

**Rabbit Meat Production in Cameroon (06-30 April 2009)
Messages (edited) from e-seminar (23 March to 16 April)**

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#1 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Mar 23, 2009 8:09 pm
Subject: Welcome - pre-seminar activity

Hello Everyone

My co-moderator Mr Jackson Ntapi (Yaounde) and I would like to welcome you to this Internet seminar on "Rabbit Meat Production in Cameroon (06-30 April 2009).

As a pre-seminar activity, you are invited to introduce yourself and tell other participants about your work on rabbit meat production.

A special invitation goes to participants from Cameroon to elaborate their work with greater details and also those who have worked in Cameroon to do the same.

thank you.

Regards Jacky E.L. Foo
Globetree. Program Officer,
Environment & Sustainable Development
www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net

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#2 From: "Festus Ayodeji Sunday Dairo" <fasdairo@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Mar 24, 2009 7:17 am
Subject: Festus Dairo (Nigeria)

- I'm a University teacher and researcher in one of Nigerian Universities. Precisely I teach in the University of Ado-Ekiti, located in Ado-Ekiti, one of the southwest towns of the country.

My area of research is in feed resource management generally in monogastrics.

Dairo

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#3 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Mar 24, 2009 9:25 am
Subject: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria)

Dear All,
Thank you for this mail, I am Ajayi A.O. of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development.

I presently teach in a Nigerian University.

My interest in Rabbit Production is in the area of Agricultural Extension Communication, Programme Planning and Training of rabbit farmers for high productivity through the application of new research findings.

Thank you.
Femi Ajayi

AJAYI, Adedayo Olufemi Ph D.
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
O.A.U.P.O.Box 1979,
Postal Code 220005
Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
Tel; +234 803 409 2337
OR +234 805 407 9392

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#4 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Mar 24, 2009 9:30 am
Subject: Lucas F. (Cameroon)

I am a Veterinary Doctor working with Heifer International Cameroon.

This is an NGO with mission to end hunger and poverty and to care for the Earth with livestock as a point of entry.

Working with animals including rabbits for the past six years in Cameroon thus will have much to offer during the seminar

kind regards
LUCAS F.

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#5 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Mar 24, 2009 11:43 am
Subject: Jacky Foo (Sweden)

Hello Everyone

I am educated as a research scientist (botanist, agro-industrial microbiology) and trained as a biotechnologist but involved in development projects since 1995. Currently employed at Globetree (www.globetree.org) as a program officer on environment and sustainable development where I respond to children's ideas, design project proposals, fund raise and implement projects with children.

In 2008 I had a project to look at how income could be generated by children (<http://www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net/concept.htm>) and then focused at rabbit meat production which led to the construction of 7 rabbit houses (<http://www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net/index.htm>) with a follow-up grant in 2009 and the creation of Rabbit Network Kenya with associate members (<http://www.globetree.org/africa/assoc-members/index.htm>).

Another thing I do (since 1983 !) is to organize e-seminars and e-conferences ...and hence this e-seminar with Jackson Ntapi (Cameroon). I have been to Cameroon.

It is my hope that we launch the "Rabbit Network Cameroon".

Regards jacky foo

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#6 From: Liaqat Hayat <liaqathayat5@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Mar 25, 2009 9:14 am
Subject: Liaqat Hayat (Pakistan)

Hi every body,
i am a civil engineer by profession and hope to get first hand information on rabbit meat not in much use in my country .

Regards
Liaqat Hayat
Islamabad

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#7 From: patrick ngige <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Mar 25, 2009 10:00 am
Subject: Patrick Ngigi (Kenya)

hi all
My name is Patrick Ngigi, am a professional journalist in Kenya. I work with a local Radio Station.

I am looking for a serious investor to begin rabbit farming.

Ngigi
News Editor
Radio Umoja 101.5 FM
13 Riverside Drive
P O Box 78751-00100 Nairobi /Kenya
Tel: +254 20 35 08 34 0
Fax: +254 20 44 54 26 8
Cell: +254 724 4 3 97 00
Email: Ngigi.kamau@gmail.com

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#8 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Mar 26, 2009 12:32 pm
Subject: Jackson Ntapi Nk.

I am a trained agronomist specialized in animal production. Has been working in the field of agricultural extension and rural development for 5 years.

Worked with Heifer International from 2004 to 2008. Now employed as production manager

in an agricultural development group in Yaounde Cameroon. Has worked with rabbit farmers for many years and has participated in other e-seminars including one which i co-hosted with Mr. Jacky Foo. Want to use this opportunity to once again thank participants especially none Cameroonians for their interest in rabbit production in Cameroon, we have tried to invite a wide variety of stakeholders ranging from rabbit farmers, extension workers, researchers, authors, environmentalist and policy makers to improve on the debt and range of discussions during the seminar. As a co-moderator resident in Cameroon, i will want to reassure all participants that Cameroonians will actively participate in the seminar although their access to internet services is quite limited when compared to elsewhere.

Jackson Ntapi Nk
Production Manager
ESperance Eссор Estimate Group
Po BOx 1020 Yaounde, Cameroon

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Message # 9-10 deleted
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#11 From: Steven Lukefahr
Date: Fri Mar 27, 2009 6:13 pm
Subject: Steven Lukefahr (USA)

Greetings to All!

I am a rabbit scientist from the U.S. I have raised rabbits since I was a boy. When I graduated in 1978 with a B.S. degree in Animal Science from Texas A&I University, I was fortunate that Oregon State University had just started the Rabbit Research Program. For the next 4, I worked towards my M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Animal Breeding & Genetics while conducting many rabbit experiments.

From 1983 to 1985, I was employed by Heifer International and assigned to the NW province of Cameroon with the mission of initiating grassroots level meat rabbit projects in villages. At the time, there were very few rabbits in the region. My time in Cameroon was a lifetime experience! The people treated me with much kindness and appreciation. I have been back several times at the request of Heifer headquarters to re-evaluate the rabbit program to ensure that it was "still on track". The last visit was in 1999, ten years ago.

Over the years, I have been fortunate again to have had many opportunities to travel to assist rabbit scientists in countries around the world, and also to have been active in the World Rabbit Science Association.

Cheers, Steven

Steven D. Lukefahr
Regents Professor
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries
MSC 228
Dept. of Animal & Wildlife Sci.
Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Kingsville, TX 78363
USA

Phone: 361-593-3699
Fax: 361-593-3788
E-mail: s-lukefahr@tamuk.edu

Office: <http://users.tamuk.edu/kfsdl00/index.html>
Rabbit Research Program: <http://users.tamuk.edu/kfsdl00/rabb.html>
World Rabbit Science Association (WRSA): <http://world-rabbit-science.com/>

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#12 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Mar 28, 2009 7:52 am
Subject: administrative info

Hello Everyone

(1) thank you very much for the self-introductions from the 7 participants (7/30 so far). I like to encourage the others to do the same as this is a virtual seminar and therefore it is text based. Your self-intro will be the only way that we will know your interests in rabbit production.

(2) Background paper(s) on rabbit production in Cameroon will be used to lead this seminar discussion. One paper (confirmed by the author Steven Lukefahr) is :

"Present status of the heifer project international Cameroon rabbit program: back to the future"

and this paper is available at

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_lukefahr.pdf

Please take a look.

The other paper which Jackson Ntapi (e-group moderator) would like to have for discussion but pending the confirmation of the author(s) is "Protein and energy sources for rabbits diets in Cameroon". 1.- Protein Sources. Fotso J.M., Fomunyan R.T., Ndoping B.N.

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_fotso.pdf

(3) This is a moderated forum which means that there will be a delay time before your message(s) is distributed to all the participants. Your message may be edited (and posted without your approval). Editing is usually minor and done to e.g. remove a commented message which is often an automatic insert; a change in the "Subject" title. Sometimes a long message which contains several topics may be edited and divided into more than one message. This is done to facilitate online reading with "message threads".

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#13 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com
Date: Sat Mar 28, 2009 8:13 am
Subject: [New file uploaded to rabbit-cam](#)

Hello,

This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the rabbit-cam group.

File : /rabbit-cam-seminar.doc
Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Description : April seminar messages #01-12

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar.doc>

To learn more about file sharing for your group, please visit:

<http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/web/index.htmlfiles>

Regards,
elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

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#14 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Mar 29, 2009 1:38 pm
Subject: [Gueben Victor \(Cameroon\)](#)

Hello to all

I am an environmentalist specialised in Agro forestry. I am working with the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (CWAFF) a British registered charity as an extension worker and an Education officer. This project works in primate conservation in situ and ex situ environment at Mefou National Park and the Mvog-Betsi Zoo.

Before working in CWAFF, I had been breeding rabbits since childhood in which I still run a small rabbit farm in the urban area of Yaounde .

Our project also has a program to promote alternative livelihood activities. In this program we encourage hunter's families to keep small livestock including rabbits.

Cheers
Gueben

Gueben Victor
Education Officer
CWAFF
P.O Box 2600
Tel: 237 77 63 34 69

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#15 deleted

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#16 From: Sampson Deba <mbudeba@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Mar 29, 2009 1:45 pm
Subject: [Sampson Deba \(Cameroon\)](#)

Hello to all,

I am Cameroonian and a holder of a Post Graduate Diploma in Forestry Engineering. Since i left School in 2004 I have worked in a Rural Forestry and Agroforestry Support Project (PAFRA) in the North West region of Cameroon for three years. I was a rural forestry extension worker and I helped rural poor farmers to creat both forestry and agroforestry plantations. Most of the agroforestry plantations are created by farmers who do animal husbandry for forage banks in the region and women to promote alley cropping due to the fast depleting nature of the overused soil.

Since 2008 with the close of the project, I was posted to the Mbam and Djerem National Park in the Central Region of Cameroon. Here there is a support project to the fight against poaching (the greatest threat to conservation efforts in this national park) that aims to bring together small-scale animal farm owners and poachers to develop environment-friendly production systems that, at the same time, increase production and maintains in tact the quasi-totallity of the ecosystem. In this respect the production system is based on the production of fodder using fast growing leguminous trees brachiaria

Sampson Deba

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#17 From: Jackson Ntapi Nkwentang <jackonndocs@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Mar 29, 2009 2:53 pm
Subject: Mbutakeh Agbor (Cameroon)

Dear all,

We are a common initiative group (Group de producteur de lapin de L'Ouest) situated in the West of Cameroon.

Our group is made up of 20 members (14 women and 6 men) and we have been keeping rabbits for more than 10 years. Although most of us are still small farmers with an average herd size of 8 producing females. Six of our members have succeeded to become big farmers having upto 40 producing females each in their farms.

We sell our rabbits for meat and consume some in our homes. Rabbit has helped improve the lives of most of our members and we all share the dream of becoming big rabbit farmers one day.

When Mr. Jackson Ntapi (a consultant to our group) informed us about this forum we could not fail to participate so as to learn and share our experiences.

Mbutakeh Agbor
+237 77780525
President of Group
(Group de producteur de lapin de L'Ouest)

#18 From: "eta_yuk" <eta_yuk@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Mar 29, 2009 8:37 pm
Subject: Eta Kelvin Ayuk (Cameroon)

Hello to all,

I am a trained agricultural engineer specialised in agricultural economics and sociology of development. I have researched in marketing of diverse agricultural products.

At present, I work for Plan International - Cameroon as a community development facilitator (field coordinator). One of the aspects we are involved in is livelihood of the rural population.

So, my interest is double: organisation of marketing system within the rabbit sub-sector; and microfinance to support the sub-sector.

Regards
Eta

#19 From: moshood abiola <herbyolar@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Mar 30, 2009 4:31 pm
Subject: POPOOLA Moshood Abiola (Nigeria)

Hello everyone,

I am POPOOLA Moshood Abiola, a postgraduate student (M.Sc.) of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

I had my First Degree in Agric. Extension and Rural Sociology of the same University, presently I am running my M.Sc. Programme in the Department of Animal Science of the same Institution; this is due to the interest I have in Animal Breeding and Genetics. Presently my research is about genetics of adaptability of rabbits to high ambient temperature and relative humidity (heat tolerance of rabbits under humid conditions).

I am fortunate to be using rabbits for my research, I found it easy because I have raised rabbits since I was a boy. My interest in Rabbit Production is in the area of providing information that will enhance the improvement of rabbits' productivity by applying knowledge and skills acquired from the Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology as well as through the application of new research findings with respect to Animal Breeding and Genetics.

Best Regards

POPOOLA Moshood Abiola
Department of Animal Science,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
Tel; +234 8055677314 OR +234 7034584168

#20 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Mon Mar 30, 2009 8:42 pm
Subject: Saidu OSENI (Nigeria)

My name is Saidu Oseni, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

I am the President of the Sub-Sahara Africa Branch of the World Rabbit Science Association (SSA-WRSA). Through this association, our members were able to attend the 9th World Rabbit Congress in Verona, Italy – some were actually supported financially to attend, thanks to our collective efforts and the support of the executives of the WRSA, under the leadership of Dr. S.D. Lukefahr, who provided guidance and inspiration all along. At the Congress, the SSA-WRSA was recognized as a WRSA branch and we participated in the WRSA council meeting.

So far, the SSA-WRSA has had two meetings – the first one held at the Congress venue in Verona, Italy, in June, 2008, and the second one in Ile-Ife, Nigeria, in November, 2008, when a caretaker committee was elected. We have an e-mail group for the SSA-WRSA (rr_ssa@yahoogroups.com). We are also registered with the global body of WRSA through their e-mail linkage (wrsa@kralk.com). These networks enable us to share information about current research and development issues related to rabbit production. If you are interested, I can include your e-mail address in both e-mail groups.

I wish to use this opportunity to invite all of you to join the SSA-WRSA. Our web-site can be accessed at:

<http://www.oauife.edu.ng/faculties/agric/wrsa/Home.htm>

Further information relating to the Constitution, Database of Members and the Registration Form can be accessed at:

<http://www.oauife.edu.ng/faculties/agric/wrsa/About%20the%20WRSA%20-%20SSA.htm>

Finally, please spare the time to visit the new web-link on "Rabbit Production in the Developing World", set up by the WRSA Secretary for the Developing World (Dr. S.D. Lukefahr) and the WRSA Web-Master (Dr. F. Lebas).

Go to <http://world-rabbit-science.com/> and look in the menu to the left for "Rabbits for Developing Countries". I can assure you that the contents were specially developed to meet the needs of rabbit researchers and producers from the developing world!

Dr. S.O. Oseni,
Animal Breeding & Genetics,
Department of Animal Science,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Osun State, NIGERIA.
Mobile: + 234 (0)806 658 1894
Fax: + 234 (0)36 232 401

Coordinator, World Rabbit Science Association,
Sub-Sahara African Branch (SSA-WRSA)

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<http://www.oauife.edu.ng/faculties/agric/oseni.html>

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#21 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Mar 31, 2009 3:53 pm
Subject: Re: administrative info: 2 background papers available for seminar discussion

Jacky Foo wrote:

> The other paper which Jackson Ntapi (e-group moderator)
> would like to have for discussion but pending the confirmation of the author(s)

jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com> wrote (31 March)

> Got good news, just obtained authorization from the principal

> author of the paper " Protein and energy sources for rabbit

> diets in Cameroon" Mr. Fotso Jean Marie.

> I visited him at his office and he accepted to participate and for us to use his paper.

thank you.. Jackson... for the good news.

To EVERYONE

Please take a look at these two papers before 06 April:

(a) "Protein and energy sources for rabbits diets in Cameroon".

1.- Protein Sources. Fotso J.M., Fomunyan R.T., Ndoping B.N.

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_fotso.pdf

(b) "Present status of the heifer project international Cameroon rabbit program: back to the future"

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_lukefahr.pdf

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#22 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Mar 31, 2009 4:59 pm
Subject: Re: administrative info: papers for discussion

Dear all,

Was discussing with Steven Lukefahr on the reasons for choosing an additional paper on rabbit nutrition in Cameroon. I observed the opening this could create for a vast discussion on various alternative ways by which rabbits could be fed cost-effectively, but also to throw light on the flow of research information to farmers which from my perspective is not very good in Cameroon.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

e-seminar co-moderator

Production Manager Esperance Essor Estime group

P O Box 1020 Yaounde Cameroon

#23 From: jeta james <jijames2002@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Mar 31, 2009 5:36 pm
Subject: Jeta James Fawoh (Cameroon)

Hello all,

I am Jeta James Fawoh, a trained Environmental manager. I am an Environmentalist working in the field of wildlife conservation. I have worked in this field for seven years now. During this time I worked at the Limbe Wildlife Centre and the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (where I currently work) all of Cameroon.

Presently I am the Head of the Environmental/Conservation education department of the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (www.cwaf.org) and the Mvog-Betsi Zoo/Botanical Garden.

I am interest with all that has to do with livelihood projects, that's why I cannot attempt refusing Mr. Ntapi's invitation to join this group.

Best regards
Jeta

Jeta James Fawoh
Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund
P.O Box 775 Limbe, Cameroon

#24 From: Paul Kofi Karikari <pk.karikari@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 1, 2009 5:09 pm
Subject: P.K. Karikari (Ghana)

Dear ALL,

I am a livestock research scientist and a lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana.

I have developed interest in rabbits because I believe that they have a great potential to help almost everybody to raise additional income and to improve animal protein consumption. I am now researching into the possibility of using leaf meals to improve productivity of rabbits at lower cost.

I am happy to be a member of this interest group.

P.K. Karikari

#25 From: Guemuh Geoffrey Nsofon <nsofongg@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 1, 2009 5:38 pm
Subject: Guemuh Geoffrey (Cameroon)

Hi

I hold an M Sc in Economics (Agribusines) and work for the Ministry of Agriculture in Cameroon.

In the Department of Local and Community Development we focus on policies aimed at improving the livelihoods of rural communities.

Recently we have noticed that rearing rabbits greatly contributes to attaining this objective, especially in the North West and West regions.

Guemuh Geoffrey. Nsofon
Department of Local and Community Development
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
P O Box 2201 Yaoundé Cameroon
Email: nsofongg@yahoo.com
Tel (237) 96 24 27 10 (mobile)

#26 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Wed Apr 1, 2009 7:06 pm
Subject: Making the most out of this E-seminar

Dear Jacky Foo,

On the E-Seminar, I wish to suggest that you discuss & fine tune the entire programme with Dr. S. D. Lukefahr <s-lukefahr@tamuk.edu>.

The reasons for this are as follows:

- (i) the Heifer report, which is the lead paper, was written by him;
- (ii) the Heifer 'intervention' in Cameroon was coordinated by him. In addition, Dr. Lukefahr has had a lot of field experiences in backyard rabbit research & development in Africa and S. E. Asia.

Further, democratically speaking, it would be appropriate to ask for general input & contributions from all registered participants about the overall plan and direction. This can be done within the next 4 - 5 days prior to the commencement of the Seminar.

My concerns border on ways of getting the best possible outcome out of the E-Seminar. You never can tell - this E-Seminar may lead to a rabbit revolution in Cameroon and in sub-Saharan Africa!

I remain an optimist.

Saidu

--

Dr. S.O. Oseni,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
NIGERIA.
Coordinator, World Rabbit Science Association,
Sub-Sahara African Branch (SSA-WRSA)

#27 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Apr 1, 2009 7:54 pm
Subject: Re: Making the most out of this E-seminar

Dr S.O Oseni wrote:

>....I wish to suggest that you discuss & finetune the entire

- > programme with Dr. S. D. Lukefahr
- >.....it would be appropriate to ask for general input &
- >contributions from all registered participants about the
- >overall plan and direction.
- > My concerns border on ways of getting the best possible
- >outcome out of the E-Seminar.

I will also look forward to comments from Jackson Ntapi.

The e-seminar has a few objectives and we will certainly get some positive outcomes from it.

(i) the e-seminar aims to gather Cameroonians who are interested in rabbits. The last review was in 2000 by Steven Lukefahr and it will be the lead paper and background paper for discussion. The e-seminar is to update the review with more information on the state-of-the-art of rabbit production in Cameroon.

(2) I am therefore very pleased to see the many self-introductions from participants (including 7 from Cameroon) and the efforts that Jackson has put in to contact people in Cameroon.

I anticipate that the e-seminar will provide more information to answer questions like :

Q1: what has happened in Cameroon between 2000 and 2008 ?

Q2: What will be the role of the key people in Cameroon in increasing rabbit meat production ?

Q3: what can they do together and with a future "Rabbit Network Cameroon" ?

What's next (after the e-seminar) will depend on how active and enthusiastic all the participants are..... already we can see this from Dr. S.O. Oseni who is also the Coordinator of the Sub-Sahara African Branch for the World Rabbit Science Association.

Another example is Anthony Akpan (Pan African Vision for the Environment) who proposed 2 days ago the idea of having a "Rabbit Network Nigeria".

I am already thinking beyond the creation of the networks in Kenya, Cameroon and Nigeria and I can guess that Steven L who is the General Secretary for Developing Countries in WRSA has also thought of it.

Question to Dr Oseni:

How can be "fine tune the entire programme" of the e-seminar on Rabbit Production in Cameroon ?

regards
jacky

#28 From: jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 12:37 pm
Subject: Re: Making the most out of this E-seminar

Dr S.O Oseni wrote:

>I wish to suggest that you discuss & finetune the entire
>programme with Dr. S. D. Lukefahr <s-lukefahr@tamuk. edu>.
>....(cut)...
>My concerns border on ways of getting the best possible
>outcome out of the E-Seminar. You never can tell -
>this E-Seminar may lead to a rabbit revolution in
>Cameroon and in sub-Saharan Africa!

