

BUNNY WORLD NEWSLETTER

ZICORBA
ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Zimbabwe's only Collective Voice of Rabbit Farmers

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Member of the Livestock and Meat Advisory Council

Multi-million dollar distribution deal for rabbit meat sealed



Raymeg Consultants Private Limited executive director Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga signs a distributorship deal with Surrey Group

DIVERSIFIED firm, Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, which owns Zimbabwe's sole rabbit abattoir, has entered into a multi-million-dollar distributorship deal with a leading meat products distributor in the country.

The company, which is a corporate member of the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has spent close to US\$1 million on its export-certified abattoir in Harare.

A similar slaughter house is earmarked for Bulawayo by next year.

In an interview with Bunny World, Raymeg Consultants Private Limited executive director Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga said their distributorship deal with Surrey Group will go a long way in ensuring the local market is supplied with premium rabbit meat.

"In a game-changing deal in the rabbit industry in Zimbabwe, Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, has signed a multimillion-dollar distributorship agreement with the Surrey Group, one of the largest distributors of meat products in Zimbabwe.

"It has 13 distribution outlets in all the country's 10 provinces," she said.

Rabbit meat is a delicacy known for its high protein content and immense health benefits.

The Harare-based Raymeg Abattoir, which started operat-

ing in September, has a capacity to slaughter between 2,5 tonnes and 3,5 tonnes of rabbits in a single 8-hour shift. Since the commencement of operations, the slaughterhouse has so far processed over three tonnes of rabbit.

The facility has received certification from the Halaal Council of Zimbabwe to ensure the rabbit meat is accessible countrywide.

Mrs Nyamakanga said the demand for rabbit meat has been on the rise in Zimbabwe and it was anticipated sales could reach 25 tonnes per month within the next 12 months.

Surrey Group national sales manager Mr Ranganai Zihumo was quoted as saying: "We are excited to have rabbit meat added onto our basket of white meat product-line.

"We will leverage on our wide branch network to reach every part of the country with rabbit meat."



Mrs Nyamakanga at her rabbitry

ZICORBA and a Kenyan training institute horn skills of Zimbabwean rabbit farmers



Commercial rabbit farmers practising good animal husbandry

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) and Kenya's state-owned National Rabbit Breeding and Training Institute (NRCTI) have joined hands to horn the production skills of Zimbabwean rabbit farmers.

ZICORBA Secretary General Mrs Siphosethu Ncube Moyo revealed that the strategic partnership between her organization and NRCTI was necessitated by a sharp increase of people venturing into rabbit production in Zimbabwe.

"Since the formation of ZICORBA in July 2020, we have seen a massive increase in the number of people entering into rabbit production. Our plan is to assist our people with the requisite skills to ensure the success of their projects.

"In this regard, we have identified just over 10 highly qualified Zimbabweans from different parts of the country to undergo a Trainer of Trainers (ToT) programme, which will be offered by NRCTI in Harare Next month. In turn, the graduates from the

ToT will work with rabbit farmers in the country's 10 provinces to improve their production and marketing skills," the ZICORBA SG said.

The ToT course which will be run in Harare on November 3 and 4, will cover rabbit production, husbandry, breeds and breeding, feeding, diseases, marketing and value chain. Graduates from the training will be issued with internationally recognized certificates.

NRCTI is the leading rabbit training institute in eastern and southern Africa. It has trained hundreds of farmers from a number of countries in Africa.

NRCTI Chief Executive Nathan Rotich said his organization was excited to partner with ZICORBA to broaden rabbit production skills among Zimbabwean farmers. "This, to us, is a key milestone as we see Zimbabwe as a very strategic country in rabbit production and marketing in Africa."



*Siphosethu Ncube Moyo ,
Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit
Breeders Association
(ZICORBA)
Secretary General*

*Nathan Rotich,
CEO of National Rabbit
Breeding and Training Institute
(NRCTI)*



ZICORBA makes sweeping changes to position itself for the future



ZICORBA Head office located at 15 Collosium Building, 7th Street, Harare Showgrounds

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Producers Association (ZICORBA) is implementing far-reaching structural and operational changes to position itself for its current and future requirements, President Regis Nyamakanga has said.

ZICORBA is the only recognised body that represents the interests of thousands of rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe. Since its formation in July 2020, the organisation has been on a drive to revive the industry from a near moribund state.

The strategies implemented by ZICORBA over the past 12 months have seen a massive transformation in Zimbabwe's rabbit rearing sector, including the phenomenal rise in the number of new rabbit farmers, introduction of improved breeds to bolster production and establishment of the country first rabbit abattoir.

In addition, there has been an uptake in the consumption of rabbit meat, paving way for a sustainable market for rabbit meat in the country. Leading supermarket chains such as Pick 'n Pay, Choppies and Spar Zimbabwe are now selling rabbit meat in their outlets.

