

#196 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 16, 2009 9:16 pm
Subject: Re: administrative info: next 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

Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak #189 wrote:

- > I will be in Haiti at the end of May and will discuss this
- >idea.....
- > We have already brought in several computers and are now
- >working on solar powered satellite internet access.

Good....

How long will you be in Haiti ?

Do your rabbit friends communicate via email with you ?

>(1) Rabbit meat production in Nigeria

To our Nigerian friends ...

Can some one take the initiative to organize one ?

All we need is 2 or more background papers and to take the opportunity to get all rabbit people in Nigeria to join.

Regards jacky

#197 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 9:20 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: website for Rabbit Network Cameroon

I create a page for Rabbit Network Cameroon.

<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon>

I need pictures from Cameroon..... Jackson ...Thanks

Steven:

Can I use some of your pictures to feature the e-seminar ?

Fotso:
pls send some too.

Regards jacky

#198 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 9:44 am
Subject: how many rabbits slaughtered for meat ?

Does anyone have a list based on country ?

What is the figure (estimate) for Cameroon ?

Regards jacky

#199 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 1:06 pm
Subject: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

Jecky wrote in msg #193:

>Is there any research in Cameroon on this biosystem
>or is it already a practice in some private backyards ?

I had observed in Benin that only stems of elephant grass were fed to grasscutters, while leaves were stripped and wasted. Thus we organised a trial to test how many guinea pigs could be raised per each grasscutters to get the complete consumption of the leaves and avoid them to be wasted.

I don't suppose that something similar has been done for rabbits that are far less popular and difficult to be raised in comparison with guinea pigs.

But it is easy to make a test with reference to rabbits and grasscutters to know the correct proportion of both species in order to utilise completely the elephant grass collected.

I think a good and useful paper could be published on this matter.

I am interested to this, but unfortunately I live in Italy where we don't raise grasscutters.

Cheers. Alessandro

#200 From: "Steven Lukefahr" <kfsdl00@tamuk.edu>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 3:22 pm

Subject: administrative info: website for Rabbit Network Cameroon

JF>Steven:

>Can I use some of your pictures to feature the e-seminar ?

Sure! Just mention or show my name so that readers know the source.

Steven D. Lukefahr

#201 From: dare asiyanbola <africababa@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 3:54 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

people should not believe in such myths because it has always been different people from different locality with different beliefs, but i feel if such myths are not rejected it will reduce the rate of development in rabbit production.
Thanks

#202 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 4:14 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

dare asiyanbola wrote in #201:

> people should not believe in such myths because it has
>always been different people from different locality with
>different beliefs, but i feel if such myths are not rejected
>it will reduce the rate of development in rabbit production.

Myriam in #188

(<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/188>) gave a very good example of how she dealt with the myth.

It is very important to address such myths immediately when you hear about them.

There are 2 TV programmes (USA origin) that deals with myths and the programs would test myths to demonstrate if a myth is just "exaggerated" truth or just a myth.

Myth= any invented story, idea, or concept, imaginary or fictitious, unproved or false collective belief

Regards jacky

#203 From: moshood abiola <herbyolar@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 5:20 pm
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: taboos and rabbits

Dear all,

Myths, beliefs and superstitions are things we Africans don't joke with, but with the advent of civilisation there are different ways of dispelling these superstitions which depend on location, time and the nature of such myths and beliefs. This is another challenging aspect for scientists in Africa and I think the onus lies most on Extensionists because they are the closest to scientific clientele. All we have to do is creation of awareness and giving practical (real life) examples. These myths are not limited to rabbits alone they also extend to guinea pigs when it comes to their reproduction. Please we should not overlook this aspect particularly the Extensionist they have a whole lot of work to do here.

Best regards, Moshood

#204 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 17, 2009 8:17 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

Alessandro wrote

>I had observed in Benin that only stems of elephant grass
>were fed to grasscutters, while leaves were stripped and
>wasted. Thus we organised a trial to test how many guinea
>pigs could be raised per each grasscutters to get the
>complete consumption of the leaves and avoid them to be wasted.

Let me remark here that I am currently handling the Heifer Cameroon grasscutter projects and I am yet to experience this.

What I have observed is that when fresh juicy stem of maize is given for example to the animal, it starts eating from the stem before going to the leaves. I am yet to understand why it is so. To an extent, the grass is wasted and it is usually soiled with the animal waste which farmers do gather as manure to be used on farms.

I am yet to understand how such waste and contaminated by products are collected

Q. How is the wasted grass collected in such a way that it is not soiled with urine and faeces before using to feed guinea pigs?