Dear Dr. S.O Oseni,

Interesting reading from you, I am moderating the E-seminar with Mr. Jacky Foo and want to inform you of the high regard we have of the work Dr. Steven has and is still doing in Sub Saharan Africa. He has been involved in most if not all of the process ranging from the selection of papers to the timing of the event. We are very concerned with the scope of the discussions during the seminar and intend to take onboard suggestions from all members.

Please note the papers proposed do not in any way define the scope of the discussions but are just for guiding participants, thus the Heifer program will be treated as an example of a rabbit project among many other rabbit projects. We hope to cover as much as possible on all the issues affecting rabbit production in Cameroon to better achieve your well defined revolution.

To achieve this we are hoping for maximum contribution from lead authors like Dr. Steven and from experienced rabbit scientist like yourself who happen to be of a neighbouring country (Nigeria) that may have a similar rabbit sub-sector like Cameroon. I will consult with Dr. Steven for additional comments on your concerns but how do you respond to this.

1) To increase the chance of achieving a revolution, we are inviting in addition to rabbit farmers and rabbit scientist: environmentalist, development workers especially in the field of rural economics/micro-finance and policy makers in the ministry of Agriculture. This to better address some of the off-farm constraints encountered by farmers.

Thanks once more for your very professional concern.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.
E-seminar co-moderator

#29 From: jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 12:54 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Making the most out of this E-seminar

Dear all,

Jacky you are right in outlining the wonderful interest and contribution from Dr Oseni, Anthony, Dr. Steven and others.

To me this is already a great achievement from the E-seminar for rabbit interest groups in Cameroon for most were not even aware of the existence of such networks.

Will be sharing constantly with Dr. Oseni far beyond the seminar on how issues are done in Nigeria.

During the seminar, i am already looking forward to learn from Dr. Oseni on how the Nigerian authorities ensure that useful research results go down swiftly to farmers.

There is just too much to share and thanks to the E-seminar and rabbit networks (still to be created), this can be possible.

WHO SAID AFRICA IS NOT MOVING?

Kind regards
Jackson Ntapi Nk
E-seminar Co-moderator
Production Manager E3 Group
P O box 1020 Yaounde Cameroon

#30 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 1:46 pm
Subject: Patrick Ngige (Kenya)

Am a kenyan, I have been trying to get government approval to commercialize rabbit, the process has been slow but I hope to eventually succeed.

Though I have not contributed in this e seminar, I find valuable input from all you participants and it is great to know rabbit farming is being viewed a solution out of poverty.

The Kenyan situation is tricky since negative thinking about rabbit meat is still there; there is also comparative factor with chicken which is ready for market after just 6 weeks while rabbit takes much longer.

This factor vis a vis rabbit price as compared to chicken has demoralized many.

One of my colleague I proposed this business suggested a biotechnology kind of way to boost growth

#31 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 2:57 pm
Subject: Patrick Ngige (Kenya)

it is encouraging reading through your post since I regard myself in experienced in animal husbandry, am actually learning a lot through your exchange.

My rabbit farm has 50 bunnies, feed the problem since there lacks rabbit feed supply here in Kenya.

Many have asked me how I have managed to cope, my intention is to work with heifer – I have already engaged them - their strategy to pass experience and benefits to others appear working since here in Kenya we have a same system

with chicken where the largest chicken supplier called KENCHIC provides all necessary facilities to farmer.

If I can replicate my rabbits to others and in turn I provide end user services, I see myself creating opportunities to many youth around my locality who find rabbit rearing cumbersome and time consuming with little financial return.

#32 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 3:18 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria)

Dayo Ajayi wrote:

- > My interest in Rabbit Production is in the area of
- > Agricultural Extension Communication, Programme
- > Planning and Training of rabbit farmers

Can you buy rabbit meat from a local butchery or super market in Ile-Ife ?

How many farmers are you in touch with through your extension work that produces more than 10 kg rabbit meat/month for sale ?

regards

jacky

www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net

#33 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 2:39 pm
Subject: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya situation

Mar 25, 2009 patrick ngige wrote:

- >..... am a professional journalist in Kenya.
- >I work with a local Radio Station.
- > News Editor
- > Radio Umoja 101.5 FM

Apr 2, 2009 patrick ngige wrote:

- > The Kenyan situation is tricky since negative thinking
- > about rabbit meat is still there;

what is the negative thinking about rabbits in Kenya ?
Please elaborate thanks

- > there is also comparative factor with chicken which is ready
- > for market after just 6 weeks while rabbit takes much longer.
- > This factor vis a vis rabbit price as compared to chicken has
- > demoralized many.

How does the length of time to reach slaughter age make rabbit meat "demoralizing" ???

How is the per kilo of different meats priced in Nairobi, Kenya ?

+++++

Jacky E.L. Foo
www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net

#34 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 3:54 pm
Subject: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya situation

response to jacky

Well, for a rabbit to reach market age, it has to be on the farm for 3 to 5 months, that long enough – long enough because Kenyan tend to compare with chicken.

now, for those 3 to 5 months, you will feed the rabbits and only sell them at almost same price as chicken. So calculating the rate of return on rabbit – one gets demoralized and feel rabbit farming is not lucrative –

I have been of the opinion that if one person – MYSELF IN THIS CASE- enter into large rabbit farming and encourage others to do the same on small scale, I will have provided employment since they will deliver rabbit to my farm which will slaughter and sell on large scale.

A kilo of rabbit can go for 300 shillings in Nairobi

#35 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 2, 2009 4:11 pm
Subject: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya situation

Jacky askedWhat's negative thinking – well, in Kenya, there was a time unscrupulous used to slaughter donkey and sell it as cow {beef}, the national wildlife service has also be warning the public of bush meat. It is these reports that make people fear consuming rabbit.

Most of my new customers say they want to be assured the meat am selling is not a cat. Whether cut into pieces, the thought of a dad cat is scaring to many.

I have been of the opinion that if Kenyan can be encouraged to rear rabbits, that would be the first step towards the much needed awareness campaign.

During my efforts to get commercial rabbit farming license – I have noted agriculture officers in government ministries are keen on this, they however have no means to fund – they say if I have a large farm able to supply on large scale, they would provide market.

Now on the lenth of time, 3 to 5 months before a rabbit reach market age is too long, this according to my friends who attempted rabbit farming but later stopped. They tend to compare financial benefits with chicken.

A kilo of Rabbit meat goes for 300 to 350 shillings. that the price I have been selling.

#36 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 11:50 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): donkey as beef and cats as rabbits in Kenya

"laprata" wrote:

>in Kenya, there was a time unscrupulous used to slaughter
>donkey and sell it as cow {beef}, ...It is these reports
>that make people fear consuming rabbit.

One just need to be prepared and take simple precautions with regards to such rumours. They are always people with such negative thinking everywhere. Everyone does not give up driving cars just because 100 cars are involved in accidents every year and 50 people die ?

>It is these reports that make people fear consuming rabbit.
>Most of my new customers say they want to be assured the
>meat am selling is not a cat.

So what steps will you take to assure your customers that you are not giving them cats ?

In Europe, rabbits are usually sold whole and with their heads attached. When it is cut and packed, these packages are from certified meat packing companies.
+++

#37 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 11:57 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): marketing rabbits in Kenya

"laprata" wrote:

> ..I have noted agriculture officers in government ministries
>are keen on this, they however have no means to fund –
>they say if I have a large farm able to supply on large
>scale, they would provide market.

how will they provide "market" ?
what do they mean ?

Is there an existing market in Nairobi or Kenya that they will introduce you to ?

#38 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 12:07 pm
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): friends stopped rabbit business

"laprata" wrote:

> Now on the lenth of time, 3 to 5 months before a rabbit
>reach market age is too long, this according to my friends
>who attempted rabbit farming but later stopped. They tend
>to compare financial benefits with chicken.

if your friends have tried rabbit farming and "later stopped" because chicken yields more profit, why are you doing rabbits instead of chicken ?

Do you have any business analyses from your friends to show that "rabbit farming is not lucrative" at all in Kenya and it is better to keep chickens ?

I doubt any intelligent business person will base a business decision solely because the turn over time that chickens take 6-8 weeks and not rabbits because they take 3-5 months.

#39 From: Ngwendy Fungoh <ngwendy_nick@yahoo.com>

Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 1:11 pm

Subject: Ngwendy Fungoh (Cameroon)

Hi Dear All,

i am final year student in biochemistry, university of y'de 1.

i am interested in livestock studies and research especially concerning rabbits, their growth, rabbit meat production and lots of other things.

i have developed interest in rabbits because my parents grew rabbits, i loved their calm nature and everything about them. i will love to expand this rabbit farm in future and thought it wise to join the forum to get enlightened

i am glad to be part of this forum.

#40 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>

Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 2:16 pm

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): rabbit business / export promotion council

>if your friends have tried rabbit farming and "later stopped"
>because chicken yields more profit, why are you doing rabbits
>instead of chicken ?

what I meant is – there is little knowledge on economic importance of rabbit. It's not a question why I am in rabbits and not chicken, I have seen the potential of rabbits to thrive economically and this the reason am sharing my thoughts in this forum.

We have to get this notion that rabbit cannot do better in Kenya. I am a rabbit farmer albeit with no agricultural knowledge and as I talk, demand for rabbit meat is overwhelming.

Nairobi is hosting international conferences daily where many people of various nationalities are attending, hotels want to meet the cuisine demand by providing variety for foreign nationalities.

Hospitals are treating patients and want a source of easy to digest source of animal protein.

Re: marketing rabbits in Kenya

"laprata" wrote:

> ..I have noted agriculture officers in government ministries
>are keen on this, they however have no means to fund –
>they say if I have a large farm able to supply on large
>scale, they would provide market.

Jacky asked:

>how will they provide "market" ? what do they mean ?

>Is there an existing market in Nairobi or Kenya that they will introduce you to ?

On your question how Government provide market - we have an export promotion council in Kenya which provides channel for interested buyers, it's an internet portal, the government own Kenya Meat Commission buys livestock from farmers - Kenya Meat Commission is the existing market.

We have privately owned Farmers Choice

Hope this information help you see why Kenya is a goldmine for rabbit business.

#41 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 2:36 pm
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): donkey as beef and cats as rabbits in Kenya

Yeah jacky, it's a fact, Kenyan are very cautious since sometime ago donkeys were being slaughtered and passed as beef.

To assure customers am not giving them cats, just like you have mentioned with Europe where rabbits are usually sold whole and with their heads attached, its the same scenario here.

The local butcher who sells has a head with him down there to assure customers.

Now looking at it in big time business, we have Kenya Bureau of standard officers who make visit to farms to make quality and safety assurance. They issue some postage like stickers to meat you are certified. Once with the sticker, you are assured of public confidence on your product.

That why I say, its only the necessary assembly and investment needed for a large scale rabbit investor.

#42 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com
Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 4:46 pm
Subject: New file uploaded to rabbit-cam

Hello,

This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the rabbit-cam group.

File : /rabbit-cam-seminar18-38.doc
Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Description : discussion messages #18-38

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar18-38.doc>

To learn more about file sharing for your group, please visit:

<http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/web/index.html#files>

Regards,

elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

#43 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Fri Apr 3, 2009 5:42 pm

Subject: Re: administrative info: how to participate effectively

(1) Discussion Papers:

Print out the two discussion papers. You will find the hard copies useful when reading and as a reference

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_lukefahr.pdf

http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_fotso.pdf

(2) Earlier Messages:

All discussion messages are available at

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/messages>

For a quick download of messages, you can also go to:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/>

Periodically I upload my personal file of discussion messages (edited). Make a print out of these earlier messages (01-38) too.

rabbit-cam-seminar.doc (discussion messages 01-17)

rabbit-cam-seminar18-38.doc (discussion messages #18-38)

#44 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 8:10 am

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): selling rabbits at local butcheries in Nairobi

"laprata" wrote:

> To assure customers am not giving them cats,....

> The local butcher who sells has a head with him

>down there to assure customers.

Q: are the heads attached to each rabbit

or

Q: does the butcher just has a detached head to show that he sells rabbits (without their heads attached) in Nairobi ?

Q: Can you provide a digital pic of rabbits sold in a local butchery in Nairobi?

Thanks jacky

#45 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 8:16 am

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

"laprata" wrote:

- > we have Kenya Bureau of standard officers who make visit
- > to farms to make quality and safety assurance.
- > They issue some postage like stickers to meat you
- > are certified. Once with the sticker, you are
- > assured of public confidence on your product.

At what level of production is such an inspection need by the Bureau ?
(i.e. how many rabbits are slaughtered every day ? ?)

Is it possible for you to get from the Bureau a list of farms that slaughter rabbits for commercial sales ?

Regards jacky

#46 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 8:21 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): rabbit business / export promotion council

"laprata" wrote:

- > > ..I have noted agriculture officers in government ministries
- > > are keen on this, they however have no means to fund -
- > > they say if I have a large farm able to supply on large
- > > scale, they would provide market.

- > we have an export promotion council in Kenya which
- > provides channel for interested buyers, it's an
- > internet portal, the government own Kenya Meat
- > Commission buys livestock from farmers -
- > Kenya Meat Commission is the existing market.

Can you find out how much rabbits is Kenya exporting and to which countries ?

Regards jacky

#47 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 8:30 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): lack of feed supply in Kenya

"laprata" wrote:

- > My rabbit farm has 50 bunnies, feed the problem since
- > there lacks rabbit feed supply here in Kenya.

What are you giving your rabbits to eat ?

- > lacks rabbit feed supply here in Kenya

Q: are you referring to the lack of greens (grass, vegetables) for your rabbits only?

or

are you unable to find commercial pelleted feeds for your rabbits ?

or

are you making a general statement that rabbit farmers in Kenya have problems in getting feed supply ?

regards jacky

#48 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 2:55 pm
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

Jacky asked

>At what level of production is such an inspection
>need by the Bureau ? (i.e. how many rabbits are
>slaughtered every day ? ?)

The Kenya bureau of standard makes inspection in all commercial engagement, small or large scale, there are those like myself who operate small scale but rarely get Inspection due to distance from the bureau of standard to my small farm, the cost implication also puts me off and satisfied getting a veterinary check my rabbits when am about to sell.

There is no major commercial rabbit farm, existing few are based outside Nairobi – I have sent a request to see if there is any list of farms that slaughter rabbits for commercial sales.

Am however the only person keen to begin this venture based on extensive research I have been doing.

Jacky asked-

>are the heads attached to each rabbit,

No, the head is not attached, but producing one head, customers feel satisfied, unsatisfied customers are requested to visit my farm and make instant orders.

Jacky asked

>Q: Can you provide a digital pic of rabbits sold in a
>local butchery in Nairobi?

I will get you some of the pictures

Jacky asked -

>What are you giving your rabbits to eat?

There is a National rabbit breeding center some 3 kilometer from my farm, they feed rabbit pellets, I get them from the national rabbit breeding center, there is bran and pollard used as concentrates.

jacky asked -

>are you referring to the lack of greens (grass, vegetables)
>for your rabbits only?

No, greens are readily available

My statement reflects the situation in my area of business, since I have done a study and concluded there is no major rabbit farmer in Nairobi, am convinced commercial rabbit feed is not easily available- they are however available at the national rabbit breeding center in Ngong

Jacky asked -

- >Can you find out how much rabbits is Kenya exporting
- >and to which countries ?

currently, Kenya does not export rabbit meat, however, rabbit is exportable under export promotion council, if a proper business can be set in Kenya will all required standards, a rabbit farmer can list his product with export promotion council portal

#49 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 5:11 pm

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): selling rabbits at local butcheries in Nairobi

"laprata" wrote:

- >No, the head is not attached, but producing one head,
- >customers feel satisfied, unsatisfied customers are
- >requested to visit my farm and make instant orders.



if Kenyans spread bad rumours/thoughts about local butcheries selling cats as rabbits, why do you detach the head of the rabbit ??

The butcher could be selling a cat and showing the head of a rabbit !!
(after all, you can make a nice dish with the rabbit's head+neck)
http://www.donkey-pal.com/pic/chengdu-food/rabbit_head_200.jpg

#50 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 5:00 pm

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): lack of feed supply in Kenya

laprata wrote:

- >My statement reflects the situation in my area of
- >business, since I have done a study and concluded
- >there is no major rabbit farmer in Nairobi, am
- >convinced commercial rabbit feed is not easily
- >available- they are however available at
- >the national rabbit breeding center in Ngong

How much do you pay for your pelleted rabbit feed at the National Rabbit Breeding Center in Ngong.

P.S. you can call Charles Kamau Mwangi
Phone: 0721-747328, 0733-121674
and ask him where he gets his pellets for his 400 rabbits.

regards
jacky

#51 From: jackson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 4, 2009 9:39 pm
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

Dear Jacky and Patrick,

My comments:

I have been reading keenly through your discussions and think much of the issues affecting the emergence of small farms in Sub Saharan Africa are addressed

It is worth mentioning that Kenya is quite in advance in the elaboration of programs and the institutionalization of their agricultural sector to better support and manage growth.

Critical issues reported by Patrick which are very deficient in our Cameroonian setting includes:

- Government run programs to support farmers in the marketing of products
- A body taking care of the certification of animal products
- A national breeding center that certainly ensures the perenity and availability of viable breeds
- Slaughtering and dressing of rabbits

My Questions:

Q1) Knowing the importance of certification to consumers confidence, I will like to ask Patrick if it is not possible for small farmers in a region to come together and form a rabbit collection and sales point where some level of off-farm control can be effected by the certification body. I know this has been achieved in the Kenyan smallholder milk sector.

Q2) To Patrick

Is the national breeding center not having some statistics on rabbit production in Kenya. What is really the function of the center?

I was guessing it should be providing young bunnies to emerging farms and thus have some statistics of big farms!

My Remarks

It is clear how weak the agricultural sector in most SSA countries is in the collection and management of production statistics. Just so difficult to obtain the least information like the number of big farms in a country. I think the creation of the country rabbit websites can help in this domain. Is it possible for us to obtain and upload information on existing farms in the country websites? Can be tedious

Kind regards
Jackson Ntapi

#52 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 7:53 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

"laprata" wrote:

> The Kenya bureau of standard makes inspection in all commercial
> engagement, small or large scale, there are those like myself
> who operate small scale but rarely get Inspection due to
> distance from the bureau of standard to my small farm,

Where is the Kenya Bureau of Standard located (in Nairobi) ?

How does the Bureau define "commercial engagement" ?

I could guess that the Bureau of Standard would have a definition for "commercial engagement" and "small or large scale" operation.

Jacky asked earlier:

> At what level of production is such an inspection
> need by the Bureau ? (i.e. how many rabbits are
> slaughtered every day ? ?)

This question was not answered. See above !

Let me give you some scenarios:

(i) Scenario 1:

I have seen many family households with 2 or 3 females in the breeding stock. They often use the meat for their own consumption but by sell bunnies or adults too when there is an opportunity.

Does the Bureau inspects such an operation ?

(ii) Scenario 2:

A rescue center or a school has 70 rabbits and the meat is consumed at the center or school. It does not sell meat to the public.

Is this a commercial engagement ?

Does the Bureau inspects such an operation ?

Issue:

How does the Kenya Bureau know that such a site exist when such a center/school does not even know that such a Bureau exist and its role.

(iii) Scenario:

a business set-up that solely produces rabbits for sale. This is a commercial engagement regardless of the scale.

> There is no major commercial rabbit farm, existing few
> are based outside Nairobi – I have sent a request to see

>if there is any list of farms that slaughter rabbits for
>commercial sales.

thanks. I will look forward to the info.

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#53 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 10:20 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

Jacky asked,

>- Where is the Kenya Bureau of Standard located (in Nairobi) ?

The Bureau is located along Mombasa Road at a place called "South B"

jacky asked,

>How does the Bureau define "commercial engagement" ?

well, am not sure how it defines commercial engagement but I would say any product for mass market should be certified by the Bureau of standards.

Referring to your scenario below and I quote for easy read

(i) Scenario 1:

>I have seen many family households with 2 or 3 females in the
> breeding stock. They often use the meat for their own
>consumption but by sell bunnies or adults too when there
>is an opportunity.
>Does the Bureau inspects such an operation ?

Under scenario one, the Bureau of Standard would be needed if there is no veterinary personnel to check out the health status of the rabbits. Suppose the recipient complain of bad rabbit meat, the bureau will definitely act – however, families keeping rabbits for their consumption are advised to have a vet officer – I have a vet officer from Ngong National Rabbit Breeding center who does all health inspection for my rabbits.

jacky asked-

>I could guess that the Bureau of Standard would have
>a definition for "commercial engagement" and
"small or large scale" operation.

I will check with the Bureau on this

Jacky asked earlier:

>At what level of production is such an inspection
>need by the Bureau ? (i.e. how many rabbits are
>slaughtered every day ? ?)

well, production for mass market, I keep between 20 and 30 rabbits, this a low number, so I engage a veterinary officer- however, to be able to sell via

supermarkets or within central Business District, I will need certification sticker from the Bureau to gain public confidence.

jacky- on your Scenario 2:

- >A rescue center or a school has 70 rabbits and
- >the meat is consumed at the center or school.
- >It does not sell meat to the public.
- >Is this a commercial engagement ?
- >Does the Bureau inspect such an operation ?

Well, under this circumstance, it is not commercial engagement, however the rescue is advised to have an inspection record should need arise and the health officials want to see health records of the rabbits. If they at any point want to sell outside the rescue, they will need bureau of standard certification- that's a MUST.

Issue:

- >How does the Kenya Bureau know that such a site exist
- >when such a center/school does not even know that
- >such a Bureau exist and its role.