In a wide-ranging interview with Bunny World, Nyamakanga said the rapid growth in Zimbabwe's rabbit rearing industry over the last 12 months had necessitated the changes to ensure ZICORBA remained relevant and alive to the needs of the fast-growing cuniculture subsector.

"We are implementing structural and operational changes that are in sync and synergistic with the fast-paced developments in our industry. The changes include the dissolution and reconstitution of some of our governing structures as well as the reassignment and redeployment of some full-time staff and some elected officials," Nyamakanga said.

"In this regard, a new National Coordinator will be appointed to

take ZICORBA operations to another level. Some Provincial Coordinators will be reassigned while new ones will be appointed to strengthen our operational efficiency and organisational effectiveness. The ZICORBA training department will be beefed up with the inclusion of Chapter Training Coordinators, who will work under the National Training Coordinator and Technical Advisor to enhance our support to our farmers.

"Further to this, we will be appointing a full-time National Inspection and Certification Officer, who will work with our Inspection and Certification Committee to ensure that we self-regulate by way of ensuring that we implement set standards across the rabbit production value-chain," Nyamakanga said.

He said more changes would be announced soon.



ZICORBA President Regis Nyamakanga

Gwemende elected VP for Bulawayo Chapter

Young entrepreneur and rabbit breeder Miss Thabiso Gwemende has been elected Vice President of the Bulawayo Chapter of ZICORBA following elections which were held recently.

Gwemende won the two-horse plebiscite which pitted her against Munyaradzi Chioto. She takes over from Mr. Lovemore Mawodza who stepped down from the position due to other work commitments.

Gwemende said she would use her experience as an administrator to grow the number of rabbit farmers in the Bulawayo Chapter.

"I am a strong-willed young lady who wishes to empower young people, women and men around me to be able to seize the moment and achieve their dreams. With outreach programmes, seminars and training on rabbit rearing we can achieve a lot together," she said.

"With the planned launch of a rabbit abattoir in Bulawayo, I am encouraging farmers in our Chapter to ramp-up production to ensure maximum utilisation of the slaughterhouse. More rabbit farmers in the province will translate to more jobs particularly for the youths and women," Gwemende said.

The elections which were presided over by Chapter Secretary General Mr. Sijabulisiwe Mpfu, also saw the election of Ratidzo Chiwombe as Marketing and Publicity Secretary. Mr. Munyaradzi Chioto was co-opted as Chapter Treasurer.

Zicorba has operations in all the country's 10 provinces namely Bulawayo, Harare, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Midlands, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South.



Thabiso Gwemende, ZICORBA Bulawayo Chapter Vice President

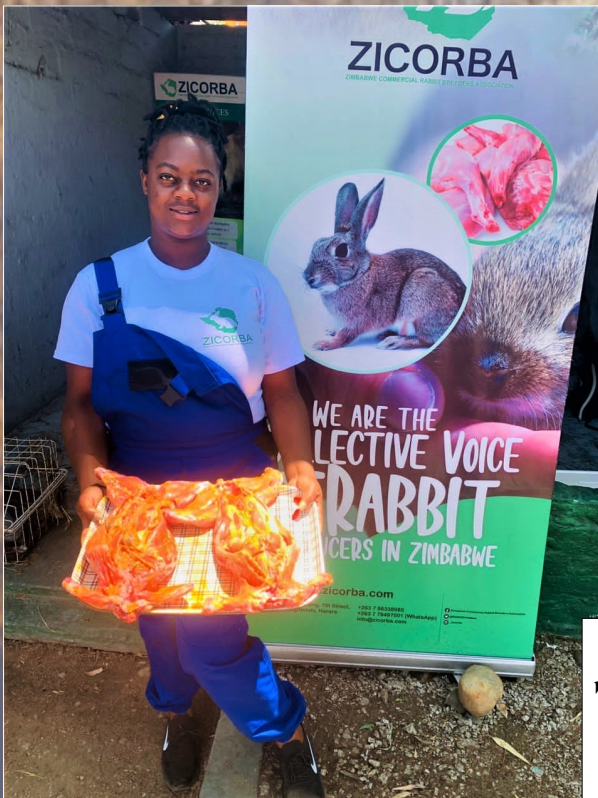


Ratidzo Chiwombe, ZICORBA Bulawayo Chapter Marketing & Publicity Secretary



Munyaradzi Chioto, ZICORBA Bulawayo Chapter Treasurer

Masvingo Agric show highlights



ZICORBA Masvingo chapter recently participated at the Masvingo Agricultural show which was held from 28-31 October 2021 under the theme "Open for business to sustain economic growth and stability". During the event, the chapter managed to display various rabbit breeds, engage in rabbit meat awareness through braais as well as recruitment of new members.

