



ZICORBA
ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Zimbabwe's only Collective
Voice of Rabbit Farmers

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Member of the Einstock and Meat Unions Council

ZICORBA reshuffles top leadership



From Top left; ZICORBA Vice President Siphosethu Ncube –Moyo, Secretary General Ntokozo Sibanda, National Treasurer James Samhembere, Inspection and Certification Secretary Kingston Rakupeni, Harare Chapter President Grace Chengeta, Mash West Chapter President Tonderai Alexio Kamuzu, Masvingo Chapter Vice President Lydia Chimbari, Mash West Chapter Secretary General Clive Chiduuro and Mash West Chapter Treasurer Mutsa Ronald Gumbanjera

Cuniculture farmers lobby group, the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has made major changes to its top level leadership as it gears to tackle its current and future aspirations, President Regis Nyamakanga has said.

Nyamakanga said the changes had been effected at the national and the provincial structures to repurpose ZICORBA and reposition Zimbabwe among the top five rabbit producers and marketers in Africa. ZICORBA, which was formed in July 2020, celebrates its second anniversary in July this year with a string of successes under its belt.

He said the former Secretary General Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo had been elected Vice President, replacing Orbert Nyakabau who stepped down last month while Matabeleland Chapters President Ntokozo Sibanda had taken up the Secretary General role, the third most powerful position in the organisation.

Top businessman, James Samhembere, assumed the fourth most powerful role in ZICORBA as National Treasurer to fill a role vacated by Sijabulisiwe Mpfu who resigned on medical grounds.

Kingston Rakupeni was elected ZICORBA's first Inspection and Certification Secretary. He becomes the key focal point for conceptualising, developing and implementing industry standards.

Nyamakanga said the provincial level changes included the election of Tonderai Alexio Kamuzu as President for ZICORBA Mashonaland West Chapter, replacing Orbert Nyakabau

who stepped down as National VP and President of Mashonaland West Chapter. Clive Chiduuro took up the Mash West Secretary General role while Mutsa Ronald Gumbanjera was elected Chapter Treasurer.

In Masvingo, prominent farmer and miner, Lydia Chimbari was elected Vice President while in Harare Grace Chengeta took the reigns as Chapter President, replacing Godknows Guvamombe who stepped down recently. Innocent Mbava and Eric Taruwona took up the roles of Harare Chapter Vice President and Secretary General, respectively.

Nyamakanga said elections for Secretary General for the Bulawayo Chapter and for the Secretary of Marketing & Publicity in Manicaland and Bulawayo respectively, would be held soon.

ZICORBA was launched in July 2020 to champion the interests of rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe. Since its formation, the Association partnered with private players to import pure rabbit breeds which have been distributed to its members nationwide to help improve the country's breeding stock.

The Association also secured price discounts from a number of stock feed producers in an effort to keep the price of production down. The country's first rabbit abattoir was also built during ZICORBA's first year of operation. The abattoir is one of the biggest in Africa.

ZICORBA has also established strategic partnership with other rabbit farmers' associations in Botswana, Eswatini, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.

At the behest of ZICORBA, the government Zimbabwe has now included rabbit among the country's livestock value chains.

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Issue No.17

FREE

ZICORBA boosts breeding stock by more than 1000 pure breeds



ZICORBA member and pure breed beneficiary Munyaradzi Chioto holding a pure breed New Zealand White kit at his rabbitry in Bulawayo

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has boosted its breeding stock by more than 1 000 pure breeds over the past 10 months, laying a strong foundation for sustained growth of the country's cuniculture sector.

ZICORBA Vice President Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo said an additional 6 000 breeders would be realized from the ongoing national rabbit pure breed roll-out programme, which is being bankrolled by one of the Association's corporate members, Raymeg Holdings.

"We are very encouraged by the progress made since we first launched the pure rabbit breed roll-out programme about 10 months ago with an initial stock of 180 imported rabbits. This is part of our strategy of ensuring that our rabbit farmers have adequate quality breeding stock to produce unencumbered," Ncube-Moyo said in an interview with the ZICORBA mouthpiece, the Bunny World newsletter.

Under the pure breed roll-out programme, ZICORBA members receive breeding stock which they pass on to the next member after they kindle twice.

Tapiwa Nyagwambo, a ZICORBA member based in Mashonaland East and beneficiary of the pure breed roll-out programme, told Bunny World that he was "very impressed" with the performance of pure breeds versus local hybrids.

