

Leading hoteliers add rabbit meat to their menus as diners opt for healthy dishes



Chef Petronella Munyoro, Head Chef at Cresta Oasis serving rabbit meat dish

Zimbabwe's leading hotel chains have added rabbit meat to their menus as diners become more discerning, preferring healthy dishes. This comes against a backdrop of a spike in rabbit meat consumption in Zimbabwe and globally, driven largely by the health benefits of rabbit meat.

Zimbabwean specialist physician, Dr. Nigel Dzvanga said rabbit meat is an "excellent" source of protein, which keeps humans healthy by building and repairing their muscles, skin and blood.

"Rabbit meat is also an excellent source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired. Rabbit meat is also an excellent source of the B vitamins B12 and niacin. These vitamins help our bodies use energy from food, and are important for growth, healthy skin, hair, nerves, and muscles, Dr. Dvanga said.

"Rabbit meat is one of the best white meats available on the market today. It has a high percentage of easily digestible protein and contains the least amount of fat among all the other available meats", he said.

Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) President, Regis Nyamakanga, said leading hoteliers such as Cresta Hotels and Holiday Inn had recently introduced rabbit meat as part of their strategy for serving healthy dishes.

In addition, the ZICORBA chief said a number popular restaurants and eateries in major urban centres in Zimbabwe have also introduced rabbit, making the dish one of the most preferred in the country currently.

"Three other top hotel groups will soon introduce rabbit meat as demand for healthy dishes continues on an upward trajectory," he said.

Chef Pretronella Munyoro of Cresta Group of Hotels said customers had responded very well to the introduction of rabbit meat in Zimbabwe following the recent opening of the country's first rabbit abattoir.

"We only buy meat from approved slaughter houses. The coming on stream of a rabbit abattoir gave our group the confidence of introducing rabbit meat as one of our dishes. We used to be worried about the reliability of product supply but the opening of the Raymeg Rabbit Abattoir in Harare has brought some welcome relief," she said.

Chef Munyoro added: "Our rabbit meat dishes have received a good response from our customers. We will continue to promote this healthy white meat and we expect more and more customers to savour our rabbit meat dishes."



Holiday Inn management team visiting Raymeg rabbit abattoir in Harare

Top chefs battle it out in ZICORBA's inaugural rabbit meat cook-off competition



Collage of various rabbit dishes

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) will host its inaugural rabbit meat cook off competition in the country's second largest city, Bulawayo, on the 10 of April, a top official has said.

ZICORBA Secretary General and Bulawayo Chapter President, Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo, said the cooking competition, which will be held every four months, is an innovative way to popularise the consumption of rabbit meat, create industry partnerships and build market share.

"Top chefs and kitchen enthusiasts will take part in the competition in which they are expected to prepare dazzling dishes using the key ingredient, rabbit meat," Ncube-Moyo said.

"We hope the competition will also stimulate rabbit meat uptake within the communities by showcasing the diverse and tasty rabbit meat recipes.

"The first of its kind cook off is a platform for chefs and talented kitchen enthusiasts to display their cooking skills and the various possible approaches in preparing rabbit dishes. Judges will consist of a panel of industry professionals who will critique each competitor on plate presentation, creativity, and product taste amongst other things. Awards will be given to the chefs with the best tasting rabbit meals and to those that demonstrate diverse methods in preparing rabbit meat," she said.

"Rabbit meat is fast becoming a staple protein alternative to other meat choices such as chicken and beef. Meat eaters are getting over prejudices held over rabbit meat as it is an excellent source of protein, with unlimited health benefits like building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood, has a high percentage of digestive protein with low fat content compared to chicken and other available meats," Ncube-Moyo said.

ZICORBA Bulawayo Chapter Marketing and Publicity Secretary, Ratidzo Thelma Chiwombe, said the event will be held at one of the city's popular restaurants. Veteran Presenter Arthur Evan will host the event with Carl Joshua as the Chief judge and competition moderator.

