



# Government Mulls Inclusion of Rabbits in its Livestock Growth Plan



Chief Director of Agricultural Advisory and Rural Development Services, Mr. Leonard Munamati addressing rabbit farmers in Harare recently

**T**he Government has announced that rabbit farming will be incorporated into Zimbabwe's forthcoming Livestock Development Policy (2025–2030), recognizing the sector's potential to transform rural livelihoods, generate employment, and contribute to economic growth.

Chief Director of Agricultural Advisory and Rural Development Services (AARDS), Mr. Leonard Munamati, made the announcement at a recent Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) training workshop in Harare.

"Government acknowledges the strategic role that rabbit farming plays in rural transformation and economic development. I am proud to inform you that the rabbit value chain will be included in this critical policy framework," Mr. Munamati said.

He described rabbit farming as a "game-changer" capable of uplifting more than 1.8 million households, creating jobs for youth and women, boosting food and nutrition security, and positioning Zimbabwe as a future exporter of rabbit meat and value-added products.

ZICORBA President Mr. Regis Nyamakanga welcomed the move, saying it would give formal recognition to a sector that has grown rapidly since the association's formation in 2020.

"We have already done an indicative cost-benefit analysis of

expanding rabbit production through better genetics, improved animal health and optimized feeding. With these interventions, domestic rabbit meat output could rise from about 800 metric tonnes in 2025 to 3,200 metric tonnes by 2030, and further to 7,300 metric tonnes by 2035," Mr. Nyamakanga said.

He added that the growth would be driven by at least 10 regional rabbit production clusters anchored on ZICORBA each establishing local abattoirs and cold chain wholesale facilities.

"The safe, hygienic slaughter and cold chain consolidation of surplus rabbit meat for both domestic markets such as Harare and Bulawayo, and for export, will require greater investment. ZICORBA sees itself playing a central corporate role in mobilizing resources for abattoirs, cold chain infrastructure and the wholesale marketing of rabbit meat under one or more national brands," he explained.

Zimbabwe already boasts one of Africa's largest rabbit abattoirs and has pioneered value-added products such as rabbit sausages, burgers, pies, samoosas, and polony. The emergence of Rabbit Grills fast food outlets has further popularised rabbit meat across the country.

The inclusion of rabbits in the national livestock policy marks the first time cuniculture has been formally integrated into Zimbabwe's agricultural framework — a move both Government and industry players say could unlock export opportunities in Asia, Europe and the Middle East, while strengthening local food systems.



# ZICORBA Unveils Ambitious Strategic Plan to Mainstream Rabbit Farming

**T**he Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) has launched its 2025/26 Strategic Plan, setting out an ambitious roadmap to position rabbit farming as a leading livestock enterprise and rabbit meat as a mainstream dietary option in Zimbabwe.

ZICORBA President, Regis Nyamakanga, said the plan outlines short, medium, and long-term goals, including reinforcing ZICORBA's position as the industry's only voice, expanding value-added products, and promoting rabbit meat consumption locally and abroad.

"Key focus areas include increasing rabbit production through expanded breeding stock, partnerships with schools and universities, and investment in cost-effective feed alternatives. ZICORBA also aims to boost processing capacity by establishing low-cost abattoirs, standardizing meat hygiene practices, and diversifying

into products such as sausages, burgers, and dried meat, he said.

"Marketing strategies will focus on aggressive consumer awareness campaigns, retail partnerships, and international trade linkages, while training initiatives will include certified programs and the establishment of a National Rabbit Training and Breeding Centre.

The association also unveiled a tiered membership strategy with exclusive benefits to attract and retain members, alongside revenue-generation plans such as a Regional Rabbit Expo in 2026, to be officially opened by the President of Zimbabwe.

"ZICORBA's long-term vision is to make rabbit meat the most preferred protein source in Zimbabwe and establish the country as a regional hub for rabbit production and exports," Nyamakanga said.



*ZICORBA EXCO members pose for a group photo during a strategic planning workshop held recently in Harare*

# ZICORBA and Raymeg to Launch National Contract Growing Scheme for Rabbit Farmers

**T**he Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA), in partnership with Raymeg Consultants Private Limited Group, will soon roll out a national contract growing scheme for rabbit farmers. The announcement was made by Mrs. Grace Chengeta, Chairperson of ZICORBA's Harare Chapter, during a rabbit production training session in Harare recently.

