



BUNNY WORLD NEWSLETTER

ZICORBA
ZIMBABWE COMMERCIAL RABBIT BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Zimbabwe's only Collective Voice of Rabbit Farmers

Member of the Livestock and Meat Advisory Council

August-October 2022 Edition

ZICORBA reshuffles top leadership

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) is undergoing a massive restructuring to position itself to tackle current and future challenges confronting the country's nascent cuniculture industry.

ZICORBA President, Regis Nyamakanga, told Bunny World in a wide-ranging interview that the changes included the abolition of provincial executive roles and axing of non-performing full-time staff. Each of the ZICORBA Chapters in all the country's 10 provinces are currently run by seven-member executives.

The changes, which will be implemented over the next three months, will result in the reorganisation of the top echelons of the two-year-old organisation, which is the collective voice of a plethora of rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe.

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"Our National Executive, which is the highest decision-making body in ZICORBA in-between the Annual General Meetings of Members, met for a few days recently to introspect and came up with a raft of changes to reposition our organisation.

"We resolved to dissolve our provincial executives to make the organisation nimbler and agile in dealing with an array of issues facing the cuniculture industry in Zimbabwe. In addition, some non-performing provincial coordinators will be sacked.

"At the national level, the National Executive will be reorganised and mandates for all members of the top leadership will be redrafted to include performance targets and accountability statements as well as tough sanctions for non-performers," Nyamakanga said.

The constitution of the organisation will be amended to reflect the changes and an extraordinary general meeting of members of the association will be held within the next two months to approve the constitution.

"Once the constitution is approved, elections will be held to choose a new leadership of the organisation and new provincial coordinators will be appointed to run the affairs of the 10 ZICORBA Chapters in all the country's provinces," Nyamakanga said.



ZICORBA National President, Mr. Regis Nyamakanga

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Issue No.19

FREE

ZICORBA debuts at the Zimbabwe Agric Show with a bang!



The ZICORBA team pose for a photo at their stand during the Zimbabwe Agricultural show 2022 edition

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) made a debut at the 2022 Zimbabwe Agricultural Show, scooping 16 prizes – probably the biggest number of awards by a single organisation in the history of the show.

Vice President Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo said four ZICORBA members scooped 11 first prizes at the show, four of which were overall first prizes in the rabbit section. The members also collected three second prizes and three third prizes.

“We exhibited 12 different breeds at the show and I must say we were very happy with the performance of our rabbits, which attracted large crowds who were wowed by the standard of our display and the general condition of our animals,” Ncube-Moyo said.

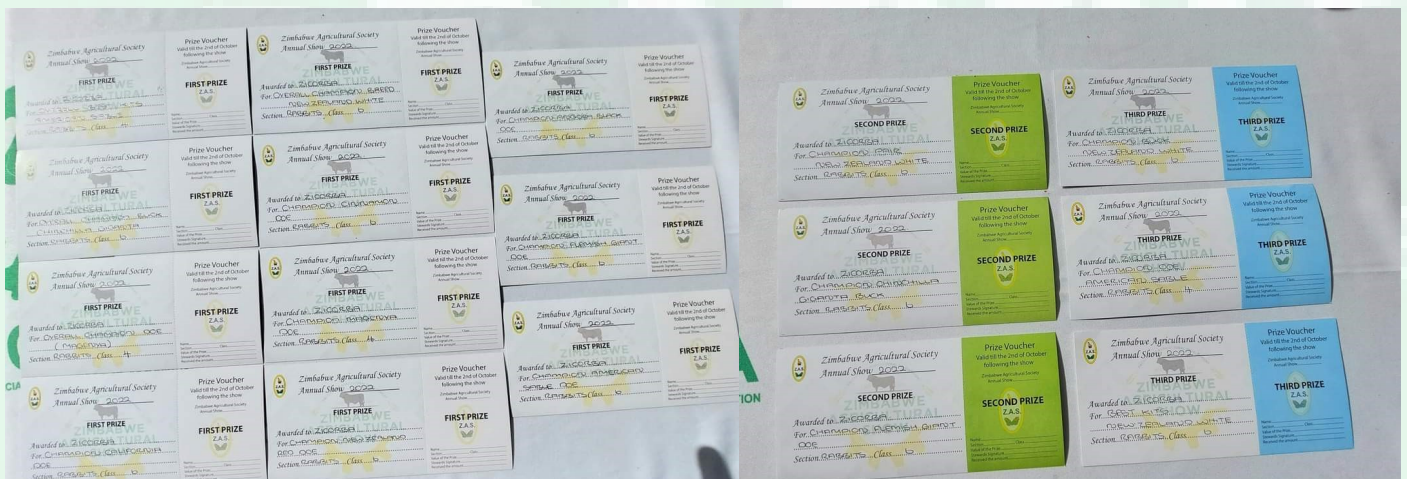
Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, a corporate member of ZICORBA, exhibited nine breeds, which all won first prizes in the different breed categories.