"Our marketing team conducted a survey on the consumption of rabbit meat in Bulawayo, which showed that people were interested in preparing rabbit meat dishes but lacked knowledge of how to prepare it," she said.

"The competition will equip the rabbit meat lovers with the requisite skills of how to prepare rabbit dishes. It will also give people the opportunity to taste the meals prepared on the day.

"The competition is one of many activities that are geared towards promoting rabbit meat as the preferred addition to people's menu in Zimbabwe. It will also showcase the work ZICORBA in promoting, developing and improving rabbit production in Zimbabwe," Chiwombe said.



ZICORBA Secretary General and Bulawayo Chapter President Mrs. Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo



ZICORBA Bulawayo Chapter Marketing and Publicity Secretary, Ratidzo Thelma Chiwombe

Harare province poised for a rabbit farming boom - Chengeta



Harare chapter members enjoying themselves during a get together recently held at Waterfalls Sports Club

Harare province, which is home to Zimbabwe's capital city, is poised for a boom in rabbit farming that could spur it to be the hub of commercial cuniculture production in the country, a top official of the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has said.

Chapter Secretary General for Harare, Mrs. Grace Chengeta, said the city had the highest number of small-scale rabbit producers in Zimbabwe and that plans were underway to support them to ramp up their production to meet the growing demand for rabbit meat in the country.

ZICORBA Harare Chapter recently held its first strategic planning meeting where a cocktail of measures was unveiled to support the current members as well as to woo new producers. ZICORBA has 10 chapters based in Zimbabwe's administrative provincial capitals.

Chengeta said the intermittent supply of rabbit pellets, shortage hay and the high cost of rabbit cages had been identified as the major challenges facing rabbit producers.

"Our thrust is to ensure that our members in Harare ramp up their cuniculture production through the use of good breeding stock, construction of proper rabbit hutches and cages, correct feeding regime and good bio-security," Chengeta said in an interview with ZICORBA's official newsletter, Bunny World.

"We will also recruit new rabbit farmers into our Association and train them on good animal husbandry as well as on how to engage in commercial rabbit farming," she said.

Chengeta added that her Chapter was also in the process of mobilizing funds for various projects. "We are in the process of creating our own pool of funds at Chapter level which will support all the initiatives that we want to do. In this regard, we are setting up a Chapter rabbitry which will generate the desired programme funds," she said.

A major drive to raise the ZICORBA brand awareness and to popularize the consumption of rabbit meat would be launched at the end of this month, Chengeta said.

"We plan on having promotional branded materials written ZICORBA Harare Chapter and others just written ZICORBA so as to reach the provincial and national market as well. The branded items will include caps, T-shirts, license disc holders, coffee mugs and so on. As for promotional events, we planning on doing a braai expo starting this February. This will allow us to sell the brand ZICORBA as well as promote rabbit meat and rabbit farming simultaneously," she said

Various recommendations were also made during the meeting which are expected to help Chapter members to become fully fledged commercial rabbit famers.

"As a Chapter, most members are operating on a personal name basis. We recommended that members should start registering rabbit companies so that they become professional in their business operations. In line with this, we also encourage our members to have proper books of accounts as well opening bank accounts for their rabbitries as this will be helpful in accessing loans in the future," Chengeta said.

She said the Harare Chapter was also exploring the possibility of value addition through the processing of rabbit skins, production of rabbit sausage and ornaments.



*Mrs Grace Chengeta
ZICORBA Harare Chapter Secretary General*

ZICORBA Mashonaland West Chapter ventures into value-addition



Collage of various value added rabbit products, which include rabbit urine, droppings and skins

ZICORBA Mashonaland West Chapter has resolved to focus on the many benefits of rabbit farming as its market penetration trump card.

The resolution was adopted during the Chapters’ inaugural strategic planning meeting, which was held this month and attended by all ZICORBA members in the province. Mashonaland West is one of richest farming zones in Zimbabwe.