The training, organised by ZICORBA in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, brought together farmers from Mahusekwa Communal Lands of Mashonaland East and covered the fundamentals of rabbit farming, including breeding, feeding, and health management.

Mrs. Chengeta said the scheme aims to boost production and steer the structured growth of the industry. Under the initiative, Raymeg will provide participating farmers with rabbit feed and guaranteed market access for their produce.

"Priority will be given to ZICORBA members who already have approved cages and breeding stock," Mrs. Chengeta said. "This is a game-changer for the rabbit farming industry, as it tackles two of our biggest challenges; access to inputs and access to markets; under one programme."

Mrs. Paidamoyo Nyamakanga, Executive Director of Raymeg, said demand for rabbit meat and related value-added products had surged in recent months as more Zimbabweans turn to healthier dietary options.

"Rabbit meat is lean, high in protein, and cholesterol-free, it is the healthiest meat you can put on your plate," Mrs. Nyamakanga said. "Through this contract scheme, we are not just buying rabbits; we are building a sustainable industry that will create income for farmers and put premium-quality meat on Zimbabwean tables."

Raymeg, a pan African diversified group with interests in strategic communication, real estate, agriculture, agro-processing and retail, owns Zimbabwe's only rabbit abattoir and a chain of fast-food outlets, Rabbit Grill, that serve a variety of rabbit meat products.

Since its establishment in 2020, ZICORBA has positioned itself as the sole representative body for rabbit farmers in Zimbabwe, leading training programmes and advocacy efforts to integrate rabbit production into mainstream agriculture.

The contract growing scheme comes at a time when the rabbit farming sector is attracting growing interest, particularly among smallholder farmers and youth—thanks to its low input requirements and short production cycles.

The training, which was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, Ms. Caroline Kambudzi and Mr. Peter Chanengeta.

The initiative forms part of a broader push by ZICORBA and its partners to equip farmers with the technical skills, resources, and market access needed to transform rabbit farming into a viable



*ZICORBA Harare Chapter Chairperson Mrs Grace Chengeta addressing farmers during a rabbit farming training*



# Diaspora Farmer Builds Commercial Rabbit Project in Macheke



When Edgar Gurure left Zimbabwe in pursuit of opportunities abroad, he carried with him not only the hope of a brighter future, but also the dream of one day investing back home. That dream began taking shape in March 2023, when he set up a modest rabbitry in Macheke, Mashonaland East Province, starting with just two does and a buck.

Today, Edgar's rabbitry has grown into a thriving enterprise with 125 breeders, mainly California White and New Zealand White rabbits. With disciplined management and a clear growth vision, he is steadily working towards expanding his breeder base to 250, with a target of supplying 100 rabbits every week to the local market.

"I want to contribute to food security and create jobs through rabbit farming," Edgar explains. True to his word, he already employs two workers in Macheke who ensure the rabbitry runs smoothly while he is away.

For Edgar, rabbit production is more than a side project – it is a pathway home. He plans to return to Zimbabwe soon to go full-time into rabbit farming and become a leading player in the country's growing cuniculture industry.

His story is a testament to how Zimbabweans in the diaspora can harness agriculture not only to build sustainable livelihoods, but also to transform rural communities.

*Edgar Gurure showcasing his mega rabbitry in Macheke, Manicaland province*



# ZICORBA Empowers Farmers Through Rabbit Production Trainings



*Photo collage of various rabbit production training facilitated by ZICORBA in Harare recently*

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA), in partnership with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, has successfully conducted two comprehensive training sessions aimed at strengthening skills in commercial rabbit farming.

Held in Harare, the sessions brought together national and provincial livestock officers, as well as emerging rabbit farmers from across the country. Participants received practical, hands-on instruction on key aspects of rabbit production, including breeding, feeding, health management, and sustainable farming practices.

The trainings were conducted by ZICORBA's expert trainers, Garisanai Mudzingwa and Tapiwa Nyagwambo, and attended by senior officials including Mr. Leonard Munamati, Chief Director of Agricultural Advisory and Rural Development Services (AARDS); Dr. Sitokozile Sibanda, Director of Livestock Production and Development; Mr. Wisdom Moffart Gunzvenze, Senior Livestock Officer; Ms. Sensile Ndlovu, Livestock Officer; and Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural De-

velopment representatives from Mahusekwa Communal Lands in Marondera, Ms. Caroline Kambudzi and Mr. Peter Chanengeta.