Other ZICORBA members including Harare-based rabbit breeder, Godknows Guvamombe, collected a first prize in the Angora rabbit section while Tapiwa Nyagwambo and Garisanai Mudzingwa also collected first prizes in the Magen’a and Flemish Giant sections, respectively.

Raymeg’s American sable kits and New Zealand White rabbits as well as Nyagwambo’s Magen’a and Guvamombe’s Angora rabbits won the overall first prizes in the rabbit section.

Ncube-Moyo said the judges were very impressed with the standards and quality of ZICORBA rabbits. “During the briefings that we held with the Show Society, ZICORBA received numerous commendations from the Judges, who urged other rabbit producers to emulate the standards set by the members of the Association.”

ZICORBA recently won the first prize in the newcomers’ section at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair held early this year.



A collage of prizes which ZICORBA scooped at their first ever exhibition at the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show

Zimbabwe Agricultural Show 2022 in pics



Ukama scoops top prize at Chirumanzi District Agric Show

As the sun rises cheerfully over the eastern horizon illuminating the Gonawapotera sacred pool, it is a day like no other in Chirimuhanzu now known as Chirumhanzi Zibagwe District. All is set for the annual agricultural show and a natural buzz of activity and excitement engulfs the area.

Clad in blue denim jeans, a T-Shirt and a cap, 24-year-old Tatendaishe Constantine Ukama secures his rabbits in their transport cages as he prepares to exhibit for the first time after a long and difficult rabbit farming journey which has seen him becoming a beacon of hope amongst the youth in his community.

In an exhibition that the young man thought he would just be grateful for having the opportunity to showcase his Chinchilla Giganta purebreed rabbits and adding up the numbers of exhibitors, Ukama surprised himself after scooping first prize at the Chirumhanzi District Agricultural Show held at Mvuma Primary School, out-shinning more than 100 other exhibitors.

The young rabbit farmer from Takawira resettlement area, Zibagwe district, is excited about his prizes, which include maize seed, fertilizer and pesticides amongst other farming inputs, as he leaves the exhibition with way more stuff than he came with.

“All the hard work that I put into my rabbitry over the years has paid off. The validation that I received today after my rabbits became the centre stage of the show with everyone jostling to have a photo - op with my rabbits shows that I have come of age in the rabbit farming business as young as I am. This heap of prizes from various stakeholders says it all.” Ukama said.

Tatendaishe who is Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) Midlands Chapter Membership Secretary and also a trainer of trainers, attributes his victory to his upbringing as well as the youth empowerment initiatives by ZICORBA.

“I describe myself as an “Entremanure”, someone who makes a living from manure. I have learnt to love the soil and how it sustains many families from where I come from through livestock farming as well as land husbandry. My parents have taught me a lot about farming but my rabbit farming journey story can never be complete without acknowledging the ZICORBA factor.”

