits of rabbit meat, the idea is to ensure that there is a reliable market for our produce,” she said.

Plans are also underway to create one-stop shops in strategic parts of the country, which will provide an array of products and services to rabbit farmers. “We will ensure that these shops are fully stocked with essential inputs, some of which are currently in short supply,” Moyo said.

ZICORBA will be rolling out “Rabbit Master Farmers” programmes as part of capacity building and training initiatives for its members. “The Master Farmers’ graduates will be enrolled into contract growing schemes to ensure sustainable throughput to the rabbit slaughter houses that will be opened in various parts of the country.”

“We will also be launching a research and development unit to help us innovate and come up with cutting edge solutions for the rabbit industry. In this regard, we will be working with top research institutions to develop local pure rabbit breeds and to introduce other exciting initiatives.

“Added to this, an inspection and certification programme will be unveiled to ensure that quality procedures and standards are applied across the rabbit production value-chain,” she said.

ZICORBA is also planning to introduce funding programmes and insurance schemes for rabbit farming enterprises.

Key players in Zimbabwe's rabbit industry meet



Dr John Basera,
*Permanent Secretary in the
Ministry of Lands, Agriculture,
Fisheries Water and Rural
Resettlement*



Regis Nyamakanga,
*President of the Zimbabwe
Commercial Rabbit Breeders
Association*



Dr Renneth Mano,
*Chief Executive Officer of the
Livestock and Meat Advisory
Council of Zimbabwe*



Mrs. Brenda Kandiero,
*Chairperson of the Stockfeed
Manufacturers Association*



Denford Mutashu,
*President of the Confederation
of Zimbabwean Retailers*

Key players in Zimbabwe's nascent rabbit industry meet in October 2021 to develop a blue-print for one of the fastest growing farming sub-sectors in the agriculture-rich southern African country.

Top honchos in government, led by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries Water and Rural Resettlement Permanent Secretary, Dr. John Basera, will attend the meeting, which is being jointly organized by the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) and the Zimbabwe Insurance Brokers (ZIB).

Experts from the state-run Departments of Research and Specialist Services; Veterinary Services and Agricultural and Extension Services will be on hand to provide technical input to the meeting.

Livestock and Meat Advisory Council of Zimbabwe, Chief Executive Officer, Dr Renneth Mano, will address the meeting on the catalytic importance of the rabbit industry to Zimbabwe's economy.

Representatives of banks and insurance companies will attend the meeting amid a growing appetite for funding packages and insurance schemes for rabbit producers and merchants of associated products and services.

Chairperson of the Stockfeed Manufacturers Association, Mrs. Brenda Kandiero, will also attend the meeting at a time when the country is experiencing an erratic supply of rabbit pellets, which are an essential feed for rabbits.

Confederation of Zimbabwean Retailers President Denford Mutashu will join other industry leaders at the meeting as rabbit farmers seek the support of the country's top supermarket chains in growing the market for rabbit meat in Zimbabwe.

In addition, the Chefs Association of Zimbabwe will be at the meeting as they engage with ZICORBA to make rabbit meat the most preferred dish in Zimbabwe.

The state-run export agency, ZimTrade has also been invited to the meeting to provide support and guidance on matters relating to rabbit exports.

Representatives of banks and insurance companies will attend the meeting amid a growing appetite for funding packages and insurance schemes for rabbit producers and merchants of associated products and services.

Universities, agricultural colleges and research institutions will also join the meeting as the debate about developing local pure rabbit breeds gathers momentum.



BUNNY WORLD

ZICORBA pushes the gender card, elects Gapa to top post in Midlands



Pinel Nyazara

ZICORBA Midlands Chapter Vice President

Former senior Agricultural Extension Officer and a Correctional Services Officer have been elected into top positions at the Midlands Chapter of the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA).

The elections, which were held on 12 September saw Pinel Nyanzara, a Prisons and Correctional Services Officer, being elected Vice President of the Chapter while Mrs Anna Mary Gapa, who worked for Agritex in Midlands Province for 31 years, was elected Chapter Secretary General.

Tatendaishe Ukama, a young farmer from Chirumhanzu Zibagwe, was voted Membership Secretary, in elections which were supervised by Chapter President, Rejoyce Nyamanhindi.