Representatives from ZICORBA also participated, including Mrs. Grace Changeta, Chairperson of ZICORBA in Harare; Mr. Victor Vambe, Chairperson of ZICORBA in Mashonaland East; and Lloyd Mangoh, ZICORBA Marketing and Publicity Secretary.

Since its establishment in 2020, ZICORBA has emerged as Zimbabwe's leading body representing rabbit farmers, championing training, advocacy, and initiatives to mainstream rabbit farming within the country's agricultural sector.

These training sessions form part of ZICORBA's broader strategy to transform rabbit farming into a viable, sustainable, and profitable enterprise, particularly for smallholder farmers and youth. By equipping farmers with the necessary skills and knowledge, the association aims to expand the role of rabbit farming in Zimbabwe's agribusiness landscape.



# From Small Beginnings to Rabbitry Success: The Story of Christen Vambe



*Prominent rabbit producer Mr Christen Vambe inspecting his rabbitry in Chihota District , Mashonaland East*

In the quiet Landos area of Chihota District, Mashonaland East, Mr. Christen Vambe has turned a simple idea into a thriving enterprise. A graduate of ZICORBA's commercial rabbit farming training, Christen began his journey in July 2023 with a modest setup of indigenous rabbit breeds, primarily to produce urine for his orchards.

"I never imagined that what started as a small-scale project for my farm could grow into something much bigger," Christen recalls.

His perspective changed after attending training sessions organized by ZICORBA in partnership with the Chinese Embassy in Harare. Armed with new knowledge on breeding, feeding, and rabbit health management, Christen quickly transformed his rabbitry into one of the largest in Mashonaland East. Today, his farm boasts 320 does and 32 bucks, primarily New Zealand White and Californian pure breeds.

"ZICORBA's training opened my eyes to the commercial potential of rabbit farming," he says. "I learned how to improve productivity and scale up operations while maintaining quality."

Christen is not stopping there. He is currently expanding his rabbitry with the goal of becoming a major player in the rabbit meat market.

Christen is not stopping there. He is currently expanding his rabbitry with the goal of becoming a major player in the rabbit meat market. His journey reflects both the power of education and the growing opportunities in Zimbabwe's rabbit farming sector.

Through hard work, training, and determination, Christen Vambe has shown that with the right guidance, even small beginnings can lead to remarkable success.



# Domboshava Rabbit Farmers Converge to Strengthen Rabbit Production



*Rabbit farmers in Domboshava sharing experiences and challenges at Vivam Rabbitry owned by Mr Victor Vambe*

**R**ecently, 40 rabbit farmers and aspiring rabbit farmers convened at Viviam Rabbitry in Domboshava, owned by Mr. Victor Vambe, ZICORBA Chairperson for Mashonaland East. The gathering provided a platform for farmers to share experiences and discuss the challenges they face in rabbit production, particularly the rising cost of feed.

The meeting highlighted the importance of peer learning and collaboration among rabbit farmers, reinforcing the need for innovative solutions to make rabbit farming more sustainable and profitable across the region.

*Mr Vambe enjoying rabbit meat dish with an aspiring rabbit farmer from Domboshava. He later took him on tour of his rabbitry*





# RABBIT BALLOTINE



## Method

For the filling sweat onion, garlic, chopped carrots, green peas, sweet corn, mushrooms and rosemary while blanching the spinach in salted water then shock it in ice cold water. Once the vegies are cooked through, season to taste and add grated cheese then allow to cool. Wrap the filling using the spinach and form a ball.

Gently pull the meat from the bone using your finger and turn it inside out leaving the bone attached. Season with salt and pepper inside out then stuff with the spinach ball then wrap tightly with foil paper and poach in rabbit stock for 45mins on medium-low heat.

Once done poaching remove the foil paper and gently simmer the ballotine in the sweet and sour sauce for 15mins. (Add some of the rabbit stock into the sauce through a strainer to avoid over thickening the sauce while simmering.)  
(Chef's tip: For the stock boil rabbit bones, roughly cut onions, carrots, Leeks, garlic and black pepper)

Credit: Mbongeni AKA Chef Nigel

## Ingredients

Rabbit leg 1 (hind)  
Spinach 1 large leaf  
Sweet corn kernels 25g  
Green peas 25g  
Baby carrots 1  
Chopped button Mushroom 2lbs  
Grated mozzarella cheese 1lbs  
Chopped Onion 1lbs  
Chopped garlic ½ tsp  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Fresh Rosemary-pinch  
Cajun spice-pinch  
Rabbit stock



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