"At personal level, I believe the program is a huge success as I received 19 kits from 3 New Zealand White does from their first kindling. The does have shown a very good mothering ability after attaining a 99.9% survival rate at weaning and the weight gains are remarkably excellent," he said.

"The most noticeable advantage that I saw in comparison with the hybrid rabbits is their high feed to meat conversion ratio which was proven by weekly average weight gains of 150 grammes reaching about 1.8-2kgs at 8 weeks for weaners,

which is very good for meat rabbits and enabling the breeder to sell at the premium age," Nyagwambo added.

Munyaradzi Chioto, a Bulawayo-based rabbit producer said: "The New Zealand breeds that I received have a high reproductive rate compared to native breeds that I have been rearing. In the past, I used to specialize in native breeds which took 6 months to grow, which were very costly, however, the 4 pure breeds I received were a good boost to my rabbitry. With the use of the pure breed buck, we have managed to get 65 kits which are growing fast like never before."

Harare-based rabbit farmer and ZICORBA member, Neil Francisco, said: "The pure breed programme is a real success. I received New Zealand White pure breeds in February, I started breeding them in April, and to date I have 13 kits from 3 does. In August, I expect more kits before I pass on the initial breeding stock to the next farmer."

Mrs Anna Mary Gapa of Gokwe said: "The pure breed roll-out programme is a huge success. My does kindled 20 kits in May 2022. They are so healthy and growing vigorously with all their traits of purity. My intension is to phase out all my small breeds and replace them with these pure breeds."

Another beneficiary of the pure breed roll-out programme Kingston Rakupeni, a ZICORBA member based in Manicaland, echoed the same sentiments.

"I managed to successfully breed the pure breeds that I received in September last year and got 10 live kits from the two does. With less difficulties, I raised these kits to maturity and they commenced breeding them in March 2022 with great success. I also managed to raise another 10 live kits and handed the initial breeding stock over to another farmer," Rakupeni said.

Rakupeni encouraged all beneficiaries of the programme to ensure that proper care is given to the breeding stock to so that as many farmers as possible could benefit.

Pure breeds beneficiaries showing off kits



Mrs. Anna Mary Gapa



Tapiwa Nyagwambo



Kingston Rakupeni



Mashonaland East Chapter launches model rabbit cage



ZICORBA Mashonaland East Chapter discussing the proposed model rabbit cage during their strategic planning meeting

The ZICORBA Mashonaland East Chapter held its strategic planning meeting on earlier this month, with a pledge to become the benchmark of commercial rabbit farming in Zimbabwe through the introduction of standard rabbit hatches and a monitoring and evaluation plan for all member rabbitries.

The meeting, attended by Chapter Executive members, was aimed at re-evaluating the current strategies with the hope of coming up with a more effective target-based plan, which would enable farmers to track their progress and operate viable and profitable rabbitries.

Chapter President Kholiwe Kafungura said the issue of affordable housing, which had dogged farmers in her region for a while, would be a thing of the past if the prototype rabbit cage that the province is working on becomes successful.

“As a Chapter we are impressed with the sample cage which Mr James Samhembere is constructing. We have agreed to make it our minimum basic standard cage for Mashonaland East-based commercial rabbit farmers. So we are working with Mr Samhembere’s Engineering company to ensure that we come up with a cost-effective yet durable standard cage which should open up increased production in rabbitries,” she said.

Mr. Samhembere is the Chapter Secretary General and the ZICORBA National Treasurer. He is a businessman and farmer.

ZICORBA National Training and Technical Coordinator, Gar-

isanai Mudzingwa, gave a talk on the art of commercial rabbit keeping. He said ZICORBA was in the process of establishing rabbit rearing demonstration sites across the country, with one such facility having been established in Rusape in Manicaland.

He said the demonstration sites were meant to assist farmers in getting a deeper and practical understanding of commercial rabbit farming.



ZICORBA National Training and Technical Coordinator, Garisanai Mudzingwa (left) explaining the recommended cage specifications for commercial rabbit farming

Mash East rabbit cage model Pics



“Knowing your breeds is a key factor in running a successful rabbitry”



Farmer Jane

**KNOW
YOUR
BREEDS**



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

*** BREED : AMERICAN SABLE RABBIT**

The American Sable is a commercial breed that was developed by Otto Brock in 1924. By crossbreeding many purebred Chinchillas, he developed the American Sable rabbit with different coloring. Recessive genes in the Chinchilla lines produced an entirely new color, with an identical body shape.