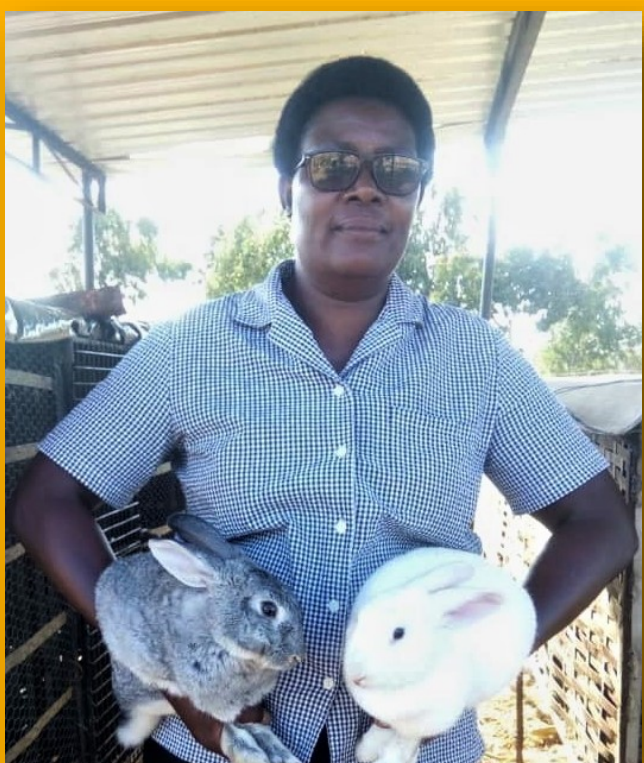
Ms Nyamanhindi said the three positions had remained vacant since ZICORBA's first elections and annual general meeting that were held in December 2020.

She said the election of Mrs Gapa to the powerful position of Chapter SG was testimony that ZICORBA is an organisation that strives for gender parity among its full-time and elective officials.

Mrs. Gapa is the fifth female SG in ZICORBA to join the league of Grace Chengeta in Harare, Mavis Mupingo in Manicaland, Rudo Sithole in Masvingo and Thabiso Gwemende in Matabeleland South.

"ZICORBA is probably one of the most gender sensitive and gender aware organisations in Zimbabwe with more than 50 percent of its full time and elective officials being women," Nyamanhindi said.

Five of the the current eight Chapter Presidents in ZICORBA are female and these are: Kholiwe Kafungura in Mashonaland East, Lydia Chimbari in Masvingo, Nontokozo Sibanda in Matabeleland South, Rejoyce Nyamanhindi in Midlands and Siphosethu Ncube Moyo in Bulawayo.



Mrs Anna Mary Gapa

ZICORBA Midlands Chapter Secretary General



Tatendaishe Ukama

ZICORBA Midlands Chapter Membership Secretary

ZICORBA Strategic planning meeting



ZICORBA members move to popularise rabbit meat

ZICORBA members across the country have, during the month of September, been staging public braais in a quest to popularise rabbit meat and the response from the public has been overwhelming, Marketing and Publicity Secretary, Shame Chibvongodze, has said.

Chibvongodze said so far public braais have been held in Kwekwe, Midlands, Headlands in Manicaland, Goromonzi in Mashonaland East and Waterfalls in Harare.

More public braais are planned in other parts of the country in the months of October and November, he said saying the public response has been overwhelming.

“The reports that we are receiving from the rabbit abattoir is that since we started the public braais, demand for rabbit meat has spiked. Thankfully, throughput from rabbit farmers to the slaughter-house has also risen sharply,” ZICORBA’s Marketing and Publicity chief said.



Collage of rabbit awareness activities that were being carried out by various ZICORBA chapters across the country. Braais have proved to being the favourite activity especially in the summer



ZICORBA DIARIES

ZICORBA brings hope to rabbit farmers, Mukondiwa



Ms Mathilda Rutendo Mukondiwa at her home in Morningside, Mutare where she currently operates her rabbitry

In this issue of Bunny World (BW), we feature an interview with Mutare based farmer, Ms Mathilda Rutendo Mukondiwa (MM), an accountant by profession, who recently joined our Manicaland Chapter. She is a farmer who almost gave up on rabbit farming for good, after experiencing challenges in regards with securing a market for her rabbits. The emergence of ZICORBA has given her hope of running a profitable rabbit farming venture. Below is the interview we did with Ms Mukondiwa:

BW: Can you give me a brief background about your rabbit farming journey?

MM: I have a passion of raising animals and I started raising rabbits in my backyard in Morningside as a hobby and quickly found out that it was easy to raise rabbits and grow their numbers. At that stage I was raising broiler chickens and a comparison between the two showed that it was cheaper to raise rabbits compared to broiler in terms of feeds. As a numbers person, I realized that there was money in rabbits and I changed my focus to rabbits. All along the rabbitry was a self-taught project without paying much attention to breeds and things like inbreeding and my excitement was fueled by delivery of new kits. My dilemma came when I had more than 250 rabbits and I failed to sell them in numbers. This brought a lot of discouragement in the project and it almost collapsed.

