



BUNNY WORLD

NEWSLETTER



Zimbabwe's only Collective
Voice of Rabbit Farmers

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ZICORBA to Launch National Rabbit Breeders Register



Photo collage of Kingston Rapukeni, ZICORBA's Secretary for Inspection and Certification and rabbits

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) is set to launch a National Rabbit Breeders Register aimed at certifying and listing bona fide rabbit breeders across the country, in a move expected to transform the industry.

The register, which will be the first of its kind in Zimbabwe, is designed to bring order, professionalism, and credibility to the fast-growing rabbit farming sector. According to Kingston Rapukeni, ZICORBA's Secretary for Inspection and Certification, the initiative will ensure that only breeders meeting set standards are formally recognized.

"The register will protect farmers and consumers by eliminating fly-by-night operators and promoting trust in rabbit products," Rapukeni said. "It will also serve as an official reference point for buyers, investors, and regulatory authorities, ensuring that rabbit farming in Zimbabwe meets both national and international standards."

Rapukeni noted that certified breeders would benefit from improved access to markets, technical support, and financing

opportunities, as their inclusion in the register would serve as proof of compliance with industry standards. "This is a game-changer for our members because recognition on the register automatically boosts their credibility, opening doors to partnerships with hotels, supermarkets, and exporters," he added.

He further explained that the register would help ZICORBA monitor breeding practices, curb the spread of diseases, and promote the use of traceable breeding stock. "In the long run, this will enhance productivity, improve the quality of rabbit meat and related products, and strengthen Zimbabwe's position as a leader in rabbit farming on the continent," said Rapukeni.

ZICORBA has members nationwide and has been at the forefront of commercializing rabbit farming in Zimbabwe, including establishing the country's first rabbit abattoir and developing rabbit meat products. The introduction of the breeders register is part of the association's broader efforts to professionalize the industry and align it with global best practices.

The register is expected to be officially launched early next year.

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#zicorba

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FREE

Shortage of Rabbit Meat Bites Zimbabwe as Demand Surges



Photo collage of rabbit meat and value added products like rabbit polony and sausages

The Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA) president, Regis Nyamakanga, attributes the current shortage to a sharp rise in consumer demand that has outstripped production capacity across both commercial and smallholder producers.

“We are seeing renewed consumer interest in rabbit meat because it is a healthy, high-protein option. But production simply hasn’t caught up. We are urging rabbit farmers to scale up breeding and improve supply-chain coordination to avoid long-term shortages,” Nyamakanga said.

Health and nutrition experts highlight rabbit meat’s dietary advantages: it is high in protein, low in fat and cholesterol compared with many red meats, and provides essential vitamins and minerals, notably B-vitamins and phosphorus. These nutritional benefits make rabbit meat increasingly attractive to health-conscious consumers and those with cardiovascular concerns.

Zimbabwe is widely recognized as one of the leading producers

of rabbit meat in Africa and a pioneer in rabbit value-added products, including burgers, sausages, polony, pies, and biltong. Despite this, retailers and processors are reporting a current shortage of both fresh rabbit meat and value-added products, highlighting the need for increased production to match growing demand.

ZICORBA is calling on farmers to take practical steps, including increasing breeding rates through better doe management, investing in feed efficiency and improved breeds. “With coordinated action, we can stabilize supplies within months, lift incomes for smallholders, and meet growing consumer demand,” Nyamakanga added.

Retailers and processors warn that immediate relief will depend on rapid production increases and smoother farm-to-market logistics. Currently, rabbit meat in Zimbabwe is retailed at around \$7 per kilogram.

Rabbit Meat Prices Firming Up Across Eastern and Southern Africa



Photo collage of Confederation of Rabbit Breeders Association (CARAPRO) President, Regis Nyamakanga and rabbit meat

Retail prices of rabbit meat are firming up across Eastern and Southern Africa, driven by renewed consumer interest in the delicacy, largely due to its health benefits, according to a pan-African rabbit farmers' group.

In Zimbabwe, rabbit meat is currently retailing at between US\$7 and US\$10 per kilogram, a price point that is slightly higher than in some neighboring markets. According to the Confederation of Rabbit Breeders Association (CARAPRO) President, Regis Nyamakanga, the steady rise in demand presents both an opportunity and a challenge for producers in the region.

In South Africa, rabbit meat remains comparatively affordable, with speciality butchers and retailers selling it at between US\$1.92 and US\$3.83 per kilogram. In Kenya, the price is firmer, ranging from KES 695 (US\$5) to KES 800 (US\$5.80) per kilogram.

Zambia has some of the highest price points in the region, with retail figures ranging between ZMW 146.91 (US\$7.79) and ZMW 220.37 (US\$11.69) per kilogram. In Uganda, rabbit meat sells at around UGX 25,000 (US\$6.76) per kilogram, while in Rwanda retail prices range from RWF 8,200 (US\$7.50) to RWF 10,000 (US\$9) per kilogram.