“ZICORBA has made sure that youths like me get access to purebreed rabbits, standard rabbit housing, training, discounted feeds as well as a home where we can voice our concerns and be heard. Being in the largest group of commercial rabbit farmers, has helped me to focus and get advice from seasoned rabbit breeders,” said Ukama.

The Chirumanzi Agricultural show which was organised by Agritex, was supported by agro-dealers like Farm and City, Farm Shop, Seed Co, K2, Farmers Choice, Agri Seeds, Vast Africa and government departments such as the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) and the Environment Management Authority (EMA). Farmers from the area exhibited in categories such as livestock, horticulture, field crops, fruits, food and art craft. The show was held under the theme “Building Resilience Through Climate Smart Agriculture.”

ZICORBA runs a Young Rabbit-Farmers’ Club meant to propel youth into commercial cuniculture production. The initiative,



Tatendaishe Ukama, Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) Midlands Chapter Membership Secretary and Trainer of Trainers

which is being funded by Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, is aimed at benefitting youth in the country’s 10 provinces. Raymeg is a corporate member of ZICORBA. It owns the country’s only rabbit abattoir and one of the biggest rabbitries in Zimbabwe. Since ZICORBA was launched in July 2020, the association has taken a deliberate stance to economically empower youth and women by assisting them with breeding stock and in setting up hutches or rabbit cages

ZICORBA charms Gokwe rabbit farmers



Group photo of rabbit farmers and would-be rabbit producers who attended a Rabbit Farmers Day hosted by ZICORBA at Gokwe Centre



*ZICORBA Midlands Chapter Secretary y General
Mrs Mary Anna Gapa*

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) held a Rabbit Farmers Day at Gokwe Growth Point recently, which attracted more than 100 rabbit farmers and would-be rabbit producers.

The event; which was also attended by Agricultural Extension Officers, Government Veterinary personnel, private rabbit abattoir operators and feed companies; was organized by the ZICORBA Midlands Chapter.

Chapter Secretary General, Mrs. Anna Mary Gapa, said the idea of the Rabbit Farmers Day was to promote cuniculture production in Gokwe area, where a plethora of farmers had expressed interest in rearing rabbits.

“The response from Gokwe farmers was overwhelming, with the majority of the people that attended the meeting expressing interest in joining our Association. We want to make Gokwe the rabbit production nerve centre in Midlands,” she said.

Certified rabbit farming trainer and member of ZICORBA, Tatendaishe Ukama, gave a lecture on rabbit production, processing and marketing while ZICORBA Vice President Siphosethu Ncube-Moyo, who was the guest of honour spoke about the immense benefits of rabbit farming.

Ncube-Moyo said ZICORBA was targeting to introduce rabbit production among the 1.8 million households in Zimbabwe to create employment, improve livelihoods and contribute to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

“Our key focus is on women and youths, who are the most effective developments agents in any society. We are satisfied with the progress that we have made in promoting rabbit production in these segments of our society and the future of cuniculture in Zimbabwe looks great,” she said.

ZICORBA exhibits at Makoni & Masvingo Agricultural Shows

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) showcased different breeds of rabbits at the Makoni and Masvingo Agricultural Shows and collected first prize in rabbit category at the Makoni Show.

ZICORBA Manicaland Chapter Secretary General, Ms. Mavis Mupingo and National Training Advisor and Technical Coordinator, Garisanai Mudzingwa, attended the Makoni show where they exhibited some pure rabbit breeds.

At the Masvingo Show, Chapter Secretary General, Joyce Tamirepi, led a team of ZICORBA members that participated at the show. Ten different rabbit breeds were on exhibit, attracting huge crowds that sought knowledge about rabbit production.

Tatendaishie Ukama, the ZICORBA accredited Trainer and Technical Advisor, was on hand at the Masvingo show to respond to questions from current and budding rabbit farmers.