In an interview with Bunny World, Mashonaland West Chapter Secretary General, Tonderai Kamuzu revealed the meeting had crafted a strategies and initiatives to encourage the general uptake of cuniculture in the province.

“The aim of the strategic planning meeting was to see how best can we move forward in rabbit farming as a province. We want to see the Association going forward, creating marketing opportunities, creating jobs especially to the youth of today hence the need to come up with a well-coordinated plan for the province.”

“Our discussions were broad and touched on many areas of interest. We interrogated a number of ideas because this was the opportunity, we had to come up with a robust road map to ramp up production. We discussed more on the production side of rabbits, benefits of keeping rabbits, how to penetrate the market and how best can the Association can get more productive members, not just idle members. The many benefits of rabbit farming should be our key marketing point in pushing the uptake of cuniculture in the province,” he said.

Kamuzu said value-addition was identified as a key to increasing profitability amongst rabbit farmer

“We talked about value-addition of rabbit meat and the potential uses of rabbit waste products, chief among them is the use of rabbit urine as fertiliser and insecticide. We also explored the use of rabbit droppings as good quality manure which can be used in organic horticultural activities,”

“We talked about value-addition of rabbit meat and the potential uses of rabbit waste products, chief among them is the use of rabbit urine as fertiliser and insecticide. We also explored the use of rabbit droppings as good quality manure which can be used in organic horticultural activities,” Kamuzu said.



Mr Tonderai Kamuzu
ZICORBA Mashonaland West Chapter Secretary General

Top medical doctor speaks about the benefits of eating rabbit meat

Specialist physician, Dr. Nigel Dvanga, says rabbit meat has numerous health benefits compared to other types of rabbit meat.

The Bulawayo-based medical specialist told Bunny World that rabbit meat contains the least amount of fat compared to other types of meat.

“Rabbits are one of the most productive domestic livestock there is. Rabbits can produce 6 pounds of meat on the same feed and water as the cow will produce 1 pound of meat on the same feed and water.

“Rabbit meat is an excellent sources of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood”, he said.

“Rabbit meat is also an excellent sources of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired. Rabbit meat is also an excellent source of the B vitamins B12 and niacin. These vitamins help our bodies use energy from food, and are important for growth, healthy skin, hair, nerves, and muscles,” Dr. Dzvanga said.

He said some of the reasons why rabbit meat is a good choice or substitute, include:

- ◆ It is one of the best white meats available on the market today.
- ◆ The meat has a high percentage of easily digestible protein.
- ◆ It contains the least amount of fat among all the other available meats.
- ◆ Rabbit meat contains less calorie value than other meats.
- ◆ Rabbit meat is almost cholesterol free and therefore heart patient friendly.
- ◆ The sodium content of rabbit meat is comparatively less than other meats.
- ◆ The calcium and phosphorus contents of this meat is more than any other meats.
- ◆ The ratio of meat to bone is high meaning there is more edible meat on the carcass than even a chicken.



Specialist physician, Dr. Nigel Dvanga

Valentines Day with ZICORBA



Mrs Grace Chengeta
Harare Chapter



Mrs Rejoice Nyamanhindi
Midlands Chapter



Mrs Kholiwe Kafungura
Mash East Chapter



Mrs Ntokozi Sibanda
Mat South Chapter



Mrs Mavis Mupingo
Manicaland Chapter



Ms Thabiso Gwemende
Bulawayo Chapter



Global rabbit market set for lucrative growth during 2022-2028 – Market Research



Despite the COVID-19 pandemic spreading at a rapid pace across the globe, the Global Rabbit Market has employed certain strategic moves and profitable processes to sustain the industry into the future, according to a latest global research report.

The report published by Market Research Store says that even though the pandemic has affected majority of the key players in the global rabbit market they have adopted various strategies such as signing agreements, acquisitions, mergers, and joint ventures to grow their business in the market over the period 2022 to 2028.