Kenya Bureau has advertised its role widely in newspaper, TV and Radios, so Kenyan know its existence – all products in Kenya have Kenya Bureau of standards certification, in fact Kenya Bureau of standards certification helps market the products since customers have faith in certified products.

Rabbit meat is no exception, chicken, sausages, all meat sold in supermarket is certified. So the Bureau advises any business seek certification, so this is more of a process when starting a business, just the way you look for a business license, anyone with rabbit business need to get this certification, with certification, you can sell with confidence

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#54 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 10:34 am
Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): Kenya Bureau of Standard

Jackson Ntapi asked

- >Q1) Knowing the importance of certification to consumers
- >confidence, I will like to ask Patrick if it is not
- >possible for small farmers in a region to come
- >together and form a rabbit collection and sales point
- >where some level of off-farm control can be effected
- >by the certification body. I know this has been
- >achieved in the Kenyan smallholder milk sector.

Exactly my point Jackson, when I began by explaining why my friend left rabbit farming for chicken, I was actually trying to put a cross this point and I gave an example of the biggest chicken business in Kenya called kenchic. I also mentioned a system used by heifer international where you pass the benefits to the community. That's where am coming from, am a rabbit farmer with strong desire to build a network of rabbit farmers,

I will provide end user facility, I have a farm where individual rabbit farmers can sell two - four bunnies, together with mine – I do the slaughter in accepted standards {read Kenya Bureau of Standards} I package, I sell to mass market.

>Q2) To Patrick

>Is the national breeding center not having some statistics

>on rabbit production in Kenya.

>What is really the function of the center?

The center acts as a resource center for rabbit farmers, but the officials there feel that government has not been active encouraging farmers to start rabbit farming. I will check if there are statistics we can share in this forum.

>I was guessing it should be providing young bunnies to

>emerging farms and thus have some statistics of big farms!

that's their role but few Kenyan have this mentality rabbit farming is not commercially viable, what they lack is a central place where they can sell rabbits after rearing, now am trying to provide this central place- farmer A, B, C, D, E F ... can drop a ready bunny at my central place for slaughter and subsequent mass marketing. Its easier to sell many than two, three or four rabbits in a high demand market

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#55 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>

Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 10:37 am

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): lack of feed supply in Kenya

Jacky asked -

>How much do you pay for your pelleted rabbit feed at the National

> Rabbit Breeding Center in Ngong -

For a kilo I buy 35 shillings, I buy three kilos per day.

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#56 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>

Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 10:43 am

Subject: Re: Patrick Ngige (Kenya): selling rabbits at local butcheries in Nairobi

Jacky asked -

>if Kenyans spread bad rumours/thoughts about local

>butcheries selling cats as rabbits,

>why do you detach the head of the rabbit ??

if they spread rumors, well, that's a challenge in any business, but they later come to realize the business is respected, mine is very much respected, after all, I have been in this business for a good five years, 5 years is good enough time

to gain acceptance, however am restricted with my locality and my hope is to sell to Nairobi residents

>The butcher could be selling a cat and showing the head
>of a rabbit !! (after all, you can make a nice dish
>with the rabbit's head+neck)

It is rare since I engage respected butchers, few would like their business go down after public get the truth. In fact, they see rabbit meat as an additional source of income

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#57 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sun Apr 5, 2009 11:21 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: messages need approval before distribution

Hello Everyone

We will start the discussion on "Rabbit production in Cameroon" tomorrow.

Here are some administrative info and requests for your consideration during your participation.

(1) Please note that all messages will be moderated, i.e. your message will be reviewed by the moderators (Jackson N and Jacky F) and edited if necessary. So there will always be a delay in the appearance of your message in the web.

(2) There are a few things that participants can help the moderators to reduce their work load and make editing easy. If you are making a comment on an existing message, please use the same "Subject" title or extension of it. This will allow readers to put into context your message or to skip it. e.g.
Title: "Patrick Ngige (Kenya)"

Your comment may carry an extension title e.g.:
>Patrick Ngige (Kenya): lack of feed supply in Kenya

(3) when making a comment or reply, it is important to quote and use an excerpt from the original message you are commenting. This will enable readers to follow the sub-discussion ("thread"). It is preferred that you use " > " as the pre-text before your quote. e.g.
>How much do you pay for your pelleted rabbit
>feed at the National Rabbit Breeding Center
>in Ngong ?

Please do not insert the whole commented message.

(4) if your name shown in your email address is different from your real name, please remember to sign/add your real name at the end of your message. e.g. ID = "laprata"

real name = "Patrick Ngige"

(note: you can change your name but not the email address) e.g.
from "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>
to "Patrick Ngige" <laprata@yahoo.com>

(5) always treat a comment or reply as a "separate" message since many will receive discussion messages as individual messages in their mail box. For the reader, it is much easier to read a comment or reply if there is an excerpt from an earlier message.

Note: participants will find it much easier to follow the various discussion threads if they visit

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/messages>

++
regards
jacky

#58 DELETED

#59 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 12:33 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria)

Dear Jacky,

I am proud of this group and want to use this medium to repond to the questions raised.

I can buy rabbit meat from butcher in Ile-Ife. This answers the question, however, the following information in addition to the answer may be relevant :

- (a) Rabbit meat are not part of that which is sold in the local butchery or super market in Ile-Ife. They are mostly sold on request by the consumers.
- (b) Farmers do not have enough for the ever increasing market because of the demand for white meat (which has rabbit meat in the list) which was recommended by the medical people as good.

On the question requesting to know the number of farmers that I am in touch with through my extension work that produces more than 10 kg rabbit meat/month for sale, my response is that most farmers here are not producing on commercial scale yet. We are trying to identify other rabbit farmers that has the potential and we can work with them to adopt scientifically proved practices to increase their production in the area being covered.

I want to state that the Nigerian group of researchers in the area of rabbit production is planning to compile the list of rabbit farms and the number of rabbits owned by category. With the list in place, I should be able to promptly answer such questions.

Femi Ajayi

AJAYI, Adedayo Olufemi Ph D.
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology,
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#60 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 1:11 pm
Subject: Re: administrative info: Welcome message to participants

Hello everyone:

Welcome to the internet seminar on rabbit production in Cameroon programmed to run from the 6th of April (Today) to the 30th of April 2009.

In Cameroon Rabbits were introduced into local farming systems approximately some 3 decades ago by government agencies, local and international Non governmental organizations and church groups. Its role as a tool in fighting hunger, poverty, improving the environment and livelihood of small farmers in Cameroon has been exemplary.

Due to its well known characteristics as an animal adapted for small farm households with limited income, the rearing of rabbits has been adopted by many farm households as a source of meat and extra income.

Nevertheless, rabbit production in Cameroon is still in the hands of small crop/livestock integrated farmers owning between 2-8 bunnies. Its rearing is characterized by a low average annual production that hardly meets the nutritional and financial needs of its rearer.

The aim of this seminar is to bring together researchers, development workers, rabbit farmers and environmentalists in a discussion on the practice, prospects and constraints of rabbit keeping in Cameroon. Inputs from participants with experience in rabbit production in Cameroon will be useful in outlining the practice of rabbit production in Cameroon while participants from other countries and areas will help share their own experiences which they think can help the growth of the Cameroonian rabbit sub-sector.

To keep participants focused on the above objective, two background papers have been selected to guide the discussions during the seminar:

1) "Present status of the heifer project international Cameroon rabbit program: back to the future" available at
http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_lukefahr.pdf

> 2)"Protein and energy sources for rabbits diets in Cameroon".1.- Protein Sources. Fotso J.M., Fomunyan R.T., Ndoping B.N.
> http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_fotso.pdf
>
Please take a look.

As my co-moderator Mr. Jacky Foo explained earlier, messages from participants will be edited before forwarding into the seminar website. I will use this opportunity to advise all participants to be on the alert against internet scammers while we at the moderation desk will do our best to shield all suspected scam messages. Also we will want to thank participants who endeavoured to introduce themselves and encourage others to do same as this will help detect and eliminate suspected e-mails.

While looking forward for a wonderful and fruitful discussion on rabbit production in Cameroon i will once again welcome participants to this development focused forum.

Jackson Ntapi Nk. (Cameroon)
E-seminar co-moderator

#61 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 1:43 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear Ajayi,

Ajayi Wrote

> (a) Farmers do not have enough for the ever increasing market because of the demand for white meat (which has rabbit meat in the list) which was recommended by the medical people as good.

I think this is an information we need to pass on to prospective farmers and consumers. Patrick from Kenya was outlining the fact that rabbit farming was not viewed as being attractive and lucrative in Kenya. Our new country websites must help sell out to people the competitive nature of rabbit farming. The Nigerian experience on this aspect is same as in Cameroon. Demand here is increasing but information on how and where to buy rabbits is not clear, consumers are not informed on the advantages of consuming rabbit, farmers are failing to increase their herd size to meet this demand.

Ajayi wrote

>(b) I want to state that the Nigerian group of reserchers in the area of rabbit production is planning to compile the list of rabbit farms and the number of rabbits owned by category

This is a real problem in most countries, production statistics is poorly gathered and managed.

My Question

Ayayi i am happy to learn you work in the agricultural extension department.

Are extension workers doing their job in ensuring regular updating of production statistics in Nigeria?? I thought they are the one in the field with close contacts to farmers not researchers!!

Kind regards

#62 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 2:12 pm

Subject: Fotso: pelleted feed

In the paper "Protein and energy sources for rabbits diets in Cameroon".1.- Protein Sources" by Fotso J.M., Fomunyam R.T., Ndoping B.N. (http://www.wrs.upv.es/files/journals/vol%208_2_fotso.pdf), I agree that the quality of feeds and feeding practices are of key importance to successful commercial rabbit businesses.

In Table 1 of page 58 of the paper by Fotso et. al., it provides the per cent composition of the test diets using chicken offal, fish meal, cotton seed meal and cassava leaf meal.

Q: were these "home-made" test diets provided to your test rabbits in a powder form or was it a pelleted form ?

If yes (I presume that they were made at Mankon Research Station), how were they made ?

What equipment is needed if a farmer needs a monthly supply of e.g. 600 kg of pelleted feed ??

I am interested to know if it is feasible for a rabbit farmer (e.g. with 200 rabbits) to make its own pelleted feed.

regards
jacky foo
www.globetree.org

#63 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 4:11 pm

Subject: Lukefahr et al: local diets

In his paper (page 79) "Local Diets and Feeding Practices", Steven wrote:
>a poor score was assigned if a farmer ..(cut).. fed mostly
>grasses and weeds to their rabbits without rich
>energy or protein feed sources.....(cut)..

the state of mind of the farmers is that rabbits only need grass and weeds. This is the same with farmers who collect feed for my rabbit project in Kenya. In my projects, www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net grass and weeds are the primary

feed used. Since the rabbit projects are with institutions, we get some vegetable wastes from their kitchens.

I have found it difficult to get them to allot land for grass-legume plot.

Defoliated green maize leaves have a crude protein content of 16.6 %.

Do you think it is easier to get farmers to give 3 rows of maize plants to their rabbits ?

Regards jacky

#64 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 4:28 pm
Subject: Cameroon: exporting rabbit meat

Is Cameroon exporting rabbit meat ?

I got this email today which demonstrates that there is a demand for rabbit meat.

+++++

>from <rmelnikov@sivma.ru>

>date 6 April 2009 16:25

>subject Rabbit production

>My name is Roman MELNIKOV. I'm a brand- manager of
>a Russian company, which produce baby food.

>Now i search for producer of rabbit (meat).

>I found your contacts in

<http://www.farminguk.com/news/China-Rabbit-meat-production-600,000-tons.9669.asp>

>Could you help me to find producers of rabbit meat.

>Thanks in advance

>Yours faithfully,

>Roman MELNIKOV

>"Sivma Group"

>T +7(495) 933-59-95 (ext.122)

>Fax : +7(495) 933-59-96

>e-mail: rmelnikov@sivma.ru

#65 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 4:52 pm
Subject: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

Hi Steven

I found your paper most interesting and easy to read.

The Figure 1 (Prediction of growth of local rabbits) in page 77 was useful for me.

Q: were these rabbits fed with grass and weeds only ?

I was told by a rabbit farmer in Nairobi that on the 3rd month, he gives 1 kg of pelleted feed (over 1 month, i.e. about 33 gm per day) along with the grass-weed diet. He observed 1 kg gain with his rabbits. This means that by the 4th month (instead of 7th month) he can get 2.5 kg rabbits with an input of 35 Ksh (about 0.50 US\$) each.

Can you comment on this ?
Is this possible ?

Regards jacky

#66 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 5:38 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear Jackson Ntapi,

This is in response to your mail discussing Dr. Ajayi's contribution from Nigeria. Terms like 'not ATTRACTIVE' OR 'not LUCRATIVE' used in describing rabbit enterprises may be totally out of place when one considers the real benefits of backyard rabbit production units, especially in relation to family welfare.

A guiding question is:
What was the driving force behind the Heifer backyard rabbit project?

I stand to be corrected, but this project was focused primarily on enabling impoverished families access to high quality animal protein, with the resulting (positive) effect on family welfare.

Two crucial goals are:

- (a) stabilizing backyard rabbit units and
- (b) making such units more 'attractive' (not in the business sense) to friends and neighbours so that they can also raise rabbits in their backyards and contribute to the well-being of their families. Here, 'attractiveness' is not defined in the 'narrow' business sense, but as a tool for promoting family nutrition and welfare.

It is common knowledge that sub-Saharan Africa has one of the highest poverty levels in the world. The goal is to have 'attractive' national or local rabbit programmes that would, at the minimum, enable families to feed themselves. Lukefahr (8th World Rabbit Congress, 2004) paper on "Small Scale Rabbit Production Model" outlined in details, strategies to actualize these goals. If this works out, we can come up with successful national rabbit programmes all across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Saidu Oseni

--

<http://www.oauife.edu.ng/faculties/agric/oseni.html>

#67 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 5:54 pm

Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear Jackson,

My response to your question is that: the extension agents on the field are aware of the importance and relevance of the statistics but may not have an up to date data. The need to ensure regular data collection is important because the data could change very fast depending on the situation (either good or bad).

In addition, please note that in Nigeria, rabbit production is contributing to sustainable protein consumption of the farming households. Not just consumption alone but also enhanced income from sale of rabbit when in need of cash for other uses.

I only wish that rabbit production on commercial level would be encouraged such that the cherished and health promoting rabbit meat could be available everytime.

There emerged therefore, the need to train agricultural extension officers and farmers as well on the efficacy and essentials of rabbit production for economic, health and food security.

Femi Ajayi

AJAYI, Adedayo Olufemi Ph D.
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Obafemi Awolowo University,

#68 From: jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 9:15 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: no export of rabbit meat yet

Jacky asked

>Is Cameroon exporting rabbit meat?

No, production is low and unable to meet local demands.

We in Cameroon are hoping more programs/projects can be implemented by the public and private sectors to support the growth of the rabbit sub-sector. A forum like this seminar will help promote this dream which can be achieved through the following means.

- * Sensitizing farmers on the potentials of rabbit projects may help boost investment in the sub-sector
- * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers technically will improve efficiency and thus increase interest in rabbit keeping
- * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers in the marketing of their products

* Put in place a standardization and certification scheme will improve consumers confidence

These among other steps may help boost production and put local farmers in a position to export rabbit meat.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#69 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 10:10 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbit production centers

2009/4/6 jackson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>:
> We in Cameroon are hoping more programs/projects can be implemented by the
> public and private sectors to support the growth of the rabbit sub-sector.

I like to be involved in setting up rabbit production centers in NWP.

These goals are useful.....

- > * Sensitizing farmers on the potentials of rabbit projects may help boost investment in the sub-sector
- > * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers technically will improve efficiency and thus increase interest in rabbit keeping
- > * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers in the marketing of their products
- > * Put in place a standardization and certification scheme will improve consumers confidence

What is really needed is a demonstration project.

I am a board member of the International Council on Ecopolis Development (<http://intecopolis.org/Organization/steering-board.html>) and will be in the 2009 mtg in May. There is a "Steering Committee on Ecocity Demonstration" and I hope that this committee will support a demonstration project.

I am also presenting my work in Kenya in <http://www.changemakers.net/en-us/node/20304> and there is also a discussion on a family-production center idea for meat production (1000 kg per month or more).

I hope that I will be able to identify partners to form a team for Cameroon for this project.

Regards jacky

#70 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 10:14 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear Dr. Oseni,

You wrote:

- Terms like 'not ATTRACTIVE' OR 'not LUCRATIVE' used in describing
- >rabbit enterprises may be totally out of place when one considers the real
- benefits of backyard rabbit production units, especially in relation to family
- welfare.

Patrick from Kenya used the word "LUCRATIVE" in a business sense when he was trying to compare rabbit farming to poultry farming.

Yes you are right to emphasize on the important role rabbits are playing in improving the nutrition of resource limited farmers (Which i mentioned in my welcome message) but i still think we should help present rabbit projects as a competitive business which can excel beyond a poor mans backyard. Or which can enable a poor man to use his backyard to become richer.

.....(cut)....

We may discuss further but i am strongly in the camp of those who believe business should be an integral part of any sustainable rabbit project. Africans may be poor, but their dreams are bigger than food and family welfare. They want their children to go to school, they like their housing condition to improve.....

I think we should make inputs on any rabbit project in Sub Saharan Africa to ensure guys like Patrick are not left behind, they will be important element of sustainability when these projects end.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#71 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 10:23 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: no export of rabbit meat yet

2009/4/6 jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>:

> We in Cameroon are hoping more programs/projects can be implemented by the

> public and private sectors to support the growth of the rabbit sub-sector.

- > * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers technically will
- > improve efficiency and thus increase interest in rabbit keeping
- > * Creating and implementing programs that support farmers in the marketing
- > of their products

HPI rabbit program is 25 years old and was a "self-help" development program with a small scale, farm and family-level approach. This will always continue to be the foundation of rabbitry in Cameroon and from this is where a network business can be developed. My business plan/idea is innovative and does not require farmers to expand their facilities.

But firstly, what I am interested to hear from Steven L. is whether the HPI has any intentions to move forward in Cameroon into commercial production and at the same time such a project should be designed to involve the small farmers.

regards
jacky

++++
Jacky E.L. Foo
www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net

#72 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 10:38 pm
Subject: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Dr Oseni wrote:

- > What was the driving force behind the Heifer backyard rabbit project?
- > I stand to be corrected, but this project was focused primarily on enabling
- > impoverished families access to high quality animal protein, with the
- > resulting (positive) effect on family welfare.
- >
- > Two crucial goals are:
- > (a) stabilizing backyard rabbit units and
- > (b) making such units more 'attractive' (not in the business sense) to
- > friends and neighbours so that they can also raise rabbits in their
- > backyards and contribute to the well-being of their families.
- > Here, 'attractiveness' is not defined in the 'narrow' business sense,
- > but as a tool for promoting family nutrition and welfare.

You are right on the initial objective of the Heifer rabbit program, but local socio-economic factors are fast changing. I totally agree that neglecting the role rabbit keeping has in improving family nutrition is wrong but will insist that formulating programs, projects and strategies that considers rabbit farming only as a backyard affair (for family nutrition and welfare) is incomplete and may not meet the desire (usually long term) of a large number of resource limited farmers.

From my field experience, when somebody is very poor he will appreciate food, after eating he will need money for other issues which may become more important than eating. I have seen small farmers sell more than 15 rabbits a year and eat none while some empty their entire rabbitry to solve problems they term more important.

The sustainability of a good rabbit project goes far beyond its ability to supply protein to the family and is greatly related to its ability to generate income for the family. A good example is the speed with which neighbours to pig farmers than rabbit farmers adopt new ideas from Heifer Cameroon and other sources. It is getting more and more difficult to get a farming group in Cameroon that chooses rabbit as a livestock of choice in a partnership program because of the way they view and underestimate its income generating potentials.

----cut----

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#73 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Mon Apr 6, 2009 11:26 pm
Subject: RE: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Please bear in mind that farmers can also sell more rabbits to buy food of higher quality that cost less money than the market value of a rabbit (for example, should that price happen to higher than for a broiler chicken).

Steven D. Lukefahr
Regents Professor
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries

-----Original Message-----

From: "jacksonntapi"

>I totally agree that neglecting the role rabbit keeping
>has in improving family nutrition is wrong but will
>insist that formulating programs, projects and strategies
>that considers rabbit farming only as a backyard affair
>(for family nutrition and welfare) is incomplete
>and may not meet the desire(usually long term) of
>a large number of resource limited farmers.

>

>The sustainability of a good rabbit project goes far
>beyond its ability to supply protein to the family
>and is greatly related to its ability to generate
>income for the family.

#74 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 6:42 am
Subject: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

Jacky Foo asked:

>The Figure 1 (Prediction of growth of local rabbits) in page 77 was
>useful for me.

>

>Q: were these rabbits fed with grass and weeds only ?

In addition to forages, weeds, garden and kitchen wastes, etc., some farmers also fed a small quantity of concentrates to boost growth and reproduction.

+++

Steven D. Lukefahr
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries
<http://world-rabbit-science.com/>

#75 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 6:52 am
Subject: Cameroon: no export of rabbit meat yet

Dear All,

I have not been involved in the Rabbit-Heifer programme for the past 10 years.