BW: To what extent would you say the emergence of ZICORBA has reignited your desire to farm rabbits?

MM: ZICORBA has brought a new lease of life to my perception of the rabbit industry. When one looks at the objectives of the association, they speak to what a rabbit farmer would need to stay in business. I am now getting training to run the rabbitry properly. The cross pollination of ideas from its various social media platforms is very helpful. I would say I am revitalized and rearing to go, no turning back this time. I am definitely heading for commercial breeding!

BW: From your previous experience with rabbit farming, what would you say is the biggest reason for the collapse of most rabbit projects?

MM: To me the most important aspect of any business venture is to be able to dispose of your produce to the market at the appropriate time. Failure to secure market for the produce renders your business unsuccessful. I would attribute this to be leading reason for collapse

of rabbit projects. Obviously, there are other issues like lack of training on proper methods of running the rabbitry. There are also issues poor record keeping, it's easy to keep going without taking stock of the project viability and this will negatively impact on the project.

BW: Where do you see your rabbit farming project in the next 5 years/ in the future?

MM: I am looking forward to a very significant growth in my rabbit farming project. I intend on moving my rabbitry to our plot in Fern Valley where there is adequate space for expansion. The short-term goal is to increase current stock numbers to 500 by end of April 2022. In the long-term goal is to be a farmer who supplies breeding stock as well as fryers for meat. Expansion and value addition are my key long-term objectives and, in this regard, I look forward to opening a retail outlet in Mutare CBD which will focus on selling rabbit meat and other value-added products from rabbits like organic fertilizer and pesticides

BW: Any words of encouragement to budding rabbit farmers?

MM: ZICORBA is an exciting chapter in the history of the rabbit industry in Zimbabwe. Let's come and be inspired by what others are doing, let's come and be taught the correct methods of running our projects. Let's support the noble cause of ZICORBA as there are benefits that accrue by being part of an association. I sincerely believe the future is bright and there is money to be made in this business.



Ms Mukondiwa at her backyard rabbitry



Nigeria's Oyo State launches first rabbit abattoir, supports young rabbit farmers



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

The Oyo State Government in Africa's most populous state, Nigeria, is setting up its first rabbit slaughter house to help provide a ready market for cuniculture producers in the region as consumption of rabbit meat gains momentum in the West African nation.

Oyo State Rabbit Farmers and Breeders Association President, Pastor Josephine Oyelami, told Bunny World in an interview that the government was promoting rabbit farming in Oyo State, especially among the youth as a way of creating employment and improving livelihoods.

"The government has launched a project to empower youth who are keen to venture into rabbit production. They are supporting the youth with starter packs comprising breeding stock, cages and rabbit pellets. About 50 youth have benefitted from the programme so far and many more stand to benefit from it," Pastor Josephine said.

She said her Association was complementing government's efforts by mentoring the youth as well as sourcing and selecting quality breeds for the benefit of the young farmers.

The Oyo State rabbit farmers' boss said rabbit production was developing very fast in the region in particular and in Nigeria in general due to its fast production turnaround, which provides the much-needed revenue and employment for a plethora of unemployed youth.

"To provide a ready market for rabbit farmers in Oyo State, the government is setting up an abattoir and cold rooms, the first for rabbit meat in the region. This is obviously an exciting development for us and it bodes well for the future of rabbit farming in Nigeria," Pastor Josephine said.

"The government has launched a project to empower youth who are keen to venture into rabbit production. They are supporting the youth with starter packs comprising breeding stock, cages and rabbit pellets....."

She said although rabbits were previously regarded as pets in Nigeria, consumption of rabbit meat in the country was on an upward trajectory due to its health and economic benefits.

Oyo State Rabbit Farmers and Breeders Association is working closely with the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) to promote rabbit production through sharing and exchange of information as well as the provision of technical support.

“Besides being tasty,
Rabbit meat is suitable
for special diets such as
those for the aged, heart
disease patients, low so-
dium diets and weight
reduction diets”

It's magnifique



Chef Pablo

Oven Barbecue Roast



Ingredients

4 tablespoons oil
1 full rabbit, cut into pieces
Barbecue spice
salt

Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 170°C/190°C .
- 2 Rub salt on the rabbit, remove any impurities and rinse under cold running water.
- 3 Marinate the rabbit with barbecue spice and salt for about 20 minutes.
- 4 Add cooking oil into a roasting tray and rub some oil on the rabbit. Bake for 45minutes until the rabbit is golden brown. Serve with a salad of your choice.

Simple & Delicious


ZICORBA
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