Regards Fu lucas

#205 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 12:19 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: website for Rabbit Network Cameroon

To all participants from Cameroon

In webpage:

<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm#CONTACTS>

I have listed your name in "Contacts"

- (i) if I missed your name. pls let me know. Pls check that info is correct.
- (ii) pls send photo of yourself to me for the webpage

thanks jacky

see photo gallery

<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm#PHOTO GALLERY>

#206 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 3:15 am
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

I had the same thought concerning the transferring of wasted feed to a second species that might be sensitive to soiled feed. In the US some farmers place pigs or chickens under the rabbit cages. These animals are not very picky about what they eat and not susceptible to diseases from rabbits. We also leave the waste feed for compost and worms.

Myriam

#207 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 2:01 am
Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Jackson,

"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)."

I agree this is often true. Unfortunately many NGO's prefer to save money by by passing the feasibility study. Unfortunately this is not the only shortcut they take.

They often (this is especially true in Haiti) use volunteers with limited expertise to offer advice on a project because they have time, money and are free. These people rarely have language, cultural or project specific skills.

I am currently in communication with a cat and dog veterinarian from New York City who has been asked by her church to give advice for an agricultural development project in a village in Haiti. Luckily she was able to meet my colleagues on site to help her out.

In 1985 a Unicef water pump project did a midterm evaluation in Niger to find that 75% of the pumps they had put in were broken or not used. The conclusion of the study was communication failure. Apparently UNICEF saved some money by not hiring the communication specialist who was to act as a liaison between the project and the villagers. The result was pumps placed in unmarked cemeteries, taboos about pregnant women using foot pumps and lack of knowledge on how to repair broken pumps.

I am sure all of you have a list of stories like these. What we need to figure out is how to change this pointless pattern of so many NGO's. Any Ideas?

Myriam

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

Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 3:56 pm

Subject: Re: Ethnoveterinary/Veterinary information

Dear Myriam,

Yes you are right Myriam, sharing treatment ideas will help increase the viability of the rabbit sector that suffers from many prejudices like the one you mentioned on animal drug companies neglecting the rabbit sector.

When i was in Heifer Cameroon i served as the contact person for the ethno-veterinarian department in my region because of the keen interest i have on alternative practices that adds value and competitiveness to endogenous projects. We had a workshop with ethno-veterinary practitioners in the region and the following diseases with their remedies (in attached draft) were identified during the workshop. Please take a look, there is a lot we can add from our different experiences but again the list of treatment for rabbits during the workshop was quite short whan compared to that of cattle, small ruminants and pigs. We should push on the identification and sharing of more ethno-veterinary practices for rabbits

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

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

Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 4:11 pm

Subject: Re: ethnoveterinary for rabbits in Cameroon

Dear Myriam,

Myriam wrote

> My number one treatment for all rabbits is make good clean water available all the time.

Very correct but i will say out of providing good quality water and feed to rabbits, my number one treatment for a successful rabbit farm is maintaining good hygiene.

I am saying this because of the great difference i noticed in mortality rates in farms with good hygiene and those where hygiene was poor to bad. A farmer should be able to sleep in a clean rabbit farm.

Experienced farmers who had made the link between hygiene and disease occurrence especially coccidiosis are making tremendous efforts to maintain clean in their farms. Cleaning rabbit cages is not an easy task the following is important:

- *Remove feces in and around cages every day
- *Empty and wash drinkers every day to prevent accumulation of semi decomposed feed
- *Empty feeder every day and wash twice per week
- *Clean cages with water (Using a foam as cages are made with Bamboo) and disinfectant using detergent once every week
- *Clean cages with water and disinfect using multi purpose disinfectant (TH4) once every month

Adoption of these majors has really helped most farmers reduce mortality and expenditure on orthodox drugs especially in controlling coccidiosis and external parasites.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

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

Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 4:20 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

Dear Jacky,

- Is there any research in Cameroon on this biosystem
- >or is it already a practice in some private backyards ?

Saw such a combination in the University of Dschang but think it is rather rare in private backyards. Farmers may have the interest in adopting this but the issue which we have so far failed to raise in this discussion is the rarity of initial parent stock for a next farmer. I have seen farmers sourcing young grasscutters for their farms in vain. This is becoming a major factor in the rabbit sector as a large number of people wanting to keep rabbits are facing problems sourcing good parental stocks.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#211 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 5:08 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: rabbits-grasscutters

Dear Myriam and Fu Lucas,

I think your questions about the use of leftovers from one animal in feeding another animal are pertinent but in the case of grass-cutters combined with rabbits or Guinea pigs we can look at this differently.