CARAPRO Chief noted that the upward trend reflects changing consumer habits. "People are becoming more health-

conscious, and rabbit meat is winning over new consumers because it is high in protein, low in fat and cholesterol, and rich in essential vitamins and minerals," he said.

"The firming up of rabbit meat prices is creating strong incentives for farmers. Higher prices compared to traditional meats such as chicken (averaging around US\$3–4/kg) and beef (about US\$5–6/kg in many parts of the region) make rabbit farming an attractive enterprise. Smallholder farmers, in particular, stand to benefit from better incomes, quicker production cycles, and rising demand from both health-conscious consumers and urban markets.

"However, challenges remain. The cost of scaling up rabbit production, such as sourcing quality breeding stock, ensuring adequate feed supplies, and investing in housing and veterinary care, poses hurdles for many farmers. Limited processing and cold-chain facilities in some countries also constrain market access, while competition from cheaper meats like chicken may limit how fast rabbit can expand into mainstream diets," he said.

Despite these hurdles, Nyamakanga is optimistic that the sector can grow rapidly if farmers embrace improved breeding practices, collective marketing, and closer collaboration with processors and retailers. "With the right support, rabbit farming can transform livelihoods while supplying the region with one of the healthiest sources of protein," he said.

Young Farmer Chasing a Dream with Rabbits



Young rabbit farmer Munashe Kupera poses for a photo at her rabbitry in Nyazura

At just 25 years old, Munashe Kupera, an animal scientist from Nyazura, is proving that passion and curiosity can open new doors in agriculture. Although she has only been running her rabbitry for six months, her journey with rabbits began much earlier while she was still at school.

While studying at the University of Zimbabwe, Munashe became part of a student research team that won a grant from the Zimbabwe Agricultural Development Trust (ZADT) to carry out a project on New Zealand White rabbits. That project sparked her interest and laid the foundation for what would later become her own rabbit enterprise.

After completing her studies, she decided not to leave the project behind. Instead, she built on it, setting up her own rabbitry with a clear vision: to grow from a small operation into a commercial venture and, eventually, into the export market.

Her dream, however, goes beyond business. She hopes to continue researching rabbits, contributing to scientific knowledge, and

sharing her expertise with students and farmers who are eager to learn.

For Munashe, rabbit farming is more than just an enterprise—it is a calling. Each day she spends in the rabbitry brings her closer to transforming her passion into possibility

For Munashe, rabbit farming is more than just an enterprise—it is a calling. Each day she spends in the rabbitry brings her closer to transforming her passion into possibility. She believes that with research, dedication, and collaboration, the rabbit industry in Zimbabwe can unlock its full potential.

Though her journey is still at the beginning, her story already shines as an inspiration to other young people considering a future in rabbit farming.

From Youth Ambassador to Graduate: Kingston

The story of Kingston Rapukeni, the National Secretary for Inspection and Certification at the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA), is one of passion, resilience, and the transformative power of opportunity.

Recently, Kingston graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal and Wildlife Sciences from Midlands State University. For him, this achievement is not just a personal milestone but also a testament to how support and mentorship can help young people realize their dreams.

Kingston is a proud beneficiary of the ZICORBA and Raymeg Youth Support Initiative, which has been instrumental in nurturing the next generation of rabbit farmers. Through this initiative, he received pure rabbit breeds from Raymeg, a ZICORBA corporate member, giving him the solid foundation he needed to start and grow his own rabbit farming venture.

His journey with rabbits began in 2019 during high school, and in 2020 he started commercial rabbit production during his tenure as a ZICORBA Youth Ambassador; a role that exposed him to leadership, innovation, and the limitless opportunities in cuniculture. Today, he runs a thriving rabbit project in Nyanga with 30 does, which stands as a model of what young farmers can achieve with the right guidance and resources.

Looking back, Kingston acknowledges the role ZICORBA and Raymeg have played in shaping both his academic and farming journey.

“I am deeply grateful to ZICORBA and Raymeg for the support they gave me. The rabbits I received and the mentorship I benefited from were not just about farming; they motivated me to push harder in my studies and to build a future around my passion for animals. Today, I can proudly say that I am not only a graduate but also a successful rabbit farmer,” said Kingston.

He hopes to pursue a career in livestock production and health management.

As a young leader in the rabbit industry, Kingston’s story reflects the impact of investing in youth. His success demonstrates how strategic initiatives can empower young people to pursue education, embrace agribusiness, and contribute to the growth of Zimbabwe’s rabbit industry.

For ZICORBA, Kingston is not just a graduate; he is a shining example of the association’s vision to empower and uplift young rabbit farmers across the country.

Kingston Rapukeni, the National Secretary for Inspection and Certification at the Zimbabwe Commercial Rabbit Breeders Association (ZICORBA)



Finding Purpose and Prosperity in Rabbit Farming at 74



Mrs. Ethel Bofu poses for a photo with New Zealand White rabbits from the Dowa Rabbit Farmers Club

At 74, Mrs. Ethel Bofu is proving that age is no barrier to innovation, leadership, and sustainable farming. As a committee member of the Dowa Rabbit Farmers Club; a vibrant group of 10 farmers and the renowned Dowa Primary School; she is at the heart of a movement that is transforming livelihoods in the Dowa Small-Scale Commercial Farming Area.