Jacky Foo wrote::

>HPI rabbit program is 25 years old and was a "self-help" development
>program with a small scale, farm and family-level approach. This will
>always continue to be the foundation of rabbitry in Cameroon and from
>this is where a network business can be developed.....
>But firstly, what I am interested to hear from Steven L. is whether the
>HPI has any intentions to move forward in Cameroon into commercial
>production and at the same time such a project should be designed to
>involve the small farmers.

I am not aware if there are plans to go commercial. However, my gut feeling is ..."no" since Heifer's main aim in development is to reach out to the poorest of the poor.

Later, if entrepreneurs decide to make a commercial goal of it, then I doubt if Heifer would stand in the way.

Steven

#76 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 7:36 am
Subject: Re: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

"Steven Lukefahr" wrote:

> In addition to forages, weeds, garden and kitchen wastes,
> etc., some farmers also fed a small quantity of concentrates
> to boost growth and reproduction.

Thanks for the information.

To understand that feed concentrates for rabbits are useful at a rural level and to be willing to put up the money, it would take some convincing since livestock production usually use whatever forage that is available in the area.

Q: Is commercial feed easily obtained from their village or do they have to go to "town" to buy it ?

Q: did they buy concentrates that was designed specifically for rabbits ?

Where my project sites are, the cost of transport is often equivalent to at least 1-2 kg of pelleted feed. (1 kg is about 35 Ksh).

So one would probably by 10 kg to make the trip fee worthwhile.

regards
jacky

#77 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 7:45 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: going commercial

"Steven Lukefahr"

> I am not aware if there are plans to go commercial.
> However, my gut feeling is ..."no" since Heifer's
> main aim in development is to reach out to the poorest
> of the poor.
>
> Later, if entrepreneurs decide to make a commercial goal of it,
> then I doubt if Heifer would stand in the way.

if a group of HPI former family farmers decide to use their skills and want to increase production and go commercial, e.g. a set up a rabbit center that aims at 10 litters every month and housing a population of say... 350 rabbits, would HPI co-sponsor such an initiative ?

Q: has any HPI former family rabbit farmers gone commercial with their own money in Cameroon ?

Regards jacky

#78 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:16 am
Subject: RE: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

I have read much about the publications of Dr Lukefahr and I am highly delighted to meet great researchers like him and others in this forum. I was the one who handled the HPI rabbit project immediately after his research till 2005

Strictly from a cultural perspective, rabbit does not play any traditional role like chicken, goats and pigs which are often used for ritual purposes and other occasions in the life of the farmer in Cameroon.

Farmers do not first of all see it as a potential source of protein and that is why it is very common to see some one rearing rabbit but is not eating it. Let me pause here to remark that it was only during the out break of bird flu in Cameroon that some people tasted rabbit for the first time. This has actually contributed to project apathy and failure of most rabbit projects.

Question. What can be done to work on the mentality of farmers in Cameroon to accept rabbit socially as a potential source of protein like in Ghana before thinking of how to expand rabbit production?

DR FU LUCAS
HEIFER INTERNATIONAL CAMEROON
HUMID RAINFOREST PROGRAM ZONE
B.P 13003-DOUALA

#79 From: "guebenvn" <guebenvn@yahoo.fr>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:01 am
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Hello

i disagreed with patrick that outlined that rabbit farming is not viewed as being attractive and lucrative, though he gives a kenyan example. From my experience as a environmentalist and owner of a small household rabbit farm, I agree with Ayayi that, the problem is, consumers do not have the appropriate information on the quality of rabbit meat and where to get them.

We should not think that the low production of rabbit is due to non attractive or lucrative aspect. From the evolution of most farming in Cameroon, the world crisis in the late 80s did affect the yield of all agricultural products including rabbit farming. To tackle this problem, farmers of other sectors re-organized themselves as a group and things a gradually moving, examples are the cocoa farmers in Cameroon. Let's take their example.

I salute the initiative taking by Jackson Ntapi to organize this e-seminar and also other organization that are working to bring farmers together. I believe networking stands a big chance. We need to motivate farmers and assure our consumers.

Thanks
Gueben victor
Agroforester/ environmentalist
CWAf cameroon

#80 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:15 am
Subject: Re: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

2009/4/7 fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>:
>I was the one who handled the HPI rabbit project immediately after his research
> till 2005

Good to know your presence....cheers !

what happened to the project after 2005 ?

> Strictly from a cultural perspective, rabbit does not play any traditional

- > role like chicken, goats and pigs.....
- > Farmers do not first of all see it as a potential source of protein
- > it was only during the out break of bird flu in Cameroon that some people
- > tasted rabbit for the first time.

this is the same in other countries too. China and south east asian countries that were seriously affected by bird flu quickly get commercial into rabbit business almost overnight.

- > This has actually contributed to project apathy and failure of most rabbit
- > projects.
- > Question. What can be done to work on the mentality of farmers in Cameroon
- > to accept rabbit socially as a potential source of protein

when you compare before 1982 and now in NWP, has HPI significantly changed this attitude/mentality in NWP ?

What about other provinces in Cameroon

Would the impact of bird flu get NWP Cameroonians to start keeping rabbits if HPI rabbit project was not there ?

regards
jacky



#81 From: dairo ayodeji <fasdairo@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:42 am

Subject: Re: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

I believe HPI is on course with her goals & objectives. To do otherwise in terms of going business will definitely make her loose track.

The provision of protein to the teaming population on family basis through backyard rabbit is the first thing to do. Individuals (if interested in commercial rabbit production) should & must explore this aspect.

From my little experience with a similar project in the 90s here in Nigeria, FAM Nigeria an NGO was involved in rabbit breeding & distribution to individuals as backyard rabbit production in Lagos & some parts of Edo states. But the project failed when it lost focus.

I know that HPI definitely will not stand in the way of any beneficiary of the project from going commercial.

To achieve this, I know that it is at this point of increase in production at the backyard level with aggressive campaign that farmers/ beneficiaries be educated on the real business in rabbit production through processing, popularization among the various communities etc This is where this body as an association comes in. We must organize ourselves & move beyond the rudiments by series of designs of affordable cages, processing equipments etc which will also enhance the economy of the local artisans (welders/blacksmith etc). I quite

appreciate the kind of campaign reported at the last World rabbit congress in Verona, Italy by I think it was Indonesia. This is what we should do.

The breeders, nutritionist, vet, extensionist that are members of our association should meet and see how we seek & implement gradual commercialization i.e moving forward from where HPI stops.

Dairo, F.A.S.
Dept. of Animal Production & Health Sciences,
University of Ado-Ekiti,
P.M.B. 5363,
Ado-Ekiti.
234-803-364-3670

#82 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 1:30 pm
Subject: Re: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Dear Jackson Ntapi Nk,

In my last contribution, I did not suggest that rabbits should be raised solely to provide supplemental protein for family consumption. Neither did I imply that backyard rabbit production systems should remain static. We all know that all natural systems (including rabbit production) evolve with time. We need to adopt a step-wise approach to rabbit development.

Two broad phases in rabbit project development include:
(a) the development of backyard/smallholder rabbit production units and
(b) commercialization of rabbit production.

Critical constraints are the acceptance and marketability of rabbit meat. These and other drawbacks need to be tackled.

I think that the development of stable backyard units will eventually lead to commercialization of rabbit production.

First, there should be massive campaigns about the benefits of rabbit production in alleviating poverty (e.g. improved family menu and sale of excess stock to raise money for other pressing needs). This step will help to resolve major constraints like the acceptance of rabbit meat & its marketability. There is the need to establish support structures for sustaining backyard & small-scale rabbit production.

As more people get involved with rabbit production and as the system evolves, entrepreneurship, value addition, etc can be made a part of a new agenda for small-and medium scale rabbit development strategy. This obviously, will require a comprehensive agenda in order to achieve it. I agree absolutely with you this is a long-term strategy.

On a final note, I would like somebody in this group to share any success story of a commercial rabbit production unit in any part of West and Central Africa.

I thank you all for sharing your experiences.

Saidu Oseni

#83 From: fotso tagny jean marin <jeanmarinfotso@yahoo.fr>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 12:52 pm
Subject: Fotso: pelleted feed

The "home made" test diets provided to our tests animals were in the powder form.

Cassava leaf meal was sun dried and powdered with a grinding machine. It is so simple, because when cassava leaves are dried they can easily being powdered. Concerning the chicken offal, they are boiled and sun dried, then powdered with a grinding machine. Cottonseed meal and fish meal are sold already in a powdered form.

Feed were made at Mankon station. The research station has a pelleted machine. This was not used because it is not common to a farmer to use a pelleted machine. However, in some towns like Yaoundé in Cameroon, you find feed mills who has as equipment a pelleted machine. That a machine needed to pellet feed. But, for about only 600 kg needed per month, I would not advice to buy a pelleted machine. It will be underused.

Farmer can be grouped as many as they can to buy their pelleted machine, or, a feedmill in the region can have it as equipment to satisfy all the rabbit producer of the region.

200 rabbits need about 600 kg feed per month. It advisable to deal as mentioned here above.

#84 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 2:34 pm
Subject: Re: Fotso: pelleted feed

fotso tagny jean marin wrote:

> Cassava leaf meaf was sun dried and powdered with a grinding
> machine. It is so simple, because when cassava leaves are
> dried they can easily being powdered.....
> for about only 600 kg needed per month, I would not
> advice to buy a pelleted machine.

thanks very much for the info.

> The "home made" test diets provided to our tests animals
> were in the powder form.

Q. DO you think there will be a food intake difference when feed is provided in a powdered form (instead of pelleted form ? ?

- > Farmer can be grouped as many as they can to buy their
- > pelleted machine, or, a feedmill in the region can
- > have it as equipment to satisfy all the rabbit
- > producer of the region.

yes, it seems to make sense !!

#85 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:10 pm
Subject: RE: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

In many villages in Cameroon, rabbit meat has consumed on a regular basis for many years. While I agree that rabbit meat consumption is not a traditional practice, I happen to disagree with some of your other points. I have been to Cameroon several times at Heifer's request since 1985. Have we met?

Steven

Steven D. Lukefahr
Regents Professor
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries

#86 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:11 pm
Subject: RE: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

One correction, it is now Heifer International, no longer HPI. The shorter reference is simply now to "Heifer", according to headquarters.

Steven D. Lukefahr
Regents Professor
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries

#87 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:06 pm
Subject: RE: Re: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

The commercial feed is more easily available to farmers who live closest to large towns or cities where feed stores exist. It was usually poultry or swine mash; no feed formulated for rabbits was ever available. Economically, it is only feasible to feed a concentrate feed as a supplement if the market price for fryers is high so as to offset this purchase. We published a paper on this years ago in JARR.

Steven

#88 From: moshood abiola <herbyolar@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:26 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear jackson

the situation of rabbit production in Nigeria with respect to the efforts of researchers as as described by Dr. Ajayi;----

researchers are making efforts to ensure that there is improvement in performance of rabbits (growth and reproductive performances) such that the economic aspects of rabbit production would be facilitated. In order to attain these goals, researchers are working on genetics and nutrition of rabbits as well as preparing records of rabbit producers through the initiation of WRSA for Sub-Saharan African countries.

#88 DELETED

#89 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:29 pm
Subject: Re: administrative info: editing messages before approval

Hi

I had difficulties with messages from Steven L yesterday and now I have noted that the problem is only with messages from Steven. I dont have problems with messages from other participants.

It is possible that Steven has a setting/code which does not allow his original messages to be edited.

See the last 3 messages which was not edited.

When I have more time to handle his messages, I will edit it manually via my email account.

regards
jacky
e-group/list moderator

#90 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 3:37 pm
Subject: RE: Re: administrative info: editing messages before approval

Thanks Jacky.

Perhaps the problem is with some virus wall software used by my university. All of the messages from this e-discussion have gone automatically into my Junk folder.
Steven

#91 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 5:04 pm
Subject: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Another experience working with Heifer is that they have used rabbit projects in extreme poverty and/or emergency situations.

For example, in Cameroon, poor women in villages were the target of rabbit projects because the women's families would benefit sooner than by any other livestock project, and the the lowest investment and operating costs! Later, it was observed that some of the women who were active in rabbit project community groups became elected officers, and still later even held area leadership offices.

Steven D. Lukefahr

#92 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:23 pm
Subject: New file uploaded to rabbit-cam

Hello,

This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the rabbit-cam group.

File : /rabbit-cam-seminar58-91.doc

Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Description : Discussion Messages 58-91

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar58-91.doc>

To learn more about file sharing for your group, please visit:

<http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/web/index.htmlfiles>

Regards,

elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

#93 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:52 pm
Subject: RE: HPI in Cameroon: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

This question by Dr. Fu Lucas if I may quote him is "What can be done to work on the mentality of farmers in Cameroon to accept rabbit socially as a potential source of protein like in Ghana before thinking of how to expand rabbit production?"

I appreciate Dr. Lucas concern and experience which lead to this question. The solution is with the stakeholders in rabbit farming, they all need to be motivated through extension programme. It is important to state that if any agricultural project would grow to make impact, there must as a matter of necessity be a vibrant and effective extension component. Therefore, I suggest that the stakeholders in rabbit production in Cameroun establish an extension programme.

Femi Ajayi

DR FU LUCAS

#94 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:52 pm
Subject: Fotso et al: stunning the rabbit

To Fotso et al:

In your paper, you wrote:

>rabbits were stunned, killed, bled and skinned.

How do you stun your rabbits ?

In table 3, you had the average live weights of the rabbits.

chicken offal meal = 2348 g

fish meal = 2424 g

cotton seed meal = 2037 g

cassave leaf meal = 2099 g

You started with 45 days old rabbits and stopped the experiment after 6 weeks+12 days. So I presume that when you slaughtered them, they were 99 days old.

In Figure 1 of Steven's paper, the average weight of local rabbits at 3 months old was around 1.2 kg.

Q: Would you say that if you had a control for rabbits that were fed with grass and weeds, you would also get a live weight of around 1.2. kg after 99 days ? or do you think 1.2 kg for a 3 month old rabbit is "low" ?

I think our 3 month olds weigh more !

Regards jacky

#95 From: jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:43 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbit production centers

Dear Jacky,

I have always been satisfied with your vision on approaches that could be more appealing especially to young people. If goals like producing 1000kg of meat per month guides a project then you can convince a youth to consecrate time on it

as his problem of unemployment can be solved. Consider me a partner in any demonstration project.

Jackson Ntapi

#96 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:18 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbit production centers

jackkson ntapi wrote:

> If goals like producing 1000kg of meat per month guides
>a project then you can convince a youth to consecrate
>time on it as his problem of unemployment can be solved.

A 1000 kg of rabbit meat production (in Kenya) operation (i.e. based on about 700 rabbits per month) for Kenya is based on buying/collecting 6-week month old bunnies from a network of 70 farmers with 3 does + 1 buck each. You can buy the bunnies for 100 Ksh. Then the production center keeps them for another 3 months and they should yield 1½ kg meat each. You should be able to make an income of 300,000 Ksh per month. 1 person can run such a center.

Can you do a business plan for NWP for the same idea ?
Would it be feasible ?

Regards jacky

#97 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:17 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Contributing to this issue of mentality as raised by Dr. Fu Lucas,

> This question by Dr. Fu Lucas if I may quote him is
>"What can be done to work on the mentality of farmers
>in Cameroon to accept rabbit socially as a potential
>source of protein like in Ghana before thinking of
>how to expand rabbit production?"

I have worked with Dr. Fu Lucas in these rabbit projects for years and i think we can both agree that the beginning of the solution is how we present rabbit projects from the day we start working with a community. If we continue to present rabbit projects only as a source of protein to farm household then farmers will not allocate much of their time on it as other income generating activities will take much of their time and resources.

On the contrary, if rabbit projects are presented and implemented from the onset as a viable source of protein and income then farmer's will not need to be motivated, the results will motivate them.

Jacky talked about the need of a model that will not necessitate extension of farm units.

This is absolutely right because we are working with resource limited households and are executing projects with limited resources. Rabbits are adapted in farm units because of the low capital investment needed in their establishment, making maximum use of local resources is fundamental.

I am emphasising on this point because i don't think we need to separate rabbit as a source of protein and a source of income.

If a program is well elaborated, the farmers will be the ones expanding their farms to increase profits. These people are not different from other entrepreneurs, when the incentives are there, they will invest more.

#98 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 8:58 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Jacky Foo :

Immediately after 2005, Heifer started a new strategic plan where only selected livestock without rabbits were given to farmers thus the then rabbit farmers had to maintain only the old stock.

I would not really say that they succeeded there after.

Lukefahr:

Thanks for correcting the name HPI.

DR FU LUCAS

#99 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:28 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Lukefahr;

I never wanted to introduce the new name of HEIFER because it is not the name used on your article. All the same thanks for the reminder:

We have not met as I joint the Organisation in 2001

My previous comment did not imply that farmers and others in Cameroon do not eat rabbit at all. They do but not as much as the other livestock:

In addition rabbit farmers in Cameroon need closed follow up before they can implement good rabbit husbandry practices implying that there is a problem some where which needs rapid attention:

Jacky Foo;

After 2005 Heifer shifted focus to another livestock in a new strategic plan.

DR FU LUCAS
HEIFER INTERNATIONAL CAMEROON

HUMID RAINFOREST PROGRAM ZONE
B.P 13003-DOUALA

#100 From: dairo ayodeji <fasdairo@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:29 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Dr. Ajayi,

While vibrant extension programme is an issue in changing the mentality of these farmers in Cameroon, I think it goes beyond mere extension.

Other motivating factors like availability of credit and other inputs to make a success of commercial production of rabbit comes into play. In addition, the time is ripe for the experts like you and I to start something that will be like a role model to these people. These mentality appears common to people.

If some group of people are making success out of the rabbit business, others will follow just as in poultry. As bad as the situation is in poultry business, people are still into it.

In effect this boils down to what I suggested earlier, serious campaign for rabbit meat in our diet, processing of the meat to make attractive to our people (either by smoking in the traditional way like bush meat or through proper packaging).

In this regards, breeders, nutritionist, marketers, vets and all the stakeholders must come together. It will be difficult to be talking of commercialization when the right stocks is not there, when people do not accept the meat.

We need a role model that people can see & emulate. I think this is one of the reasons for this wrong mentality.

Dairo

#101 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:31 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Happy reading from our main speaker Prof. Steven and was very delighted when Mr. Fotso Marie reaffirmed his participation. We are happy to have these two distinguished scientists leading our discussions.

Prof. Steven wrote

- > Please bear in mind that farmers can also sell
- > more rabbits to buy food of higher quality that cost
- > less money than the market value of a rabbit
- > (for example, should that price happen to higher
- > than for a broiler chicken).

That is absolutely correct, and is the main reason why the income generating ability of rabbit projects must be fully exploited.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

Production Manager E3 group
1020 Yaounde Cameroon

#102 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>

Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:38 pm

Subject: RE: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

fu lucas wrote:

- >rabbit farmers in Cameroon need closed follow up before
- >they can implement good rabbit husbandry practices
- >implying that there is a problem somewhere which
- >needs rapid attention:

Dr. Fu Lucas,

When farmers first receive training, that is the opportunity for them to learn about the high protein content of rabbit meat and the use of many local diets that can incorporate rabbit meat. After training, it is critical that farmers are closely supervised to ensure their success.

Unfortunately, too many farmers obtain rabbits for breeding but never received training or supervisory assistance! Hence, the bad reputation of some rabbit projects.

Cheers,
Steven D. Lukefahr

#103 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 9:40 pm

Subject: Re: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

Jacky Foo asked:

- >The Figure 1 (Prediction of growth of local rabbits) in page 77 was useful for me.
- >Q: were these rabbits fed with grass and weeds only ?

Steven Responded

- > In addition to forages, weeds, garden and kitchen wastes, etc.,
- >some farmers also fed a small quantity of concentrates to boost
- > growth and reproduction.

Jackson Comment

I noticed the quantity of concentrates served to rabbits was directly related to the farmers ability to generate income from the sales of rabbit. This was visible when HPI Cameroon stopped supplying feed to rabbit farmers to help boost their participation in the project.

Farmers who were not generating much income from rabbit sales could not afford supplementing with concentrate (especially to in-kid does and fast growing young bunnies), the result was reduced performance.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#104 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 10:05 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: no export of rabbit meat yet

Jacky Foo wrote:

>HPI rabbit program is 25 years old and was a "self-help"
>development program with a small scale, farm and family-level
>approach. This will always continue to be the foundation of
>rabbitry in Cameroon and from this is where a network business
>can be developed.....But firstly, what I am interested to
>hear from Steven L. is whether the HPI has any intentions
>to move forward in Cameroon into commercial production
>and at the same time such a project should be designed to
>involve the small farmers.

Steven replied

> I am not aware if there are plans to go commercial.
>However, my gut feeling is ..."no" since Heifer's
>main aim in development is to reach out to the
>poorest of the poor.
>
> Later, if entrepreneurs decide to make a commercial
>goal of it, then I doubt if Heifer would stand in the way.

Jackson Comment

Dear Steven,

Yes rabbit was used as a tool to help the poorest of the poor to improve their livelihood. But in the new strategic plan elaborated in 2004, Heifer shifted from a relief work to a partnership with farmers in which the perspective of commercial farming was taken on board.

I have worked with farmers on how to increase production and how to organize themselves in order to attain a commercial level.

Unfortunately these farmers were from the old school of thought and refused accepting they can go commercial with rabbits.

Why Dr. Fu Lucas of Heifer Cameroon was talking of farmers mentality.