Distinct Features: The main colour of these rabbits is sepia brown with darker sepia brown over the back, feet, face, ears and tail. It has graduated coloring with a sepia brown over the flanks that darkens on the face, ears, feet, back and tail.



RATING : * * * *

American Sable rabbits have a lifespan of 5-10 years and weigh around 4- 4.5 kgs when fully grown.



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Across The Borders



Kansas youth say raising rabbits is ‘year-round project’



Picture of rabbit weaners

MANHATTAN, Kan. – For many, raising rabbits seems like a simple gig: Put some food out, clean the cage and enjoy the furry snuggles.

But for more than 1,000 [Kansas 4-H](#) youth who participate in the annual rabbit project, it’s a bit more involved.

“It’s a year-round project,” said Briony Smith, a 4-H Youth Development agent in Butler County. “Typically, these youth don’t sell their animals at the county fair; they are taking those animals home to use during the next year’s project.”

In fact, Smith adds, often the work multiplies – quickly. The 4-H rabbit project includes not only maintenance and care for the first rabbit, but also breeding and care for her litter.

“When the litter is weaned, youth begin to learn about breeding traits so they can select which one’s to keep for their own projects; which one’s might be better for other 4-Hers’ projects; and which one’s are best suited as pets,” Smith said.

Within 6-8 months of owning their first rabbit – that is, once the first litter arrives – youth in the project get hands-on experience in selecting animals for production, and creating their own bloodline.

“Second year 4-H members typically have their own animals to show out of their own breeding line,” Smith said.

At county and state fairs, Smith said youth don’t show their animals in a ring as is common with larger animals.

“It’s more of a conversation with a judge,” she said. “(The youth) takes the rabbit to a table then goes through an examination of the animal, much as a judge would do. They must explain the parts of the rabbit – including the eyes, ears, nose, tails, tail and feet – and explain what they look for when they decide whether a rabbit is of high enough quality for a show.”

“There is quite a bit of knowledge that is needed to be successful, as well as developing public presentation skills.”

Smith said youth from Butler, Sedgwick, Kingman and Harvey counties are currently working together in the rabbit project, meeting monthly to challenge each other on their current knowledge about rabbits.

More information on the 4-H rabbit project, or on any of nearly three dozen projects offered in Kansas, is [available online](#). Interested person can also contact their [local extension office](#). -*Kansas State Research and Extension news service*

Rabbit stew with okra

This rabbit stew is inspired by the northwest African cooking style and it incorporates okra

“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

Recipe by
Chef Craig Shura



Ingredients

- 1kg rabbit cutlets
- 1Tbs crushed garlic
- 1Tbs crushed ginger
- 1/2 tsp bird's eye chilli powder
- Salt
- Crushed black pepper corns
- Cumin powder 1/2 teaspoon
- 1 sprig thyme
- 1tspn old fashioned brown sugar
- 4Tbs olive oil 25g margarine
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 100g tomato paste
- Okra pods 250g (sliced in half lengthwise)
- 250ml Rwendo sauvignon blanc
- 1ltr vegetable stock

Directions

Step 1

In a large bowl, marinate your rabbit cutlets using half of the olive oil, all the garlic, ginger, cumin powder, thyme, chili, salt & pepper (to taste) and the old-fashioned sugar.

For best results Refrigerate overnight.

Step 2

In a large sauce pan, heat the remaining olive oil, add in the marinated rabbit cutlets, fry them to a light golden color, add in the onions and stir-fry for a minute, add in the tomato paste, stir and add the chopped tomatoes and simmer for 3mins

Step 3

Add in the white wine and simmer until it reduces by half, add the vegetable stock and leave simmering until it reduces by half

Step 4

In a separate pan, shallow fry the okra in olive oil to a light golden brown colour, add the rabbit stew, simmer for 5 mins and serve with millet sadza or peanut butter rice.

Chef's tip: for vegetable stock, wash and boil whole onions, carrots, celery stalk, leeks and bay leaves for about 40 mins, strain, cool, Refrigerate and use as required (replaces water in cooking giving food more flavour)



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