Mrs. Bofu's rabbit farming journey began in December 2024, when she received her starter stock from Raymeg Consultants Private Limited, a corporate member of ZICORBA. Armed with 9 does and 1 buck, she embraced rabbit husbandry not only as a source of income but also as a way of finding fulfillment.

"Rabbit keeping is therapeutic for me. It helps reduce stress, requires relatively low maintenance, and the market is always there," she says with a smile. Less than a year later, her herd has multiplied to 53 rabbits, despite already selling some. Over the

next three months, she plans to expand her stock and improve her infrastructure by 40%.

Beyond her personal success, Mrs. Bofu's role as Treasurer underscores her commitment to collective growth. Together with fellow members, including the historic Dowa Primary School in Rusape, which has produced some of Zimbabwe's most accomplished sons and daughters, the club is nurturing a model that blends education, food security, and economic empowerment.

Her advice to aspiring farmers is simple but powerful: "Start small, connect with other farmers, and grow. Rabbit farming is a viable and rewarding business that can change your life in a short space of time."

Mrs. Bofu's story is a shining example of how ZICORBA's partnerships with corporate members like Raymeg Consultants are building resilient communities, inspiring farmers



Kigali Rabbit Farm: Breeding a Future for Food Security in Rwanda



Various Stakeholders touring Kigali Rabbit Farm Ltd founded by Dieudonne Musoni in 2018

When Dieudonne Musoni founded Kigali Rabbit Farm Ltd (KRF) in 2018, his dream was simple but ambitious: to turn rabbit farming into a serious livestock business that could feed families, create jobs, and open new markets for Africa. Today, that vision is taking shape in remarkable ways.

From the outskirts of Kigali, KRF has grown into a fully registered and licensed livestock enterprise that does much more than raise rabbits. The company specializes in breeding, artificial insemination, feed manufacturing, farmer training, and value addition. In 2022, it secured a major breakthrough by becoming the official African representative of Hycole Genetic, one of the world's leading rabbit genetic firms. Building on this momentum, KRF is now spearheading the establishment of 35 Genetic Rabbit Multiplication Centers across Rwanda and the continent.

"We wanted to do more than just run a farm," says Dieudonne. "Our goal has always been to build a sustainable and competitive rabbit sector that contributes to food security and healthier diets."

The motivation is clear. Rabbit meat is rich in lean protein, affordable to produce, and environmentally friendly. Rabbits reproduce quickly, convert feed efficiently, and their manure and urine provide natural fertilizer for organic farming. These qualities make them a powerful ally in Rwanda's push for food security and nutrition.

KRF's achievements are already impressive. The farm has set up

a genetic breeding center, developed local rabbit feeds, commercialized rabbit semen, and trained hundreds of farmers in Rwanda and neighboring countries. Today, the model farm houses over 1,000 female rabbits and 65 males, bred for multiplication and distribution. Farmers from Burundi, Uganda, the DRC, and Kenya are also benefiting from its training programs and supply networks.

The wider industry is also on the rise. While rabbit farming remains smaller than poultry or cattle, government policies supporting livestock diversification, youth employment, and nutrition are accelerating growth. Demand for rabbit meat is increasing both locally and regionally, with exports on the horizon.

Of course, challenges remain. Access to specialized veterinary services is limited, feed costs remain high for smallholders, and modern slaughterhouses are still lacking. Consumer awareness also needs to grow to match the sector's potential.

Still, Dieudonne is confident about the future. "With innovation, partnerships, and continued training, rabbit farming will become a mainstream enterprise in Rwanda and Africa. We see it as a path to healthier diets, new jobs, and stronger livelihoods for thousands of families," he says.

From a small idea in 2018 to a continental vision in 2025, Kigali Rabbit Farm is proving that rabbits are more than a niche livestock—they could be a cornerstone of Africa's food future.

Rabbit Recipe

Asian Rabbit Fried Rice

Ingredients

2 cups cooked Jasmine rice
300g chopped rabbit meat
20mls hoisin sauce 20mls oyster sauce
20mls sweet chilli sauce 20mls soy sauce
10mls sesame oil
1 large chopped red pepper
1 large chopped yellow pepper
1 large green pepper 1 tsp crushed garlic
1 tsp crushed ginger
1 tsp chopped chilli
50g bean sprouts
2 fresh lemons
1 bunch fresh coriander
1 chopped red onion



Recipe by Chef Zinzile Y Masiye



Directions

In a Wok or Deep pan Add your sesame oil and heat Add chilli, ginger, and garlic and fry Add rabbit meat and fry Add chopped peppers and chopped onions and fry Add, hoisin, sweet chilli, soy and oyster sauce and cook Add cooked rice and fry Add a splash off lemon juice Add chopped coriander Top with bean sprouts and garnish with a slice of lemon and you are done,



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