Question to Prof Steven

Q1) If these projects were elaborated differently to consider the poorest of the poor as production units that can accumulate resources over time to increase productivity and go commercial, will the results obtained be different. I.e. during project design for example we can plan to support farmers in the marketing of their produce after like a year, when they should have managed despite their poverty situation to increase output

Q2) I have worked with farmers on how to use alternative ingredients produced on-farm in compounding concentrates (e.g using sweet potato, soya bean, grounded cassava peelings etc.)

Adoption was slow because most farmers didn't believe rabbit can fetch much money.

What do you think we can obtain as results in a case such an idea is presented to poor farmers at the onset of the project.

Thanks Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#105 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 10:21 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: going commercial

"Jacky Foo"

> if a group of HPI former family farmers decide to use
> their skills and want to increase production and go
> commercial, e.g. a set up a rabbit center that aims
> at 10 litters every month and housing a population of say
> ... 350 rabbits, would HPI co-sponsor such an initiative ?

Heifer will not stand on their way as Prof Steven reiterated, but on whether Heifer will co-sponsor a commercial venture i think is not in Heifer's plan.

When I was there (Until december 2008) the plan was to assist farmers improve output and benefits from a subsistence system and if possible go commercial. In this growth model, groups are trained on how to sustain and manage businesses and if group decide to go commercial it can receive technical (not material) support from Heifer.

As prof mentioned, Heifer assist the poor.

> Q: has any HPI former family rabbit farmers gone
> commercial with their own money in Cameroon ?

Yes Jacky, but the percentage is low. I can cite Madame Becheba in Bamenda, Mr Francis in Dschang

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#106 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Tue Apr 7, 2009 10:50 pm
Subject: RE: Re: Cameroon: no export of rabbit meat yet

Jackson Ntapi Nk. asked

> Q1) If these projects were elaborated differently to
> consider the poorest of the poor as production units
> that can accumulate resources over time to increase

- >productivity and go commercial, will the results
- >obtained be different. I.e during project design for
- >example we can plan to support farmers in
- >the marketing of their produce after like a year,
- >when they should have managed despite their poverty
- >situation to increase output
- >
- >Q2) I have worked with farmers on how to use
- >alternative ingredients produced on-farm in
- >compounding concentrates (e.g using sweet potato,
- >soya bean, grounded cassava peelings etc.)
- >....
- >What do you think we can obtain as results in a case
- >such an idea is presented to poor farmers at the
- >onset of the project.

Perhaps Heifer has shifted its focus in Cameroon now that a foundation of rabbit farmers has been established. Just like with their dairy cattle program.

The first plan is to develop a "grass-roots" industry, and then later, once successful, go commercial. If the commercial plan meets success, then new farmers who are poor can be trained to join in on the commercial plan.

On your second question, Yes - forages can be grown in plots for small farmers, but which of course is more difficult to do if you have a large rabbit enterprise, such as over 50 does.

Steven D. Lukefahr

#107 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 12:01 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: going commercial

"jacksonntapi" wrote:

- > When I was there (Until december 2008) the plan was
- >to assist farmers improve output and benefits from a
- >subsistence system and if possible go commercial.
- >In this growth model, groups are trained on how to
- >sustain and manage businesses and if group decide to
- >go commercial it can receive technical (not material)
- >support from Heifer.

Both you and Steven talked about training the farmers further if a commercial production becomes feasible.

If I have a lump sum of money and I am to decide whether to spend it on further business training to farmers or to support an existing production center like Madame Becheba's or Mr Francis, I would spend the money to help expand an existing commercial facility.

Why:

- (i) you need a regular supplier of certified rabbit meat in order to keep a stable price and therefore need to have an economic of scale approach
- (ii) rural farmers can carry on with their original production (20 kits per doe per year) and can sell their bunnies early to the production center to avoid expansion of their hutches.
- (iii) Farmers can keep the same hours in collection grass and weeds.

#108 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 8:57 am

Subject: <http://www.heifercameroon.org/> : History of Rabbit Program

Hi Everyone

I was trying to get some documents on the background and developments that came out of the rabbit program/projects at <http://www.heifercameroon.org/> but found very limited info.

Some history of the program was outlined.

1982: inception of the project with a key role the Institute of Zootechnical Research in Bamenda
(www.metafro.be/leisa/1994/10-4-25.pdf)

1983-1985: Steven was assigned to the project

1999: re-evaluation of the project

2005: project ended (?)

(?): Heifer Rabbit Foundation (?)

can someone provide more info or direct me to documentation.

Thanks jacky

#109 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 3:36 pm

Subject: Re: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

fu lucas wrote:

- >rabbit farmers in Cameroon need closed follow up before
- >they can inplement good rabbit husbandry practices
- >implying that there is a problem somewhere which
- >needs rapid attention:

Steven Lukefahr responded

- > Dr. Fu Lucas,
- > When farmers first receive training, that is the opportunity
- >for them to learn about the high protein content of rabbit
- >meat and the use of many local diets that can incorporate
- >rabbit meat. After training, it is critical that farmers
- >are closely supervised to ensure their success.
- >
- > Unfortunately, too many farmers obtain rabbits for breeding

>but never received training or supervisory assistance!
>Hence, the bad reputation of some rabbit projects.

Jackson Commented

As a follow-up, i think one of the strength of Heifer Cameroon projects is the close follow-up which is aimed at ensuring that farmers put into practice what they gather from trainings and share best practices among themselves.

The major problem with Heifer rabbit projects is not the training package (which i think is satisfactory as most basic issues of rabbit farming are covered) nor is it the supervision. The problem to me has been the lack of a vision by the farmers. At the beginning they were told the purpose of the project was to improve family nutrition. With the change of strategy in the 2004-2009 Heifer strategic plan (rabbit projects not really included in the plan as mentioned by Dr. Fu Lucas) these farmers refused to adopt the new approach that emphasizes the importance of growth as a means to enhance sustainability. A good point that demonstrates this is the low turn out of farmers during extension visit. The farmers remained so depended on Heifer and failed to believe they can make profits on their own out of a rabbit project.

Kind regards
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#110 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 4:10 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: going commercial

Jacky Foo Wrote

> (i) you need a regular supplier of certified rabbit meat in order to keep a stable price and therefore need to have an economic of scale approach
> (ii) rural farmers can carry on with their original production (20 kits per doe per year) and can sell their bunnies early to the production center to avoid expansion of their hutches.
> (iii) Farmers can keep the same hours in collection grass and weeds.

That is exactly what i adopted as the best approach to ensure growth in small farms after 4 years in development. I was particularly interested in Patrick's (Kenya) idea because it was in line to this thinking. For example If farmers are to be supported on the marketing of their products, i think this is the best way.

Nevertheless there is a weakness which must be closely followed-up to prevent local farmers getting discouraged. We must ensure farmers are not only involved in the establishment/realization of such a plan but are also shareholders in the rabbit distribution business. Farmers have been tricked in the past by unscrupulous business men and are very careful if they have to get into such ventures.

Key points to address

*Ensure farmers are clear about the price of their product and what they are to get from the sales *Respect payment time

*Ensure transparency by putting some farmer leaders in positions where they can be involved in decisions concerning the sales of rabbits

I think Steven and I are emphasizing that continuous training is the best way to improve efficiency in production out of our experiences. These farmers are not very educated people and they are very occupied with several activities. It is wise to divide trainings into sub themes and dispatch them at a point when the farmers will use them immediately. Long and complex trainings don't give good results.

A casual example can be:

*3 months prior to rabbit placement: training on pasture establishment

*1 week prior to rabbit placement: training on rabbit husbandry

*3 months after placement: training on sales techniques

Conclusion

To Jacky...

I strongly think that if such a plan is put in place and farmers don't feel cheated, we all will be surprised of the results that will come out. You suggest farmers may not have time to cut grass for the animals, that farmers may not want to expand:

But i think the contrary:

If farmers are making money out of this business and realize it is more competitive than other activities, i swear they will harvest tons of grass each day and will expand without being advised in order to improve their livelihood. Go ask successful dairy farmers and they will tell you how they manage. More money from sales of milk more hours of family labour put in the harvesting of grass for cattle.

Like your plan Jacky.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

"Jacky Foo" wrote:

> If I have a lump sum of money and I am to decide whether to
> spend it on further business training to farmers or
> to support an existing production center like Madame Becheba's
> or Mr Francis, I would spend the money to help expand an
> existing commercial facility.

>

> Why:

> (i) you need a regular supplier of certified rabbit meat
> in order to keep a stable price and therefore need to have
> an economic of scale approach
> (ii) rural farmers can carry on with their original production
> (20 kits per doe per year) and can sell their bunnies early
> to the production center to avoid expansion of their hutches.
> (iii) Farmers can keep the same hours in collection grass and weeds.

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Dairo wrote

- > The breeders, nutritionist, vet, extensionist that are
- > members of our association should meet and see how we seek
- > & implement gradual commercialization i.e moving forward
- > from where HPI stops.

I think you've got it all right in your conclusion, no body is suggesting Heifer failed or is failing in its objectives.

What i think we should all emphasize on is on how to bring in support programs that can help these farmers get more income from rabbits as experience has shown that sustainability may well depend on this.

Read Jacky's idea on how a small complementary support program can be run within the frame work of a small scale project to help beneficiary farm families market their products. I strongly believe that can boost farmers incentives to produce far beyond family consumption.

Your suggestion of a multidisciplinary team to ensure a progressive movement towards commercialization is a very good idea. In case a where it is expensive or ,difficult to bring all these experts together for a discussion , we can have them participate in the elaboration of training materials for the project to ensure all these factors are taken onboard.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#112 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 4:54 pm

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Dear Oseni,

Oseni wrote

- > In my last contribution, I did not suggest that rabbits
- > should be raised solely to provide supplemental protein
- > for family consumption. Neither did I imply that backyard
- > rabbit production systems should remain static.
- > We all know that all natural systems (including rabbit
- > production) evolve with time. We need to adopt a
- > step-wise approach to rabbit development.

I think we are all thinking in a similar direction.

Backyard rabbit can be useful both to a family's welfare and to a commercial rabbit sector.

I agree with your two phases and on the critical constraints and think the stability of backyard rabbit units can be fueled by the desire to obtain more income from rabbit commercialization.

Jacky Foo proposed running a complementary program beside backyard rabbit projects which i totally support. We should not keep small farmers waiting for decades (addressing all the difficulties to sell excess rabbit produces alone) before they can produce for the market.

If the market exists through a support program or project like Jacky suggested, then it may well act as an incentive to help farmers increase their production. A good example of such a system is in the Kenyan dairy sub-sector where small farmers due to appropriate support programs supply more than half of all fresh milk produced in Kenya.

I was just a little different because i thought commercialization of rabbits should be addressed at the beginning of the project.

Individual farmers will come in at different times but they will all have the incentive to grow which will finally be beneficial to the rabbit sub-sector.

Wonderful reading from you Oseni.
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#113 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 5:25 pm
Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear Ajayi,
I gave the title "The Nigerian Experience in Rabbit Rearing" to e-mails from Nigeria because I am sure we of Cameroon has more to share with our Friends of Nigeria.

Happy to read about the efforts the research department in Nigeria is making to improve performance in the rabbit sub-sector. In Cameroon the National Institute of Agricultural Research (IRAD) is making similar efforts.

My questions

- Q1) How swift are research results transmitted to farmers?
- Q2) What channels are used?
- Q3) Are private development actors useful in making sure that farmers get the best from research?

Kind regards
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

--- moshood abiola wrote:

> the situation of rabbit production in Nigeria with respect to the efforts of researchers as as described by Dr. Ajayi;----

> researchers are making efforts to ensure that there is improvement in performance of rabbits (growth and reproductive performances) such that the economic aspects of rabbit production would be facilitated. In order to attain these goals, researchers are working on genetics and nutrition of rabbits as well

as preparing records of rabbit producers through the initiation of WRSA for Sub-sahara African countries.

#114 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 6:58 pm

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Steven Lukefahr wrote:

>When farmers first receive training, that is the
>opportunity for them to learn about the high protein
>content of rabbit meat and the use of many local diets
>that can incorporate rabbit meat. After training,
>it is critical that farmers are closely supervised to ensure their success.
>Unfortunately, too many farmers obtain rabbits for
>breeding but never received training or supervisory
>assistance! Hence, the bad reputation of some rabbit projects.

What could therefore be the cause of project apathy with most rabbit farmers given that all the necessary measures are put in place for the project to succeed?

I am really happy you worked with Heifer and thus very verse with her approach towards development .

Kind regards

DR FU LUCAS

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL CAMEROON

HUMID RAINFOREST PROGRAM ZONE

B.P 13003-DOUALA

#115 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 7:07 pm

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyard rabbit project

Jackson wrote:

>I am emphasising on this point because i don't think
>we need to separate rabbit as a source of protein
>and a source of income.

Remember Heifer has never separated Nutrition and Income in her training package.

Kind regards

DR FU LUCAS

#116 From: moshood abiola <herbyolar@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 8:08 pm

Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

JACKSON asked:

>My questions

- >Q1) How swift are research results transmitted to farmers?
- >Q2) What channels are used?
- >Q3) Are private development actors useful in making
- >sure that farmers get the best from research?

Dear Jackson

I know my teacher (Dr. Ajayi) will give better responses to your question. Nevertheless, i can say or two things in answering the first two questions;

1. As a step to transmit research results to rabbit farmers the WRSA meeting that was held in 2008 incorporated Extensionists as members of the Association so that they can take research results to the target farmers.
2. The channels that are used are through the efforts of Extensionists as well as private contact with rabbit farmers.

Take for instance i can remember sometime in January I and my Research supervisor (Dr. Oseni) visited some rabbit farms in a neighbouring state to where we are also i personally do maintain a personal contact with few backyard rabbit keepers. i know whenever they need my service in which i always take them through some practises that could help to improve their rabbits' performances

#117 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 8:34 pm
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

In my experience, I did not encounter apathy from farmers that I was training and supervising. Rather, after training they were generally eager to start producing rabbits for meat, income, manure for gardens, etc.

We also were very selective in deciding WHO would receive training. Mostly the decision was made in the village by the people themselves, based on interest and motivation levels, but also genuine need.

Steven D. Lukefahr
Regents Professor
WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries
Dept. of Animal & Wildlife Sci. Texas A&M University-Kingsville

#118 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 3:35 am
Subject: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear participants,

Let's shift focus a bit from Heifer-supported projects to other projects that are popularly termed "Endogenous" – meaning "from within".

It amounts to 'double shame' that

(a) government and organizations in sub-Saharan Africa cannot initiate & fund livestock developmental projects endogenously (that is, from within), and rely

on foreign agencies e.g. Heifer, Winrock, World Neighbours, USAID, DFID, IDRC, etc to help;

(b) that in spite of the 'long-distance' assistance through these agencies, the projects mostly (but not always) end up in failure.

My country Nigeria, with all the oil resources NEVER thought or did what Heifer has done all over the world with resource-limited communities! Enough of Heifer or Winrock or World Neighbours or USAID or DFID or IDRC. For once, can we do it ourselves?

Folks.

Let's reason together.

Without sounding over-sentimental, what is basically wrong with our psyche?

Why can't we just get it right for once?

Incidentally, other sectors of the economy are not different – the same level of stagnation abound!

Enough of the assistance from anywhere.

Heifer (and others) have done their best. Dr. Lukefahr, with a fresh Ph.D. from Oregon State University, was roaming villages in West Africa setting up rabbit development projects. As indicated on his schedule of activities then, when it was time to leave, he had to leave, perhaps, with the hope that local folks (our cousins and brethren!) and the government should continue the programmes, with zeal and enthusiasm. But alas, what was the outcome.....

A crucial question is:

would it have made any difference if these projects were initiated and sustained from within? That is, with local initiative, funding & nurturing. Initiative, yes, but funding is questionable since money is usually stolen outrightly, wired to some foreign account in some bank abroad (worst case scenario), or invested in some 'white elephant' projects which do not yield anything (best case scenario).

So folks, I have enjoyed all your arguments so far. It is time to switch gears from Heifer-supported projects.

Let's discuss the principles of endogenous development as they apply to rabbit projects.

Saidu Oseni

--

Dr. S.O. Oseni,

Animal Breeding & Genetics,

Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Agriculture,

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, NIGERIA.

Mobile: + 234 (0)806 658 1894

Fax: + 234 (0)36 232 401

Coordinator, World Rabbit Science Association,

Sub-Sahara African Branch (SSA-WRSA)

<http://www.oauife.edu.ng/faculties/agric/oseni.html>

#119 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 6:39 am

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

fu lucas wrote:

> What could therefore be the cause of project apathy with
> most rabbit farmers given that all the necessary measures
> are put in place for the project to succeed?

The Heifer rabbit project (1995-2000 period) looks like a "very" low budget project to me. It "distributed 2,119 rabbits to 1,410 limited-resource families in 66 villages" (quote from abstract of Steven L. paper). This means that there are families that received just 1 rabbit.

My assumptions are :
no rabbit hutches were given
no financial support given to build hutches

Missing information:
of the 1,410 families, how many have continued keeping rabbits and how many families completely lost all their rabbits ?

If you can have 75% of the families still keeping rabbits, I would call it a "success" for such a project.

If there is a lack of interest or apathy or high number of families who have lost all their rabbits, I would attribute it to the "severe" limitations that the project imposed on the "limited-resource families".

If my assumptions are right and based on a scenario that I have built, each of these limited-resource families have to build their own a hutch (i.e. have to buy nails, have access to a hammer, buy wood or collected raphia palm wood), and then allot time (maybe one hour daily to collect grass/weed, clean and etc for the rabbit(s)) to manage the rabbits.

Again, if I am correct in the scenario, the driving force is actually from the resource-limited families.

If an impact analysis is based on the cost of a rabbit, it certainly looks like a successful project.

Regards jacky

#120 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 6:55 am

Subject: New file uploaded to rabbit-cam

Hello,

This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the rabbit-cam group.

File : /rabbit-cam-seminar92-119.doc
Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Description : Discussion messages 92-119

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar92-119.doc>

To learn more about file sharing for your group, please visit:

<http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/web/index.htmlfiles>

Regards,

elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

#121 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 8:43 am

Subject: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

"Dr S.O Oseni" wrote:

- > Let's shift focus a bit from Heifer-supported projects
- > to other projects that are popularly termed "Endogenous"
- > - meaning "from within". ...(cut)...
- > A crucial question is:
- > would it have made any difference if these projects
- > were initiated and sustained from within? That is,
- > with local initiative, funding & nurturing.....
- > Let's discuss the principles of endogenous development
- > as they apply to rabbit projects.

thank you for bringing up this topic.

I like to focus at endogenous rabbit project in Cameroon (as we will certainly have other e-seminars that will focus at other countries and regions).

To get some base line information, who else is doing "rabbits" in Cameroon.

(i) the back ground papers provide 2 cases (a) Heifer's and (b) the research community in Cameroon.

(ii) are there NGOs dealing with rabbits

(iii) are there government organizations that deal with rabbits ?

(iv) what are they all doing ?

P.S. if you have not introduced yourself, this is a good chance to do it. Thanks

Regards jacky

#122 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 10:54 am

Subject: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dr S.O Oseni wrote:

- >can we do it ourselves?
- > A crucial question is:
- > would it have made any difference if these projects
- > were initiated and sustained from within?

I am one of those foreigners who go to developing countries to help the local people.

When I see a local and successful initiative, I am so so very happy.

I visited a home in Kenya recently. The lady (retired) I met was a nurse before and everything I saw was so neat and well taken cared of. She had 3 cages with rabbits and you can immediately see that she managed it well along with her goats, cows and shamba (farm). As for her rabbits, she managed just the few rabbits that she needed to fit her limitations and needs.

Note that this is a family house-hold set up and in this context, her operation is functional successful.

Regards jacky

#123 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 11:14 am

Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Jacky wrote:

- > When I see a local and successful initiative, I am so so very happy.

here is another case of a rabbit farmer who went commercial.

<http://www.globetree.org/africa/assoc-members/charles.htm>

Charles worked as a security guard at a hotel before and then changed job and worked at a food processing company (also as a security guard). In his spare time he bred german shepard dogs and sell the puppies for extra income. To feed his dogs, he used rejects from the meat processing company and then started to keep some rabbits to get some quality food for his dogs. Just a few years ago, he realised that he could make more money producing rabbits and he left his job as a security guard.

Now he has 2 rabbit farms and manages a population of about 400 rabbits. He sells his rabbit meat to the hotel that he had once worked as a security guard and is unable to supply to others.

I visited him at his home (in an area with many poor people), his rabbits were all on the roof of his goat house. Rabbit cages were spacious and kept in 4 decks (4 layers).

Do we have examples that can demonstrate private initiatives in Cameroon ??

Regards jacky

#124 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 11:34 am

Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

I gave 2 examples of private initiatives.

At the organizational level, who are the NGOs, research institutions, companies and government agencies that are doing rabbits ???

Can someone give info in Cameroon ?

Oseni's worry is reflect here:

>(a) government and organizations in sub-Saharan Africa cannot
>initiate & fund livestock developmental projects endogenously

I visited NGOs and govt agencies in Kenya. I did not visit research institutions. The best ones were managed by the Catholic missionaries. I visited probation hostels (Department of Probation and After-Care and the Dept of Children Services under the Ministry of Home Affairs) where rabbits (few and many) are managed by the child probationers.

By the nature of the activities at these sites, none of them are commercial but produce meat for their own consumption.

Question:

which organization (govt, NGO, company) in your country would be the ones that can develop a project to commercialised rabbit production ?

regards jacky

#125 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 11:25 am

Subject: Re: Ajayi A.O. (Nigeria): The Nigerian Experience in rabbit rearing

Dear All,

I acknowledge the response of Mr. Moshood, a graduate student in the field of rabbit production. My response to the very important questions raised.