Gapa charms farmers into joining ZICORBA



Mrs Gapa assisting rabbit farmers in filling out their ZICORBA membership registration forms at Njelele centre, Gokwe

Recently elected ZICORBA Midlands Chapter Secretary General, Mrs Marry Anna Gapa has hit the ground running by conducting rabbit farming awareness campaigns in Gokwe South District.

In her first meeting with Gokwe farmers, Mrs Gapa successfully convinced 10 farmers to scale up their production and to join ZICORBA.

“The awareness meeting was a major success as we saw seasoned and budding small scale rabbit farmers expressing interest in joining ZICORBA and in scaling up their production.

“Our main thrust as a Chapter is not just recruitment of new members but to ensure that rabbit farmers in our province realign their breeding practices with international best practices to ensure that we create a good gene pool as well as engage in profitable rabbit farming ventures,” Gapa said.

The Midlands Chapter Secretary General attributed the success of the rabbit farming awareness campaign to her experience as a former senior Agricultural Extension (Agritex) Officer in Midlands Province.

“I am used to speaking and doing presentations in front of farmers, so when I do these awareness campaigns, I will be in my comfort zone. With all the experience that I have as a former Agritex Officer I have no problem whatsoever in unpacking rabbit farming to any audience,” she said.

The rabbit farming meeting which was held at Njelele township was attended by more than 20 small scale rabbit farmers.



Mrs Marry Anna Gapa Midlands Chapter Secretary General



Botswana rabbit farmers import pure breeds to ramp up production



NORBA Chairperson Timbu Iris Ntjenje display her recently imported pure breeds

A group of farmers under the Northern Rabbit Breeders Association of Botswana (NORBA) have imported pure breeds from South Africa to improve their breeding stock and ramp up production in the face of a surge in demand for rabbit meat in the country.

NORBA chairperson Timbu Iris Ntjenje told Bunny World in an interview that 8 farmers under NORBA pooled resources to import a total of 55 pure breeds from two leading South African breeders Judy Stuart and Anton Gouws.

“The farmers, located in different parts of the northern side of

Botswana, which stretches from Mahalapye, Francistown, Masunga, Zwenshambe, Gweta to Maun came together to import pure breeds from South Africa to help grow our industry which is still at its infancy and growing,” she said.

“The decision to import pure breeds was to bring some good lineages and improve on what is currently available. We wanted to bring in new bloodlines to tap on pure breeds versatility and good genetics, thus making it possible to provide local farmers with good genetics and rabbits of high quality,” the NORBA boss said.

Ntjenje said her association’s thrust was to commercialise and increase rabbit production in Botswana to take advantage of the exponential growth in rabbit meat market in the Southern African country of 2.4 million people.

“The rabbit meat market in Botswana continues to grow with more people shifting towards healthy eating. However, one of the biggest challenges that we face is that there is currently no rabbit abattoir in the whole country. Most of the rabbit meat available is slaughtered in backyard operations,” she said.

Zimbabwean rabbit farmers recently imported 400 pure breeds from South Africa to improve their breeding stock as rabbit production in southern Africa continues to grow. In addition, Zimbabwe recently opened its first export certified rabbit abattoir, which is one of the biggest rabbit slaughterhouses in Africa.



One of the beneficiaries, Mr Mafa

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

It's magnifique



Chef Pablo

Rabbit in Wine Sauce



Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 full rabbit
3 cloves garlic
1 cup dry white wine
½ cup chicken stock
sea salt
fresh thyme
a splash of water

Method

Cut the rabbit down

Using a very sharp knife or a meat cleaver, cut the rabbit in 4 parts: back legs, 2 pieces for the bust and another piece front legs. Then divide the leg pieces in two so that each piece was only one leg.

Pan Sear the Rabbit

Heat a large pan on medium-high heat and add oil to the pan. Add the rabbit pieces and sear them on all sides until it is all well browned (5 minutes per each side). It's important to be patient when coloring the meat - don't turn too often. Season the rabbit with salt and pepper while it's cooking.

Reduce the heat slightly and add chopped garlic to the pan. Brown the garlic while continuing to cook rabbit, about 2-3 minutes. Make sure that the pan is not too hot at this point.

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Make sure that the pan is on medium heat now. Season the rabbit again and deglaze with white wine to get all the caramelized juices from the bottom of the pan. After the wine evaporated, we're left with syrupy substance of the wine. Now add chicken stock.

Put the pan with the rabbit pieces into the preheated oven and roast for about 30 minutes until the internal temperature is about 140 to 145°F.

One thing to keep in mind is that the meat will continue to cook while it is resting, and the internal temperature will reach the desired temperature of about 150°F.

Serve with fresh thyme.


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