A photo collage of ZICORBA activities that happened during the Makoni and Masvingo Agricultural shows

Highlight of Gokwe Rabbit Day in pics





Rabbits rearing: Here is where the money is



Picture of New Zealand Red rabbit weaners at a commercial rabbit farm

Nairobi- Kenya: Though it has high potential, the demand for rabbit meat is still significantly low. However, there are some farmers who have seen the potential and are capitalising on it. Millimag Rabbits proprietor Justin Magiri is eyeing to expand his colony of rabbits from the current 2,000, as he pushes to meet the growing demand of rabbit meat locally.

Magiri started rabbit farming nine years ago as a part time business to supplement his income but has since experienced tremendous growth.

“One thing that I like about rabbit farming is that they are fast breeders and they can multiply fast,” says Magiri.

Right now, he boasts of having an eatery in Nairobi, along Ngong Road, near Adams Arcade and a rabbit farm in Mombasa. The eatery, he says has necessitated venturing into value addition of rabbits, where they have diversified consumption of rabbit meat.

Rabbits require less space and mature faster within four months. They are also prolific in production as one female rabbit can give birth to up to 14 bunnies every month.

The gestation period for rabbits is between 28 and 32 days and they are ready for slaughter at four months. The farm sells rabbit meat, by-products and breeds. At the eatery they make sausages, samosas, pies, pizzas, burgers and kebabs.

Research shows that there is very low consumption of rabbit meat in Kenya. This has been attributed to the insufficient promotion, erratic product supply, unreasonable prices, and competition from other variety of meats.

“If only people opened their minds to the value of white rabbit meat, today there would be fewer diseases associated with red meat,” says Magiri.

Rabbit Meat is rich in vitamin B12 which is not only good for brain health but also optimise the function of the nerve system. Eating rabbit meat prevents degenerative conditions such as dementia or Alzheimer’s, according to Healthline.com.

Rabbit meat also has a lower amount of sodium as compared to other meats, making rabbit meat even more appealing to people with high blood pressure.

As compared to chicken, rabbit meat has higher levels of phosphorus and calcium. These two minerals work together to help build healthy bones. It is also high in Niacin, a mineral that helps convert carbs into energy.

As with all types of meats, the amount of nutrition you will get out of rabbit meat depends on how you prepare it. It can be fried with little to no oil thanks to its composition. Other popular methods include baking, grilling, or cooking in stews or soups.

Magiri has tasted the huge potential of the business. “We serve the domestic market through our outlet, food deliveries and the restaurant whilst supplying farmers with breeders,” says Magiri.

A kilogramme of rabbit meat costs about US\$5.

Aside from meat, the farm uses rabbit products such as the skin to make sandals, mats and their urine to make foliar fertiliser.

Rabbit Roulade

“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

- * 2 tbs extra-virgin olive oil plus more for brushing
- * 500g deboned rabbit whole rabbit, pounded
- * salt and freshly ground black pepper
- * 250 feta cheese, crumbled
- * 2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano
- * 4garlic cloves, minced
- * 1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- * 1/2 cup dry white wine
- * 1/2 cup chicken stock
- * 2tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- * Lemon wedges

Directions

Step 1

Line a baking sheet with grease proof paper; brush with oil. Spread out the deboned rabbit brush all over with oil. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle rabbit with feta, oregano, garlic, and lemon zest, dividing evenly and keeping filling away from edges. Beginning at the narrower end of the rabbit, roll up, enclosing filling, tie with kitchen twine at 2cm intervals to secure.

Step 2

Preheat oven to 260°. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add rabbit roulade and cook until brown on all sides, about 10 minutes. Transfer rabbit roulade to a small roasting pan and bake 10-15 minutes. @240°c

Step 3

Add wine, broth, and lemon juice to skillet; bring to a boil and cook, scraping up any brown bits, until reduced to 1/2 cup, about 5 minutes. Cut strings from roulade and place on plates. Glaze with pan juices; serve with lemon wedges




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