>Q1) How swift are research results transmitted to farmers?

A1). Research results whenever they are given to extension agents through Subject Matter Specialists (SMS) are packaged immediately in the farmers language. How swift will depend on the rate at which researchers releases their findings to extension agents.

>Q2) What channels are used?

A2) The various available channels of communications which could be used includes personal visit, print and electronic medium depending on the details of technicality involved in the findings. When it involves a lot of details, personal visit may be required to demonstrate the results to farmers group.

>Q3) Are private development actors useful in making

>sure that farmers get the best from reseach?

A3) private development actors in Nigeria are not very vibrant as at now and thus may not be accurately assesed.

Femi Ajayi

++++

AJAYI, Adedayo Olufemi Ph D.
Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

#126 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 11:41 am

Subject: Re: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear All,

This position and seemingly challenging situation posted by Dr. Oseni is a great shift to a good direction. It is obviously clear that Nigerian situation in respect of what obtains till now when it comes to endogenous "funding" or "support" of projects had been presented by Dr. Oseni.

What is the situation in other countries in West Africa and Africa?

Thank you.

Femi Ajayi

#127 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 12:16 pm

Subject: Alessandro Finzi (Italy)

Hello to all,

I am Alessandro Finzi and I have founded and directed the "Rabbit Unconventional Keeping Experimental Centre" in Viterbo, Italy. I have worked more then 25 years nearly exclusively on simple rabbit keeping systems.

I have observed that the problem of housing has not been considered in this discussion. But I think it is very important because, if we develop non cost housings and feed the rabbits with freely collected biomasses, it is possible to obtain a no cost production, as it happened in Europe for many centuries and still exists in rural areas.

If a project is started with purposes of feed security (preferably with women) it is very easy that single breeders move to raise the animal for economic purposes and improve the housing and feeding system if the marketing conditions are favourable.

When housing is considered, the most important factor is to avoid heat stress to which rabbits are very sensible.

In the attachment it is possible to observe a demonstrative prototype of mine underground cell system I did in Cameroon in 2002 (Dciang area). At right a good raffia cage is observed and near it the passage to the underground cell can be seen. The cell can be made by cement, clay slides, bricks or simply with freely collected stones and covered with earth. It avoids rabbits to escape but it guarantees to them a fresh shelter exactly as in the burrows they dig



underground in natural conditions.

At left a shelter is shown where fattening cages are hanged.

To manage the system some few (but very important) rules must be known, among them how to maintain a perfectly healthy stock without any medical treatment and not even vaccinations.

If someone is interested to

know more, please contact me.

Regards. Alessandro

Attachment: (image/jpeg) P4040027.JPG

#128 From: "laprata" <laprata@yahoo.com>

Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 12:35 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

"Jacky Foo" wrote:

> here is another case of a rabbit farmer who went commercial.

> <http://www.globetree.org/africa/assoc-members/charles.htm>

am encouraged by jacky foo's input in this forum, i have been studying the exchange and very beneficial points are coming out, am also encouraged by our discussant who say he visits developing countries.

some one asked about rabbit for export in Cameroon. the response given was that demand is higher than supply, i know a colleague in Kenya who received from a Chinese to supply export, he could not meet the 200 rabbit per week order.

i think it is time we engage relevant government institutions and NGOs to consider rabbit funding not only for financial benefit but also as a food security strategy.

patrick

#129 "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>

Date: Thu, 9 Apr 2009 07:46:43 -0500

Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Jacky Foo wrote:

>The Heifer rabbit project (1995-2000 period) looks like a "very" low
>budget project to me. It "distributed 2,119 rabbits to 1,410
>limited-resource families in 66 villages" (quote from abstract of Steven
>L. paper). This means that there are families that received just 1 rabbit.

Please do not try to read too much into an article. In actuality, many families already had an established rabbitry, but received a breeding buck of higher quality!

Steven

#130 From: moshood abiola <herbyolar@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 9, 2009 4:49 pm
Subject: Re: Alessandro Finzi (Italy)

Dear Dr. Finzi,

I am happy that you are participating in this e-seminar, it's a pleasure meeting you once again.

With respect what you said about anybody that is interested in knowing more about your work on housing system for rabbits in Cameroon in 2002, please can you make the paper available for us so that we can have access to the nature of prototype of the housing.

#131 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 1:27 am
Subject: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (USA)

Greetings everyone,

I am sorry to be late in joining the seminar and promise to catch up quickly over the next few days.

My name is Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak DVM. I live in California, USA with my husband (a rancher/cowboy) and two daughters on a small (for the USA) ranch where we raise meat for restaurants and wine grapes. We also have an agricultural educational program (non profit) that operates on our ranch.

You can visit our website at www.devilsgulchranch.com

We currently have over 1700 rabbits. I am also a veterinarian who specializes in agricultural development in LDCs. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Niger (83-85). Currently I am working as a Farmer to Farmer volunteer in Haiti through Makouti Agro Enterprises, a Haitian cooperative agribusiness. I am working mainly with their rabbit projects throughout Haiti. We are just getting into our third year and making progress.

I look forward to participating in this seminar and learning new ideas.

Myriam

#132 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 5:39 am
Subject: Esperance-Essor-Estime Group (Cameroon)

"jacksonntapi" wrote:

- > Backyard rabbit can be useful both to a family's welfare
- > and to a commercial rabbit sector.....
- > We should not keep small farmers waiting for decades
- > (addressing all the difficulties to sell excess rabbit
- > produces alone) before they can produce for the market.

Jackson:

You are the coordinator and production manager for the Esperance-Essor-Estime group. Does this Group have any projects on rabbits ?

If not, how can you initiate a rabbit production business at Esperance-Essor-Estime Group ?

Regards jacky

#133 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 5:57 am
Subject: Re: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

Steven wrote:

- > In addition to forages, weeds, garden and kitchen wastes, etc.,
- > some farmers also fed a small quantity of concentrates to boost
- > growth and reproduction.

"jacksonntapi" wrote:

- > I noticed the quantity of concentrates served to rabbits
- > was directly related to the farmers ability to generate
- > income from the sales of rabbit. This was visible when
- > HPI Cameroon stopped supplying feed to rabbit farmers to
- > help boost their participation in the project.

I dont remember reading the supply of concentrates to farmers in Lukefahr's 2000 status report.

- > Farmers who were not generating much income from rabbit
- > sales could not afford supplementing with concentrate
- > the result was reduced performance.

How was marketing organized by Heifer for its project farmers ?

It does make a lot of sense for Heifer to supply farmers with concentrates to get marketable weights for rabbits quickly (Fotso reported 3 months to reach 2+kg) instead of 6 months (reported by Lukefahr by Heifer project farmers) (or did the Heifer farmers have to pay for the concentrates ?)

regards jacky

#134 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 6:04 am
Subject: Heifer : rabbit houses

"Alessandro Finzi" wrote:

> I have observed that the problem of housing has not been
> considered in this discussion. But I think it is very
> important because, if we develop non cost housings and
> feed the rabbits with freely collected biomasses, it is
> possible to obtain a no cost production,

Can someone send picture(s) of the rabbit houses that Heifer farmers use ?

Thanks jacky

#135 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 6:09 am
Subject: Re: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Steven Lukefahr" wrote:

> many families already had an established rabbitry,
> but received a breeding buck of higher quality!

did the "free" distribution of bucks by Heifer produced "higher quality" rabbits from established rabbitries ?

In what ways were these distributed bucks better than what the farmers had ?

Regards jacky

#136 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 6:14 am
Subject: Re: Lucas F. (Cameroon) : health of rabbits

fu lucas wrote in msg #4:

> I am a Veterinary Doctor working with Heifer International Cameroon.
> Working with animals including rabbits for the past
> six years in Cameroon

Hi

What are/were your routines for the Heifer rabbit project ?

Did you have a routine to visit the project farmers ?

What were the common problems that the rabbits had ?

Regards jacky

#137 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 6:21 am
Subject: Re: Jackson Ntapi Nk. (Cameroon)

"jacksonntapi" wrote in msg #8:

- >I am a trained agronomist specialized in animal production.
- >Has been working in the field of agricultural extension
- >and rural development for 5 years.
- >Worked with Heifer International from 2004 to 2008.

what was your role in the Heifer rabbit project ?

If you were to do the Heifer project again (and the target group is still the resource-limited farmers), what were the lessons learnt that you would use to improve your project

Regards jacky

#138 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 7:14 am

Subject: Re: Sampson Deba (Cameroon): working to solve poaching problems

Sampson Deba wrote in msg #16:

- > Since 2008.....I was posted to the Mbam and Djerem National
- >Park in the Central Region of Cameroon. Here there is a
- >support project to the fight against poaching
- >that aims to bring together small-scale animal farm owners and
- >poachers to develop environment-friendly production systems
- >.....the production of fodder using fast growing leguminous
- >trees brachiaria

Hi Sampson Deba

Are you introducing rabbits too ?

see Gueben Victor's work in message #14

regards jacky

#139 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 7:01 am

Subject: Re: Steven Lukefahr (USA): WRSA and developing countries

Steven Lukefahr wrote in msg #11

- >I have been fortunate again to have had many
- > opportunities to travel to assist rabbit scientists
- >in countries around the world, and also to have
- >been active in the World Rabbit Science Association.
- > Steven D. Lukefahr
- > WRSA General Secretary for Developing Countries

How is WRSA involved in initiating small rabbit businesses in developing countries ?

In <http://world-rabbit-science.com/Developping/Documents/Ghana-Rabbit-Project.htm> the webpage indicated that Technoserve, a private, nonprofit

American foundation is helping small businesses to get started in the Ghana's National Rabbit Project.

Is WRSA involved here ?

Q: Does Cameroon have a "Cameroon National Rabbit Project" ?

Regards jacky

#140 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 7:09 am
Subject: Re: Gueben Victor (Cameroon): rabbits by hunter's families

Gueben wrote in msg #14

- > I am working with the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (CWAFF)
- >a British registered charity as an extension worker and
- >an Education officer.
- > Our project also has a program to promote alternative
- >livelihood activities.we encourage hunter's families
- >to keep small livestock including rabbits.

this is an interesting approach.

How many hunter's families are involved in this project ?

Regards jacky

#141 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 7:38 am
Subject: Re: Mbutakeh Agbor (Cameroon): 40 producing females

Mbutakeh Agbor wrote in message #17

- > We are a common initiative group (Group de producteur
- >de lapin de L'Ouest) situated in the West of Cameroon.
- > Our group is made up of 20 members (14 women and 6 men)
- >and we have been keeping rabbits for more than 10 years.
- >Although most of us are still small farmers with an
- >average herd size of 8 producing females. Six of
- >our members have succeeded to become big farmers having
- >upto 40 producing females each in their farms.

With 40 producing females one could be producing 100 kg of meat per month, that is 600 kg from the 6 big farmers.

You said your group has been keeping rabbits for more than 10 years.

Can you provide some stories on how your big farmers moved from small scale to the current scale ?

Thanks jacky

#142 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Fri, 10 Apr 2009 04:03:34 -0500
Subject: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

"jacksonntapi" wrote:

> I noticed the quantity of concentrates served to rabbits
> was directly related to the farmers ability to generate
> income from the sales of rabbit. This was visible when
> HPI Cameroon stopped supplying feed to rabbit farmers to
> help boost their participation in the project.

The many years ago when I was living in Cameroon and working for Heifer, we did not provide concentrate to farmers. Instead, it was their decision alone. Those farmers who lived close to a big city (Bamenda) where a feed store existed had this opportunity. Too, at the time the price for a market rabbit was very high compared to a broiler and was much higher than the production costs, so indeed a little concentrate to boost growth was a good investment!

Steven

#143 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Fri, 10 Apr 2009 04:08:01 -0500
Subject: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Steven Lukefahr" wrote:

> many families already had an established rabbitry,
> but received a breeding buck of higher quality!

Jacky asked

> did the "free" distribution of bucks by Heifer produced "higher quality"
> rabbits from established rabbitries ?
> In what ways were these distributed bucks better than what the farmers had ?

Jacky,

As you know, the bucks were not free but rather were a loan to farmers.

Heifer had imported purebred rabbits over the years, and purebred rabbits also were maintained at Mankon Station.

To answer your question, I am not aware if later, Heifer determined whether or not the offspring had higher performance, but at least some inbreeding may have been offset and some genetic variation was infused (the raw material for subsequent selection progress).

Steven

#144 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Fri, 10 Apr 2009 04:19:34 -0500
Subject: WRSA and developing countries

The WRSA is a professional network of rabbit scientists. Our main mission is to share knowledge of rabbit science and production.

Only in more recent years has the WRSA played a closer role to assist rabbit scientists from developing countries. For example, in the last 5 years, we have helped form country and regional branches in Sub-Saharan Africa, Indonesia, Mexico, and Vietnam, and have further assisted by helping to organize and participate in rabbit conferences to build the rabbit science base infra-structure. However, do know that the WRSA is not a lending institution; in fact, it operates on a meager budget that mostly comes from small annual membership fees (5 Euros) and journal subscriptions to World Rabbit Science.

Steven

#145 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 11:59 am
Subject: Re: Lucas F. (Cameroon) : health of rabbits

Jacky Foo asked
>What are/were your routines for the Heifer rabbit project ?
>Did you have a routine to visit the project farmers ?
>What were the common problems that the rabbits had ?

Routine activities to be carried out by the rabbit farmers are well outlined in a simplified rabbit husbandry training package given to them. Summarily, such routine practices involve regular cleaning of the hutches, feeders and drinkers, proper feeding etc

Such farmers benefited from regular and even unannounced visits from me to ensure that everything was moving on smoothly. Besides, each farming group had about 1-2 active members chosen by the group based on certain qualities who have received elementary knowledge on diseases of rabbits. Any problem is quickly communicated to me for prompt intervention

Prevention is better than cure is the slogan adopted by these farmers. Though they may be putting in their best some problems keep on occurring.

Health problems commonly encountered include ear cancker, Worm infestation, Treponematosis, wry neck, Trichobenzoars, coccidiosis etc some which are quickly attended to with drugs.

Kit mortality was equally encountered and that was linked to nutrition and that is why after Dr Lukefahr's work, concentrate feed was introduced and it went a long way to reduce the problem

F. Lucas
(The best way to defend is to attack)

#146 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 12:26 pm
Subject: Re: Alessandro Finzi (Italy): housing systems

Information about rabbit shelters, as asked by the colleague Moshood Abiola, can be found in internet looking for "finzi rabbit fao". Unfortunately I have no report about Cameroon but only many slides I utilize for didactic purposes.

May be the most interesting papers are the ones reported below:

Evolution of an unconventional rabbit breeding system for hot ...
<http://ressources.ciheam.org/om/pdf/c08/95605275.pdf>

Effect of housing system (cage versus underground shelter) on ...
The authors are grateful to Dr Manuel Sanchez, FAO, Rome and to Dr A Finzi of the Rabbit Research Centre, Animal Husbandry Institute, University of Viterbo, <http://www.fao.org/ag/aga/agap/frg/afris/espanol/document/lrrd/LRRD8/4/suc84.htm>

Other information can be found in a special FAO publication:
Finzi, A. 2000. Integrated Backyard Systems. {Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Publications Division, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100, Rome, Italy}.
(<http://www.fao.org/ag/AGAinfo/themes/documents/ibys/>).

Rabbits are considered in the chapter 7: Backyard small species, subchapter 7.2.1. It is easy to understand that the first figure is wrong due to a mismanagement by the FAO informatic technician.

Cheers. Alessandro

#147 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>

Date: Fri, 10 Apr 2009 04:31:06 -0500

Subject: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

P.S. In reference to my paper, in my last visit to the Heifer-CAM rabbit project in 1999, I met many farmers in villages who were not trained but who were fairly successful rabbit producers. However, discussions often revealed that they were trained by a farmer who, in turn, was trained by another farmer, who... was originally trained by Heifer. These "Passing on the Gift" chains were evident of Heifer's mission of expanding the successes of its work in development.

So, the question arises: are most of these farmers that I met truly "Heifer farmers"?

Again, many of these farmers were successful. My further observation was that these farmers were quite independent! That is, they would listen to what you had to say, but might just shrug and walk away! Unlike a farmer who was trained and supervised by Heifer staff.

In my opinion, the key to grassroots level success is mostly affected by these generations of pass-on farmers, since they represented a higher proportion of the rabbit farmer base. Know that our true mission in the name of development is to work ourselves out of work.

We can not assist every farmer, nor can work forever in the same region because of our limited resources.

Steven

#148 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 4:14 pm
Subject: Re: Lukefahr et al: production of local rabbits in villages

Lukefahr wrote,

>In reference to my paper, in my last visit to the
>Heifer-CAM rabbit project in 1999, I met many farmers
>in villages who were not trained but who were fairly
>successful rabbit producers. However, discussions
>often revealed that they were trained by a farmer
>who, in turn, was trained by another farmer,
>who... was originally trained by Heifer.
>These "Passing on the Gift" chains were evident of
>Heifer's mission of expanding the successes of its
>work in development.
>
>So, the question arises:
>are most of these farmers that I met truly "Heifer farmers"?

F. Lucas reacts,

Dr Lukefahr, your observations were completely right and I will respond to your question in the affirmative that all these farmers were indeed Heifer assisted farmers. Development work is not static. Heifer uses two development approaches to reach to the farmers

1. Training of Trainers approach (TOT) where some active members of the group are selected and train so that they can in turn train the other members of the group who are Heifer farmers. It is true that other community members who are non Heifer farmers may equally benefit from this knowledge and even succeed more than the Heifer farmer that was originally targeted. So many instances of this type has been recorded

2. Village based training(VBT) carried out in the community by Heifer Staff and other collaborators

The choice of which approach to use is based on so many factors such as available resources and literacy level of the group. Both approaches have given satisfactory results though each has its own short coming. The VBT approach is often used now.

Fu Lucas

#149 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 8:46 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Oseni;

Oseni Wrote

- > Let's shift focus a bit from Heifer-supported projects
- > to other projects that are popularly termed "Endogenous"
- > - meaning "from within". ...(cut)...

I think you are right and it was announced at the beginning of the E-seminar that discussions must not be limited by the themes of the guiding papers.

Jacky wrote:

- > To get some base line information, who else is doing "rabbits" in Cameroon.
- > (i) the back ground papers provide 2 cases (a) Heifer's and (b) the research > community in Cameroon.
- > (ii) are there NGOs dealing with rabbits

Some NGOs in the field of environmental management are proposing rabbit keeping as an alternative to poaching. To the best of my knowledge there are no NGOs promoting commercial rabbit farming.

The most successful rabbit farmers I have met in Cameroon are either functioning within an independent Common Initiative group or as an individual farmer.

Jacky wrote:

- > (iii) are there government organizations that deal with rabbits ?

Not particularly; some research on rabbit is undertaken at the National Institute of Agricultural Research while extension workers with the Ministry of Livestock provide some technical assistance to rabbit farmers in the field. No programs in particular on the development of the rabbit sub-sector is run by government

- > (iv) what are they all doing ?

Private farmers who are into the business for profit are making a lot of money. I got through to some of these farmers yesterday asking them to participate and hope to have them into the team by next week. I also hope to get pictures of their farms. This is very important as it will serve as evidence that rabbit farming can fetch money to its producer in Cameroon

#150 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:06 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

This is an ideal case of a private initiative. I contacted some private farmers prior to the seminar but they have not been us this first few days. Will bring their stories forward.

Thanks for the great example
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

--- In rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com, "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@...> wrote:

here is another case of a rabbit farmer who went commercial.
<http://www.globetree.org/africa/assoc-members/charles.htm>

Charles worked as a security guard at a hotel before and then changed job and worked at a food processing company (also as a security guard). In his spare time he bred german shepard dogs and sell the puppies for extra income. To feed his dogs, he used rejects from the meat processing company and then started to keep some rabbits to get some quality food for his dogs. Just a few years ago, he realised that he could make more money producing rabbits and he left his job as a security guard.

Now he has 2 rabbit farms and manages a population of about 400 rabbits. He sells his rabbit meat to the hotel that he had once worked as a security guard and is unable to supply to others.

I visited him at his home (in an area with many poor people), his rabbits were all on the roof of his goat house. Rabbit cages were spacious and kept in 4 decks (4 layers).

#151 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:20 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Jacky asked
> Question:
> which organization (govt, NGO, company) in your country
> would be the ones that can develop a project to
> commercialised rabbit production

There are some few that can be considered but my choice will go for an organization with a simple and functional program that could be willing to ensure farmers are stakeholders from the onset of the project.

The problem of trust is an issue out here and some organizations are too complex in their setting. This at times makes it difficult for the project to be farmer focused.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#152 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:26 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Q: Are there any taboos against eating rabbit in Cameroon?
Q: Who buys the rabbit meat?
Q: One hotel is mentioned. Are more interested?
Q: Do these hotels require specific processing guidelines or are the individual farmers processing themselves?

Thank you, Myriam

#153 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:34 pm
Subject: Re: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Ayayi wrote

> What is the situation in other countries in West Africa and Africa?

Many development projects in Cameroon have learned their lessons on the dangers of ignoring endogenous knowledge.

The guiding principle from public to private projects is to ensure participation of beneficiaries. Participation here entails contribution of knowledge and resources. Of course we all know the financial limitations that our governments and farmers are facing. But usually when farmers make financial contribution into project their participation increases and this is very beneficial to the promotion of endogenous based projects.