Some of the key players in the Global Rabbit Market include Blue Ridge Rabbit Meat Co., Brooke-Lee Farm, Deevabits Kenya Ltd., Costco, Lucky Rabbit, Whole Foods, Cunicula Los Alisos.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has affected a number of markets and the global rabbit market is no exception. However, the dominating players of the global rabbit market are adamant to adopt new strategies and look for new funding resources to overcome the rising obstacles in the market growth, the report says.

The global rabbit market is segmented into U.S., Canada and Mexico in North America, Peru, Brazil, Argentina and Rest of South America as part of South America, Germany, Italy, U.K., France, Spain, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Turkey, Russia, Hungary, Lithuania, Austria, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Rest

of Europe in Europe, Japan, China, India, South Korea, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Rest of Asia-Pacific (APAC) in Asia-Pacific (APAC), South Africa, Saudi Arabia, U.A.E, Kuwait, Israel, Egypt, Rest of Middle East and Africa (MEA).

The report provides significant information including market growth drivers, opportunities and challenges, restraints, competitive landscape, geographical distribution, and market valuation with a customer-centric concept to increase understanding of the current market status.



Out & About with ZICORBA



Holiday Inn management team visiting Raymeg rabbit abattoir in Harare



Mrs Monica Mudonhi, Mash East Chapter Vice president, recently acquired a pure NewZealand White buck to service her does. She has nearly 100 rabbits.



Raymeg Holdings Executive Director Mrs Paidamoyo Nyamakanga poses for a photo with Cresta Oasis senior Chefs and manager



Harare chapter members during a get together recently held at Waterfalls Sports Club



Rabbit sausages and burger patties



Bulawayo chapter in rabbit sausage and burger patties tasting

Rabbit Stew with Vegetables

“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



Ingredients

1 rabbit
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 large onions
1 – 1 1/3 cup water 250-300 ml
2 medium carrots
1 large red bell pepper
1 tablespoon sweet paprika powder
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika powder
1 1/4 cup beer 150 ml
1/2 cup pureed tomatoes 125 g
3-4 bay leaves
5 juniper berries
fine sea salt and pepper

Method

Cut the rabbit into 5 or 6 smaller pieces. I didn't use the backbone and the ribs for the stew, I made rabbit and chicken stock with them. See the blog post for more details on that.

Sear meat: Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a Dutch oven or another heavy bottom pot and fry the rabbit pieces on both sides until golden. Remove from the pan.

Cook onions: Halve the onions and slice the halves thinly. Pour the remaining oil in the pot, fry the onions on medium-low heat, stirring often, for about 20 minutes. Add some of the water from time to time to prevent them from burning or drying out.

Cook vegetables: In the meantime, slice the carrots and the red bell pepper. Add the vegetables to the onions and continue cooking, stirring a few times in between, for about 3-4 minutes. Add the sweet and the smoked paprika powder (sweet or hot according to taste) and stir well for about 1 minute.

Place the rabbit pieces back in the pot, add the beer, pureed tomatoes, and enough water to barely cover the rabbit, the meat pieces should not be completely underwater. Add the bay leaves, the juniper berries, some salt, and pepper.

Simmer stew: Cover the pot, bring to a boil and simmer gently for about 1 1/2 hour or until the meat is really tender, it should basically fall off the bone. Don't forget to stir from time to time and add a little more beer if the liquid reduces too much.

Adjust the taste with salt and pepper and serve with mashed potatoes and pickles. Or with boiled potatoes and roasted or boiled vegetables or salad.


ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
ZICORBA



+263 777 535 079



info@zicorba.com



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_zicorba

VISIT US AT

Head Office

15 Collosium Building

7th Street

Harare Showgrounds

Editorial Team

Lloyd Mangoch : Editor

Editorial Board

Regis Nyamakanga

Siphosethu Ncube Moyo

Rejoice Nyamanhindi



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