A good example of a project based on endogenous practices is the ethnoveterinary in Cameroon project that promotes the use of local knowledge and plants in treating and preventing diseases in livestock.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#154 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:47 pm
Subject: Re: Alessandro Finzi (Italy): underground cell system in Dschang

Dear All;
Happy reading from you Alessandro.

Alessandro wrote

> I have observed that the problem of housing has not been
> considered in this discussion.
> In the attachment it is possible to observe a demonstrative
> prototype of my underground cell system I did in Cameroon
> in 2002 (Dciang area).

I want to highlight the place mentioned by Alessandro in his mail "Dciang". The right spelling is "Dschang" in the west province of Cameroon where i attended university.

the description of Alessandro's local underground cell system is intriguing. Have visited a lot of rabbit farmers in this region but haven't come across this. Please can you give an address where i can visit and see this onsite.

There are many successful private initiatives in the Dschang and Bafoussam area in the West province of Cameroon. This is prompted by the presence of an agricultural university in the area. I intend to visit this area next week to get some pictures for the Cameroon rabbit website. I hope to see Alessandro's underground cell system.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#155 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 10, 2009 9:54 pm
Subject: Re: Heifer: driving force behind the backyardrabbit project

Jacky Foo wrote:

>The Heifer rabbit project (1995-2000 period) looks like
>a "very" low budget project to me. It "distributed 2,119 rabbits
>to 1,410 limited-resource families in 66 villages". This
>means that there are families that received just 1 rabbit.

Steven Replied

> Please do not try to read too much into an article.
>In actuality, many families already had an established
>rabbitry, but received a breeding buck of higher quality!

To add to this i will mention that after prof steven left new farmers were taken onboard who received 5 rabbit each (4 does and 1 buck) and were assisted at some level in cage construction. Thus investment per farm family was greatly increased although it was relatively low when compared to other livestock projects

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#156 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 7:11 am
Subject: ethnoveterinary for rabbits in Cameroon

"jacksonntapi" wrote in Message #153:

>A good example of a project based on endogenous practices is
>the ethnoveterinary in Cameroon project that promotes
>the use of local knowledge and plants in treating and
>preventing diseases in livestock.

This is an important topic especially for rural rabbit farmers because:

- (i) vet service costs a value of money that is often higher than the capabilities of a rural farmer
- (ii) vet service may not be immediately available because of the distance
- (iii) knowledge of ethnoveterinary medicine use local herbs and plants that are available locally and can be used as a preventive medicine.

I hope Fu Lucas and others will share their knowledge in this new discussion topic.

in msg #146, Fu Lucas wrote:

>....each farming group had about 1-2 active members chosen
>by the group based on certain qualities who have received
>elementary knowledge on diseases of rabbits. Any problem
>is quickly communicated to me for prompt intervention
>
>Health problems commonly encountered include ear cancker,

>Worm infestation, Treponematosi, wry neck, Trichobenzoars,
> coccidiosis etc some which are quickly attended to
>with drugs.

are there any local herbs/plants or simple remedies that rabbit farmers can do ?

regards jacky

#157 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 7:48 am
Subject: Re: Alessandro Finzi (Italy): underground cell system in Dschang

jacksonntapiwrote in #154:

>...Have visited a lot of rabbit farmers in this region
>but haven't come across this.

Alessandro wrote in #127:

>At right a good raffia cage is observed and near it the
>passage to the underground cell can be seen. The cell
>can be made by cement, clay slides, bricks or simply
>with freely collected stones and covered with earth.

I just realised that the large structure (underground cell) is the "best box".

If the structure is built using available stones and kept together with clay (or cement), it does seem to be useful as it uses on-site materials.

Q: How do you clean the inside of the "underground cell" ?

Q: How do you prevent rain water from getting in ?

Another aspect of this design is that the outdoor cages are hanging and so you dont need legs for your cages.

Q: have you built one with two layers of "cells" ?

regards
jacky

#158 From: dairo ayodeji <fasdairo@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 8:35 am
Subject: Alessandro Finzi (Italy): underground cell system in Dschang

Alessandro,
What a good picture!

However, the input to such a housing sure will be very tasking.

In addition, how very cost effective is this?

I also know that this type of housing will not be suitable where land is a limitation.

Can you please share other types of housing system possible for both urban & rural interest.

Dairo

#159 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 9:56 am
Subject: Re: ethnoveterinary for rabbits in Cameroon

Jacky Foo wrote
>are there any local herbs/plants or simple remedies
>that rabbit farmers can do ?

Jacky Foo, in fact there are numerous.

Paw paw (Carica papaye) seeds and leaves are often used by rabbit farmers to de-worm rabbits.

Ear canker is controlled by the combination of palm oil and kerosene in the ratio of 2:1.

Be it as it may, there are some short comings associated with this practice especially in the domain of standardization and validation. All the same rural farmers strongly believe in and it works for them as a substitute to orthodox medicine which is expensive and usually not available.

I am willing to work with anybody in this seminar in the domain of research who is willing to support/ strengthen such a project for it is cheap and reliable as testified by farmers.

Regards Fu Lucas

#160 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 10:18 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

"jacksonntapi" wrote in #151 :
> The problem of trust is an issue out here and
>some organizations are too complex in their setting.

"Trust" is one of the important basis for cooperation (in my case...with a foreign partner). By "trust" I also include fulfilling tasks which are promises made by the local partner(s).

My greatest problem is when the foreign partner is away, much less work is being done.

Is "laziness" a reason why there are very few endogenous private projects ?

Does this explains why public funded projects run by NGOs and Govt bodies fail ?

Regards jacky

#161 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 10:24 am
Subject: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Myriam Kaplan-P wrote

>Q: Are there any taboos against eating rabbit in Cameroon?

To the best of my knowledge, there are no such taboos associated with rabbit consumption here in Cameroon.

What most of the people need is awareness on the importance of rabbit so that socially it can be accepted all over the country as a potential source of protein. Traditionally rabbits in Cameroon do not play an important role like chicken; goats and pigs often used for ritual purposes

>Q: Who buys the rabbit meat?

Most rabbits are sold locally since the production is of smaller scale. Individuals who are used to rabbit meat usually purchase from these local farmers

>Q: One hotel is mentioned. Are more interested?

Definitely more hotels are interested but the problem is a steady supply and increase awareness of the importance of rabbit meat

>Q: Do these hotels require specific processing guidelines
>or are the individual farmers processing themselves?

Depending on the request of the buyer, local farmers do sell live animals and at times they process them locally before selling.

Regards Fu Lucas

#162 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 10:31 am
Subject: Re: Gueben Victor (Cameroon)

Gueben wrote (msg #14):

>...I still run a small rabbit farm in the urban area of Yaounde .

please tell us more about your rabbit farm and give pictures if possible.

regards, jacky

#163 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 11:48 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

fu lucas wrote in #161:

>Individuals who are used to rabbit meat usually purchase

>from these local farmers

is rabbit meat classified as a "poor man's" meat ?

In Sweden, the head of salmon fish is sold usually as cat food. However a large fish head would make an excellent fish head curry dish. So when there is a need to make conversation with the fishmonger, I find myself having to say that my cat likes it because if I say I am going to eat it, he may think I am really poor (eating cat food)!

Do you have a similar situation when buying rabbit meat in Cameroon ?

Regards jacky

#164 From: Okhiomah Abu <ohiahmed@yahoo.com>

Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 1:06 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear All,

In Nigeria it is also generally believed that there are no taboos against the consumption of rabbit meat. However, in some parts of southwestern Nigeria young couples are discouraged from keeping rabbits (not the eating of rabbit meat).

The belief is that young couples who keep rabbits will have difficulty bearing children.

Do you believe this?

DR. O.A.ABU
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#165 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>

Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 2:31 pm

Subject: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (USA): experiences in Haiti

Hi Myriam,

I am so pleased to know that you are involved with this forum. It was a great pleasure meeting you in Verona, Italy, at the 9th World Rabbit Congress.

Can you please share your experiences in setting up and managing rabbit projects in Haiti.

What have been your major challenges and
What sustainable progress has been mad so far?

Perhaps, a few lessons can help to galvanize us into more rewarding ventures here in West Africa.

With warm regards, Saidu Oseni

#166 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 2:33 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Jacky Foo wrote
>is rabbit meat classified as a "poor man's" meat ?

There is no shame or inferiority complex associated with the purchase and consumption of rabbit meat. Rather the problem lies on the sensitization of people to realise how good and safe rabbit meat is otherwise it is supposed to be a very prestigious meal.

Fu Lucas

#167 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 8:31 pm
Subject: Factors influencing project success/failure

Dear Jacky,

I don't think trust or laziness is a major factor. Sure there will always be individuals who fall into those categories.

I think there are two other important factors to consider.

1. Cultural

this largely has to do with the relationship between villagers in LDC and funding organizations or individuals. The charity model of foreign aid has gone on for so long that in my experience many villagers has gotten used to the forced handouts. By this I mean that the villagers have had little to no say in what type of development assistance they get or how it is to be structured. Many villagers are not in a position financially or culturally to say no to a gift. They do not want to offend the giver and getting something is better than getting nothing. From the funders side I think it is vital that they learn to listen.

Funding organizations and individuals need to step out of their own cultural perspectives and goals and into the shoes of the villagers. This is extremely difficult for Americans, many of whom think they have the answers...."if only.....they would listen"

In my work I spend a great deal of effort getting the villager to speak up, find their own voice and find solutions themselves. I then act as a catalyst to open communications with the funding organizations or find ways to bring the villagers' ideas to fruition. We work together, trial and error, to create a long term sustainable evolution.

2.The learning curve

As a farmer, I know that every time we get into a new venture, there is a period of time necessary to learn the basics and then fine tuning the details. This can be a very frustrating time and it takes more than reading a book or taking a class to learn. Often in projects I have seen, the instructor may not always be an

experienced hands on farmer, especially where rabbits are concerned. They also often have never lived in a LDC or stay in country for long term follow up. The end result is that the villagers and Trainers in Training are expected to make it work after a short introduction.

Farming is an evolutionary process that must grow and change depending on a variety of influences that can change over time. This is hard to teach. I think it is something that comes naturally to a few people which can explain some of the really successful stories. Another factor is attention to detail.

In my work I try to focus on these things especially with my Trainers. I return often to the same places and encourage people with natural talent in raising rabbits to share information and mentor others. This is especially important during the long learning curve and after large losses like those we suffered in Haiti last year with 4 hurricanes.

Sincerely,
Myriam

#168 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 9:54 pm
Subject: Re: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (USA) : experiences in Haiti

Dr S.O Oseni wrote:

- > Can you please share your experiences in setting up and
- > managing rabbit projects in Haiti.
- > What have been your major challenges and
- > What sustainable progress has been mad so far?
- > Perhaps, a few lessons can help to galvanize us into more rewarding
- > ventures here in West Africa.

Dear Dr. Oseni,

Sharing my experiences in Haiti would probably fill a book, so I'll avoid trying to put it all in one email and let the stories come as I follow the seminar.

Two key factors I have learned are:

1. First..... it is vital that I (and my colleagues), as a catalyst, consultant and farmer keep on learning. Our real goal is to create a positive, expanding evolution that will result in long term, sustainable change (in LDCs, globally, farming....). Rabbits are just a part of that picture. Therefore, for many reasons, it is important to not stick to one set model.

Rabbits have tremendous potential, in part due to their ability to adapt. We must use (and teach) that to our advantage and adapt to each situation.

2. Sustainability as a long term goal is vital. It is also a challenge and needs to be part of the evolution of a project. It is also misleading to think of it as an end point goal because to remain sustainable means that a project must be flexible to take advantage of new opportunities, technologies, explore new ideas, etc in

order to stay sustainable over time. It may also mean that at times it is more profitable in the long run to back off production (drought, weather, food loss, riots....) and use reserves to exploit another option.

My own rabbitry is a good example of the evolution of learning and sustainability.

11 years ago I started with 2 does and a buck as a 4H project for my kids and some meat for my French mother. I mentored children with their rabbits through the 4H. As I learned more about rabbits, more people asked me to teach them. A local restaurant started to bug me about supplying meat. I increased my herd to 10 does and started experimenting with treating sick rabbits as local veterinarians did not like treating rabbits because they died too easily. There were only two books available on rabbit medicine at the time. One of them was Dr. Lukefahr's (Thank you for that).

About 7 years ago through word of mouth, the demand for our rabbits became a problem. Restaurants kept calling and bugging us to sell them quality rabbit. The horses weren't making us money so we started converting the barn into a rabbitry. When I reached about 75 does, we were hit with a Staph. mastitis problem that killed 60 % of my herd. It was very discouraging, we had a lot of money invested in cages, etc. It took me about a year to really control the problem. I researched and experimented with many management ideas.

Increasing my cull rate of does, broke my heart, but turned into a whole new product line for us. We started making sausage for the family. Friends who liked it so much spread the word and now we sell sausage and stewie rabbits to other rabbit sausage makers. We can not keep up with the demand for our rabbits. Restaurants even put our ranch name on the menu. They also asked us if we could help them find sources of other quality products, mainly pork. So our 2 backyard garbage pigs turned into a 60 sow operation for market pigs direct to consumers and restaurants.

Next came the demand for charcuterie pigs (really big fat pigs) for salami, head cheese, etc and a way for us to sell those darn big sows that would not breed well. We did have to let go of the free range chicken egg operation and sell off most of our horses as they did not make money any more, but that is part of the story of remaining sustainable.

Three take home ideas for rabbit raisers

1. Through cooperative efforts, export markets can be attainable for small farmers in LDCs. There is a worldwide demand for rabbit that has as yet never been satisfied.

2. Think about selling rabbit to hospitals. Rabbit is an easily digestible meat with great nutritional value. I suspect that it will be recognised in the future as an asset to the treatment and management of patients especially those with AIDS, drug resistant TB and malnutrition.

3. Market your brand name when selling rabbits to restaurants and hotels. This idea of wanting to know where one's food comes from and having a relationship

with food growers is taking hold in a huge way in the USA and in Europe. It should attract attention with tourists even in LDC's and can boost business for restaurants and hotels leading to an increased demand for your rabbits. (pay attention to details and quality in your product). Keep your eyes open for SLOW FOOD Nation as they are an international driving force behind this increased awareness of fresh local sustainable food systems.

See.... I told you it would take a book.
I hope this helps some of you.
For now I must go celebrate....

Good luck to all of you,
Myriam

#169 From: Jackson Ntapi Nkwentang <jackonndocs@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 12:15 am
Subject: Re: Re: Mbutakeh Agbor (Cameroon): 40 producing females

Mbutakeh Agbor wrote in message #17
> We are a common initiative group (Group de producteur
>de lapin de L'Ouest) situated in the West of Cameroon.
> Six of our members have succeeded to become big farmers
>having upto 40 producing females each in their farms.

Dear all,

Sorry for the late reply to mails

Jacky wrote in msg #141
>group should be producing 600kg of rabbit per month

Actually we do not evaluate how much is produced each month by our farmers but I will say our production should not be far from that

>How the 6 farmers moved from small scale to big scale

We began with 6 rabbits each (5 females and 1 buck) per farmer. After each sale the farmers of the group are advised to save part of their money in a development fund. The six successful farmers are those who saved regularly and where able to borrow from the fund to invest more on their farms.

President of Group de producteur de lapin de L'ouest
Mbutakeh Agbor

#170 From: "ngwendy_nick" <ngwendy_nick@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 11:06 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

hi all,

wao i must say i feel particularly concerned on this issue of taboos against either the consumption of rabbit meat or their rearing especially by young couples.

i do not really believe it but it is a very pertinent and delicate issue especially when it concerns a young couple who want to rear animals like rabbits.

it is believed that rabbits will attract negative forces into their home such as unfaithfulness, barrenness and others. this is because of the nature of rabbits as they are known for having a very high libido and also for incest, so in most cases young couples are advised not to grow rabbits in their early years of marriage.

what do you think about this, should people believe in such?

Ms N.Gwendoline
Department of biochemistry
University of Yaounde1
Tel;+237(7609-0045)

#171 From: "ngwendy_nick" <ngwendy_nick@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 11:37 pm
Subject: manage a small space for the rabbit farm i want to expand?

Q-is there a simpler way of making rabbit cages that are space effective in a case where we have limited space but will love to expand the farm without necessarily inconveniencing the others?

#172 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 11:53 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Miriam asked in msg #152

> Q1: Are there any taboos against eating rabbit in Cameroon?

Not at all, the problem with rabbit meat is that of insufficient information on its quality and availability

> Q2: Who buys the rabbit meat?

People informed about its quality and those who have access to it

> Q: One hotel is mentioned. Are more interested?

Yes but they are discouraged because they don't have sufficient information on where to have regular supplies

> Q: Do these hotels require specific processing guidelines
>or are the individual farmers processing themselves?

Farmers sell rabbits unprocessed

Jackson Ntapi Nk.
co-moderator

#173 From: "ngwendy_nick" <ngwendy_nick@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 11, 2009 11:31 pm
Subject: manage a small space for the rabbit farm i want to expand?

hi all,

well just had a worry on my plans for increasing my small family rabbit farm with the little income i have and also little knowledge i have on rabbits. my parents used to grow rabbits in the past and i want to continue with it.

i will love to expand this farm because of my love for rabbits and, their calm nature, the taste of their meat and the fact that they have a short gestation period.

Q-also read something about their manure like it is good for growing vegetable crops and will love to know the link.

Q-is it possible to join some association here in Cameroon through which i can learn more of this?

Q-i do not really understand why rabbit meat is so difficult to find even at markets and at fish points whereas other stuffs like fish, meat, and even pork can be bought from the market.

thanks
N.Gwendoline
Department of biochemistry
University of yaounde 1
Tel;+237(7609-0045)

#174 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 3:12 pm
Subject: Re: <http://www.heifercameroon.org/> : History of Rabbit Program

Jacky Foo wrote in #108:

>I was trying to get some documents on the background
>and developments that came out of the rabbit program/projects
> at <http://www.heifercameroon.org/> but found very limited info.
>Some history of the program was outlined.
>1982: inception of the project with a key role the
>Institute of Zootechnical Research in Bamenda
>(www.metafro.be/leisa/1994/10-4-25.pdf)
>1983-1985: Steven was assigned to the project
>1999: re-evaluation of the project
>2005: project ended (?)
>(?): Heifer Rabbit Foundation (?)
>
>can someone provide more info or direct me to documentation.

Inception of the project was a joint effort between Heifer and IRZ, which was

sponsored by a large USAID grant. I was first interviewed in 1982 by the staff at Heifer headquarters and arrived in Cameroon in early 1983. In my last visit in 1999, I provided to the staff of the Heifer office in Bamenda copies of many of my quarterly and annual reports of my efforts to expand rabbit production in villages throughout the northwest province.

Steven D. Lukefahr

#175 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 8, 2009 8:40 pm
Subject: What has the Cameroon Government been doing ?

Dear all,

Whether we believe it or not, we are engaged in a complicated finding game, a potentially infinite cycle of concealment, revelation, false revelation, discoveries and rediscoveries in which reality is in a maze of reflecting and distorting mirrors.

Granted, I created a network of then HPI farmers in 2003 in Bui Division of the North West Region of Cameroon with rabbit farmers inclusive. It was very powerful so much so that in 2004 they came together to form a cooperative managed by themselves where their animals and other items could be sold at maximal profits. Today the cooperative is still functional with only the rabbit component dwindling. Strictly from my own point of view, lack of micro-credit schemes/ subventions from the government to support these local farmers to go commercial appears to be the root cause

Question to any Cameroon Government official in this seminar:

Q: What has the Cameroon Government been doing since the third world Rabbit Congress of 1984 where it was unanimously recommended that government give priority to the development of logistic rabbit project in their National Development and Budget?

Thanks
DR FU LUCAS
HEIFER INTERNATIONAL CAMEROON

#176 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 9:01 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: 1st week of e-seminar

Hello Everyone

We are still in the 1st week of this e-seminar with lots of exchanges so far. To give you a weekend overview, here is some info.

Number of Messages:
23-31 March : 23 (#1-#23)
01-05 April : 34 (#24-#58)
1st week running: #59-#174

What are the themes/topics initiated for discussions ?:

- (1) self-introductions and participant-participant interactions (Kenya case)
- (2) discussions related to the 2 background papers (from these we are addressing different issues, experiences from authors and other co-workers, Heifer rabbit project, rabbit diets, etc)
- (3) housing for rabbits
- (4) taboos in keeping or eating rabbits
- (5) addressing the lack of market/supply
- (6) livestock inspections and certification
- (7) going commercial, case stories
- (8) stories from Cameroon and other countries; what are their lessons learnt and how can they be used in Cameroon
- (9) housing for rabbits
- (10).....others that you can think of !

Planning for the future (next activity)

(A) National Rabbit Networks

There exists in many countries rabbit groups, local networks, local and international associations. Some countries dont have them yet. For these countries, I am suggesting the establishment of "Rabbit Network"s which simply link people with people. Within the Integrated Biosystems Network and Rabbit Network Kenya, I am happy to assist in organizing e-seminars and other e-conferencing activities.

(B) E-seminars are very useful and I hope that the active participants will cooperate to organize other e-seminars in future. Suggestions are:

- (1) Rabbit meat production in Nigeria
- (2) Rabbit meat production in Haiti
- (3) Rabbit meat production in Kenya

regards
jacky

#177 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 10:25 am
Subject: New file uploaded to rabbit-cam

Hello,

This email message is a notification to let you know that a file has been uploaded to the Files area of the rabbit-cam group.

File : /rabbit-cam-seminar120-176.doc

Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Description : Discussion messages 120-176

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar120-176.doc>

To learn more about file sharing for your group, please visit:

<http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/web/index.htmlfiles>

Regards,
elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

#178 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 11:59 am
Subject: Re: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (USA) : demand for rabbits

Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak wrote in msg #168:

> We can not keep up with the demand for our rabbits.
> Restaurants even put our ranch name on the menu.

"Each year killed about 300 000 rabbits, but there is a need today to one million. So now we need to try to become more farmers and slaughterhouses..... " explains Marianne Tønnessen (2009). Chairlady of the Swedish rabbit producers Association.

Note:

Swedish National Rabbit Society maintains and publishes an annual register for rabbit farms, and rabbit associations.

<http://toolbox.svenskidrott.se/Downloads/-999997/docs/Uppfreg-08.pdf>.

Regards jacky

#179 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 8:16 pm
Subject: Re: Esperance-Essor-Estime Group (Cameroon)

Dear Jacky,

I missed this mail, was actually very involved during the Esther week for my group is in the poultry business an this week is a strategic marketing period.

Jacky Wrote:

> Jackson:
> You are the coordinator and production manager for the
> Esperance-Essor-Estime group. Does this Group have any
> projects on rabbits ?

No, in our agricultural sector for the moment we are into Maize cultivation, goat, pig and poultry farming. We are also involved in the marketing and distribution of these products. Most of these operations are newly established and only the poultry activity is actually producing income.

> If not, how can you initiate a rabbit production
> business at Esperance-Essor-Estime Group ?

I think exactly as the poultry project i established in Esperance-Essor-Estime (EEE). The major difference may be the need to involve farmers at the rabbit production stage.

""""""Brief description of our poultry project

The poultry project is presently a broiler production project with one production site located in Melon in the littoral province of Cameroon. The location of the production unit was based on the availability of maize at a competitive price in the Melon Area.

The strategy we have adopted at EEE to ensure continuous maize supply is to get into agreement with local farmers in the region who are to supply their maize produced to the group.

Another major issue about our poultry project is the marketing technique we are using. We have opened a sales point in Yaounde Cameroon where broiler is sold as live birds, freshly slaughtered and dressed table birds and as frozen chicken. Slaughtering birds in-situ (at the sales point) where all can see helps our clients to have confidence on the health of the birds before slaughter.

Our poultry has a next step which is day-old chick production and table eggs production. We are presently in the process of importing incubators and hatchers for our day-old chick production sub-sector.

A rabbit project

*Will like having it as a separate unit in EEE to prevent complexities in service delivery

*Will open a production unit holding 500-1000 breeding does in Melon in the Littoral province which is half way between the Douala metropolis, Dschang and Bamenda and thus in proximity to rabbit farmers and a wider market in the coastal region of Cameroon. (More enlightened inhabitants who are watchful of what they eat)

*Will involve local rabbit farmers (through sensitization and on-farm visits) from Bamenda, Dschang, Bafoussam and Melon regions to supply rabbit to the production unit

*Will create a functional marketing department with major activity of sourcing new markets and ensuring smooth flow of rabbit meat to consumers. This must consider external markets in potential neighbouring countries like Gabon and Nigeria

*Will create a technical department that ensures high efficiency in production not only at the major production unit but also at the farmer owned partner unit. The latter will be done through frequent extension visits and the maintenance of an open communication line with partner farmers.

* Jacky i think our experience will guide us into starting with a small unit and then expanding as mastery of important factors by staff are improved

Hope this summary is helpful, thanks for the opportunity

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#180 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 9:21 pm
Subject: Re: Jackson Ntapi Nk. (Cameroon)

Dear Jacky

this is an interesting question

Jacky asked in msg #137
> what was your role in the Heifer rabbit project ?

As a field officer my role was to animate development in rural communities using as tool animals and crops/vegetable.

With rabbit projects i had the opportunity to work with 3 assisted groups (1 in the west province and 2 in the Northwest province). One of the groups in the northwest province was a disabled peoples group (Victims of Leprosy stigmatization).

I principally provided technical support to farmers on rabbit husbandry (trainings on nutrition, health and breeding) and provided quarterly technical visits to help farmers improve their production efficiency.

I ensured proper integration of rabbit into complex production systems. This involved the integration of vegetable/crop production to help boost the nutrition on assisted families, their income and create alternative feed sources for the rabbits.

I helped farmer groups address ensures related to group dynamics, gender and HIV and AIDs within their groups and communities

I equally helped put in place an agroforestry system that ensures a good quality in and around rabbit farms. The main theme in our agroforestry program was to identify and promote the cultivation appropriate agroforestry trees that will help farmers improve their farm environment and obtain alternative feed for their animals.

Calliandra spp was one of the major legume trees that was promoted within the program.

I was greatly involved in assisting farmers market their rabbits and vegetable products. My major guide was to promote the health qualities involved in consuming rabbit and crops produced organically. Farmers who could meet the demand of new buyers (usually civil servants in government ministries in Bamenda) benefited a lot from this program

There is a lot i can write about the role i played in helping rabbit farmers create and follow a vision in rabbit husbandry but i will want to end by saying that my principal role was to help farm families improve and maintain a good standard of living (using rabbits-vegetable-crops-trees as a tool) during and after Heifer's assistance.

Jacky asked:

- >If you were to do the Heifer project again (and the
- >target group is still the resource-limited farmers),
- >what were the lessons learnt that you would use to
- >improve your project

A lot of lessons i suppose

* From the onset of the project don't refer to a rabbit project only as a source of food. This will guide the whole process. Farmers were told this, i change the story and struggled to make rabbits more appealing but the answer was we need pigs.... rabbit is for food. The farmers were in reality just attracted a huge assistance given to pig farmers which does not necessarily mean pig farming was more viable.

*Help farmers plan for growth in their farms. Cases of overcrowded cages is because farmers were not ready to own a larger number of animals was evident. You may have a good breed, healthy initial stock but fail due to a bad plan.

Integrating activities like vegetable gardening will help farmers ease their poverty situation and allow their rabbit farms to grow. Once the farmers are having a good number of producing does (depending on the labour force and other resources like land....) they will enjoy their project more through the continuous sales of fattened bunnies. This is important when the project can not help farmers to have a good herd size at the initial stage (like the Heifer rabbit project)

*Put in place a plan that will help farmers market their products from the onset of the project or around when we expect massive production.

There was so many cases of a farmer reporting loosing 20 bunnies due to bloat, coccidiosis etc due to poor hygiene and poor feeding. Are they fools? no, I think they did not immediately see the young bunnies as income because the market is so disorganized and inconsistent.

Jacky..... i learnt when people view a project as a life changing (improvement venture) usually based on its income generating traits,, they can do wonders for it to succeed. In the contrary don't expect much. Once farmers start producing and sell rabbit, they get money and work more on their farms.

They will respect the deworming plan, they will control coccidiosis not just by using anti coccidial drugs but also by maintaining good which is the key to success.

They will not only fetch good quality grass and legume for the rabbits but will endeavor to provide some concentrates at least to the in-kid does and young fast growing bunnies meant for meat.

* May like to improve on the use of ethnoveterinary medicine in the prevention of diseases. This aspect was there but suffered from some oversight

*Jacky..... there are other issues like ensuring proper motivation and good working conditions for the people in the field that i will not want to raise in this forum

I can write a whole page but should stop here for now will elaborate more if questions come.

JACKSON NTAPI NK
PRODUCTION MANAGER EEE GROUP
1020 YAOUNDE CAMEROON

#181 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 9:33 pm
Subject: Re: Factors influencing project success/failure

Dear Myriam

when i read your mail i am sure you have been there before.

Myriam wrote in msg #167

>The charity model of foreign aid has gone on for so long
>that in my experience many villagers has gotten used to
>the forced handouts. By this I mean that the villagers
>have had little to no say in what type of development
>assistance they get or how it is to be structured.

My comment

I hope your long and explicit sentences will help many understand that endogenous or participatory development means treating farmers like colleagues. Yes this is time for a COLLEGEATE APPROACH to rural development, let the people (beneficiaries) own the process.

My question

In case where you are fixed on the project you want to implement, like starting a rabbit production/marketing unit in a community, I am proposing that the best way to identify good partners is to work with those who are already keeping rabbit in the community.

This proves they have the interest and some experience, now whether they want to go commercial should be the basis of your discussion with them.

What do you think??

#182 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 12, 2009 9:44 pm
Subject: Re: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (USA) : demand for rabbits

Dear Myriam,

you wrote in msg #168:

> We can not keep up with the demand for our rabbits.

> Restaurants even put our ranch name on the menu.

This should be an objective in Cameroon and other African countries.

We may not have a plan for 1 million rabbits as our farmers are poor and can't support excessive expansion, but if we can have rabbit meat from small farms into the menu of restaurants then we must be a far way in solving the marketing problems faced by farmers.

Rabbits are not served in restaurants as for now in Cameroon, neither are they dressed and packaged.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#183 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 13, 2009 6:27 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Jacky;

in message #160, you asked:

> Is "laziness" a reason why there are very few endogenous
> private projects ?
> Does this explain why public funded projects run by
> NGOs and Govt bodies fail ?

On this issue of trust and laziness Myriam identified a link between project viability and the involvement of beneficiaries. She highlighted the dangers of transfer of technology or projects from one environment to another without considering local interest and culture.

Another issue I will like to raise that may be responsible for the failure of endogenous projects is the superficial nature through which NGOs and governments get involved. For an NGO's input to be useful in promoting Endogenous projects; there is need to first of all understand the mechanism that guides the local systems. What are their strengths and weaknesses; what are the potentials to be exploited and perspective of growth if a particular factor is changed.

It is only when we understand the system that we can add to endogenous projects to improve their efficiency and viability (Upgrading endogenous practices/projects).

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#184 DELETED

#185 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 15, 2009 12:17 am
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

in message #160, Jacky Foo asked:

- > Is "laziness" a reason why there are very few endogenous
- > private projects ?
- > Does this explain why public funded projects run by
- > NGOs and Govt bodies fail ?

Jacky Foo, laziness appears to be the root cause of project apathy highlighted at the beginning of this seminar. Farmers often confuse laziness with patience

Most sponsored projects fail because of the following

1. Project design does not take into consideration the culture of the people. It is a well established fact that rearing pigs for example in a Moslem community is a white elephant project BECAUSE THEY DO NOT EAT PORK where as little or nothing is known about the other livestock
2. Some projects are designed in the office before going down to the field for implementation(Top-bottom approach) where as the reverse could yield better fruits(bottom-top approach)
3. Farmers do not own the process from the beginning and thus the dependency syndrome usually observed with most of these projects.
4. Where input supplies by either the NGO or Government is 100%, THE TRUE VALUE WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ACCORDED BY THE FARMER TO SUCH PROJECTS is no longer there. Remember what is given for free except oxygen has no value. There is thus laxity in the project on the part of the farmer though few may be successful. Shifting from the beneficiary approach to partnership approach with well defined contributions of each partner at the point of entry could go a long way to enhance the sustainability of such project
5. Absence of microcredit scheme/ subventions to support these projects is also attributed to the failure of such projects
6. A multisectorial approach(gov't, NGOs, Para statals; International organizations should put all hands on deck to see that such projects sail through
7. Recently the Cameroon Gov't is promoting the domestication of grass cutter which is a non conventional animal by some farmers as alternative sources of protein without a corresponding strengthening of the rabbit sector. I am afraid rabbit production will soon encounter extinction if something is not done and very urgent too. There is thus some sort of competition between the two livestock thus care must be taken.
8. Focus on what

Regards
Fu Lucas

Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 2:13 am

Subject: Ethnoveterinary/Veterinary information

Jackson Ntapi Nk" wrote in #153

>"A good example of a project based on endogenous practices is
>the ethnoveterinary in Cameroon project that promotes the use
>of local knowledge and plants in treating and preventing
>diseases in livestock.

I think it would be very useful if we could have a section of the website dedicated to ethnoveterinary and veterinary treatments. Since there is not a lot of money to be made in rabbit medicine the drug companies have not pursued the research. This makes sharing treatment ideas important.

Myriam

#187 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 2:37 am

Subject: Re: ethnoveterinary for rabbits in Cameroon

Fu Lucas wrote in msg #159:

>"I am willing to work with anybody in this seminar in the
>domain of research who is willing to support/ strengthen
>such a project for it is cheap and reliable as testified
>by farmers.

You can count me in for help.

My number one treatment for all rabbits is make good clean water available all the time. For this I suggest water bottle nipples on plastic bottles. They are worth the cost and should be included in any NGO supported project.

(Make sure they have the little plastic ring inside or they will leak. New ring can be made from inner tubing)

Identify and Reduce stress on the sick animals. (Heat, weather, predator, any changes...)

Next, if feeding concentrates, add fiber to the rabbits diet such as grasses, hay or forages. This will help stabilize the rabbit.

For mange or ear mites:

10ml of Ear Miticide or 1 % Ivomec with a bottle of 20oz (591ml) of oil. Baby oil, vegetable oil or Mineral oil. (mineral oil is better). Some people also use a little kerosene in oil and claim that it works well. This works two ways, first to smother the mites with the oil.

The Ivomec is absorbed and gives residual control for any new mites that hatch. Usually only one application of of 6-8 drops in each ear is enough and the mites

will clear in less than a week. If there are lots of mites in the rabbitry and the rabbit still shows signs of mites, a second dose may be needed 7-10 days later.

In Haiti we are using mineral oil and Ivomec topically for sarcoptic mange and it works really well. It clears up in a week. For heavily infested rabbitries we repeat monthly. Before the Haitians were injecting the Ivomec and overdosing the rabbits, killing many of them. It was also very costly.

Mixing it in the mineral oil is much cheaper, easier to use and it lasts forever (Ivomec does not go bad. For topical use it works long after the expiration date).

If we include herb treatments on the website, it would be nice if we included a picture of the plant since the names do vary by regions.

Myriam

#188 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 3:08 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

Ms N.Gwendoline wrote in msg #170

>..it is believed that rabbits will attract negative forces into
> their home such as unfaithfulness, barrenness and others. this is
>because of the nature of rabbits as they are known for having a
>very high libido and also for incest, so in most cases young
>couples are adviced not to grow rabbits in their early years
>of marriage.
>what do you think about this, should people believe in such?

The power of myth and belief is potentially very strong.

Any instructor needs to judge its audience first before challenging them.

Humor can be useful tactfully to help people see the realities behind a taboo or belief.

Time and repeated exposure help too. Look for unique opportunities to help dispel myths and be creative. Sometimes comparing and contrasting different species including humans works well.

In Haiti I encountered the myth that goats do not drink water. I understand that this is a strong belief in many LDC's which evolved since water is difficult to come by and goats can get by with little water intake. Physiologically there is a price in reduced growth, reduced milk production, smaller stature, and disease.

I challenged the group to put a bucket of water in front of a goat. Everyone laughed at me. Lucky me the goats stuck their noses in the water, sneezed when they sniffed the unfamiliar stuff and drank heartily.

Now the new game in town is to bet newcomers a dollar that a goat will drink out of a bucket. Amazingly it still works 100% of the time. (so much for new entrepreneurial opportunities).

As an educator I feel that I do have an obligation to provide knowledge. I don't insist that people take my advice, but rather experiment with it. I use my teaching opportunities to answer any questions, even awkward ones.

Many times when we discuss reproduction questions about human reproduction come up. Using animals as a reference point and a source of humor have proven useful in helping people understand new knowledge. I also get people, especially women who approach me privately with personal questions.

They see me as a role model and I do my best not to let them down.

By the way rabbit behavior is not contagious.

Myriam

#189 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 3:17 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: 1st week of e-seminar

jacky wrote in msg #176

>E-seminars are very useful and I hope that the active participants
>will cooperate to organize other e-seminars in future.

>Suggestions are:

- >(1) Rabbit meat production in Nigeria
- >(2) Rabbit meat production in Haiti
- >(3) Rabbit meat production in Kenya

Dear Jacky,

I will be in Haiti at the end of May and will discuss this idea. Our problem there is limited access to electricity, internet and computers.

We have already brought in several computers and are now working on solar powered satellite internet access. This is a good example of how diversified a group must be to create a sustainable viable program.

I am hoping that we can get enough funds together for several of the Makouti members to go to WRSA-AB in Argentina 2010.

Myriam

#190 From: dairo ayodeji <fasdairo@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 9:40 am
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Fu Lucas wrote in msg #185:

>7. Recently the Cameroon Gov't is promoting the domestication of
> grass cutter which is a non conventional animal by some farmers
>as alternative sources of protein without a corresponding
>strengthening of the rabbit sector.

What a good observation you made on grasscutter & rabbit production. There is something that suddenly occur to me:

Grasscutter (now being seriously domesticated) is a bush meat relish by virtually all Africans South of Sahara hence it is widely getting popularity than rabbit. I have a farmer who rears both here in the city I reside in Nigeria; however, he pays more attention to the grasscutter because he has more market for it from eateries & restaurants. Therefore because grasscutter is more native to us Africans, there seems to be a better acceptable attitude to it than rabbit meat. Rabbit from the wild in this part of the world is not as popular as grasscutter meat.

Based on the above, my question is why don't we then concentrate our efforts on popularising & promoting grasscutter. It may seem a "U" turn from what we are discussing but it is worth our consideration.

It is not only in Cameroon that grasscutter is becoming popular, it is something gaining ground at least I know in the West African sub-region. Can we do something on this too?

Dairo, F.A.S.
Dept. of Animal Production & Health Sciences,
University of Ado-Ekiti,

#191 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 11:23 am
Subject: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

dairo ayodeji in msg #190
> Grasscutter (now being seriously domesticated) is a bush meat relish by
> virtually all Africans South of Sahara hence it is widely getting popularity
> than rabbit.

good to know that

but gestation period of grass cutter is 152 days (about 5 months) and female gives birth normally 5 young (10 young per year). If grasscutter meat (maybe less weight than a rabbit) can fetch a high price, it is certainly worth the time and effort.

Regards jacky

#192 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 12:07 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

Some points about recent discussion:

- I have found in Cameroon the believing that people recent married must not raise ducks until they have at least one boy and one girl. Questioned about the reason they answered me that ducks (muskovy ducks) produce many eggs and this because they are able to take the fertility from women. All people was in agreement. I suppose that the same happens with rabbits as they are observed to have a high prolificacy.

- In effect "The power of myth and belief is potentially very strong" as assessed by Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak (Msg #188).

More: it is nearly always actually very strong, since people tend to maintain their opinion even in front of the evidence. I have tested this many times.

- In the lot of false believing must be put also most of the ethno-medicine. I have found in Cameroon (west zone) the believing that the urine of rabbits is good to cure poultry respiratory diseases. One litre of urine has a price equivalent to a guinea pig. It is much and, in practice, it is an added value to rabbit keeping income. I have some photos to document the way the urine is collected.

- Also rabbits are believed not to need drinking. This was believed also in Europe when rabbits were fed only with fresh, water-rich vegetables, being rabbits also able to re-absorb water in kidneys, making a rather dense urine. I have hints that this wrong believing is of European origin. In Sao Tomé I found two small farmers that, though knowing each other, one believed rabbits do not drink and the other giving water to his rabbits.

- Grasscutters and rabbits should be considered as a perfect combination for the complete utilisation of elephant grass and similar. In fact grasscutters eat only the stems and rabbits prefer the leaves. A student of mine demonstrated the same for grasscutters and guinea pigs.

Regards.
Alessandro

#193 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 8:36 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

"Alessandro Finzi" wrote in msg #192:

> - Grasscutters and rabbits should be considered as a perfect
> combination for the complete utilisation of elephant grass and
> similar. In fact grasscutters eat only the stems and rabbits
> prefer the leaves. A student of mine demonstrated the same
> for grasscutters and guinea pigs.

This is most interesting for me since I have been studying and doing integrated biosystems.

With rabbits I have found that there is a significant waste of grass and weeds and if grasscutters can scavenge these remains from rabbits, it would certainly

make a very good biosystem. Production of 10 youngs per year by grasscutters would not cause too much worries since the rabbits will be the main product.

Is there any research in Cameroon on this biosystem or is it already a practice in some private backyards ?

regards

jacky

#194 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 8:44 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits and drinking water

"Alessandro Finzi" wrote in msg #192:

> - Also rabbits are believed not to need drinking. This was
> believed also in Europe when rabbits were fed only with
> fresh, water-rich vegetables, being rabbits also able to
> re-absorb water in kidneys, making a rather dense urine.

All the rabbits at www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net pee a lot as we give fresh grass and weeds and no hay nor concentrate pelleted feed.

All the kids who had rabbits before and helping at the project rabbit house also do not give water.

So giving drinking water to rabbits isn't a must for my project.

Under such conditions, has there been any research on the "further" need for drinking by rabbits ?

regards

jacky

#195 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>

Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 9:06 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits and drinking water

Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak wrote in msg #187:

> My number one treatment for all rabbits is make good
> clean water available all the time.
> For this I suggest water bottle nipples on plastic bottles.
> They are worth the cost and should be included in any NGO
> supported project.

I add glasses (about 50 cts each) used at <http://www.globetree.org/africa/cgg/cgk/rabbit.htm> and in <http://www.globetree.org/africa/miec/index.htm> we used plastic yoghurt containers. The main problem was the water gets dirty fast and the children are not too happy with the chores of cleaning the containers. So the idea of giving water dropped out.

water bottles look "expensive" and will be for the rural farmers.

At the National breeding center in Ngong (Nairobi), they use a water pipe system with a nipple T for each cage. The system is manual and water comes from a pail of water that is placed at a higher level.

Q. can someone recommend a "cheap" system ?

regards
jacky