We are all aware that grass-cutters prefer stems to leaves while rabbits/guinea pigs are more comfortable with the softer leaves, why don't we separate the leaves from the stems and serve differently to both livestock. The stem or leaves can be viewed as left over depending on which livestock is principally reared. It is still a complementary biosystem as the rearing of both animals will help us improve the efficiency of pasture use. This approach has been used in the cattle-small ruminant combination although grazing was the feeding method used. The cattle cannot cut grass very low, so they graze through pastures first followed by small ruminants like goat having the capacity to cut grass at a lower level.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#212 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 4:42 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Dairo,

Dairo Wrote

- 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?

Instead i think we should follow Jacky's idea of promoting systems that accommodate the two livestock. You are right about the acquaintance to grasscutter meat but we can not also neglect the potential in a rabbit. Taking for example the reproductive performance of rabbit vis a vis a grass-cutter, we can at once see how useful a rabbit can be to an impoverished household.

You mentioned issues comparing the acquaintance and acceptability of rabbit and grass-cutter. Think you are right about the advantage grass-cutter has because she is a native of the region, but like any stranger the rabbit needs to sell its potentials. Rabbit unlike grass-cutters have been widely approved as white meat good for patients suffering from diabetes, hypertension etc.

I think the two livestock are worth promoting we should make a "U" turn on either of them

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

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

Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 7:42 pm

Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

jacksonntapi

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/212>

> Instead i think we should follow Jacky's idea of promoting systems that
> accomodate the two livestock.

Backyard rabbit keepers in Uganda and Kenya usually tie the grass and weeds into a bundle and hang it above the ground.

If I do a rabbit-grasscutter system, I would do the same. Rabbits will scavenge the leaves and the stems are not dirty. Then I give the bundle of stems to grasscutters.

Regards jacky

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

Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 7:36 pm

Subject: Re: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak wrote:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/207>

> In 1985 a Unicef water pump project did a midterm evaluation in Niger to
> find that 75% of the pumps they had put in were broken or not used.

I have a different opinion on why pumps remain unrepaired.

I just got an update report from my local Nairobi area rabbit coordinator on the rabbit house in Stephjoy Girls High School, Limuru.

see <http://www.globetree.org/africa/stephjoy/news.htm#report2> . I get a monthly report (rabbit count) from all the rabbit houses.

>Kenyatta is no longer working there.

>Following is Limuru report...

>RABBIT COUNT [STEPHJOY]

>No of females[all adults above 2 months]=11

>No of males[all adults above 2 months]=7

>Total =18

>Lydia told me some had given birth but the bunnies died.

>ANALYSIS

>Cages very dirty because school is closed

>Rabbits hungry not given enough food because of shortages and

>no one is available to feed them

I believe the problem (handpump and rabbit house at Limuru) is that most of such beneficiaries do not have the "energy" (brains) for problem-solving. In Sweden, before volunteers go to East Africa, they are given a briefing. One of the generalised sayings and awareness for them is the general observation that "East Africans dont solve problems. They just live with it". PLEASE do not quote out of context. This observation is also in all poor countries, not just East Africa.

My thinking is that rural people are not very innovative and that is why farming methods dont change (if so very slowly) in rural areas. They just follow a routine or a practice. Since everyone does that, there is a support system e.g. when a plough is broken, there is always a neighbour who knows how to repair it. Keeping rabbits is not new in many African countries but it has remained a backyard hobby with a few rabbits as a manageable "routine" or scale. It rarely goes beyond this backyard hobby.

That is my thinking.

So my question is : Why does backyard rabbit farming usually a small scale hobby ?

What makes the Group de producteur de lapin de L'Ouest (President Mbutakeh Agbor) different ? <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/17> (6 of 20 members have upto 40 producing females) ?

What took these 6 members from 8 producing females to 40 producing females ?

Regards jacky

#215 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sun Apr 19, 2009 9:33 am
Subject: Organizations dealing with rabbits in Cameroon

Request for help:

If you have time and access to Internet, pls let us know any organization (company, govt, NGO, etc) with offices in Cameroon that deals with rabbits.

Info needed:

Name of organization

Contact person

Phone

Rabbit activity

(other info ?)

thank you

regards jacky

#216 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun Apr 19, 2009 6:40 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Jacky,

Jacky Wrote

> Backyard rabbit keepers in Uganda and Kenya usually tie
>the grass and weeds into a bundle and hang it above the ground.

That is what our farmers in Cameroon have adopted as the rabbit will not even eat a large quantity of the leaves if they are soiled with its urine and feces. The question is, if there is a chance of the rabbit pulling the bundle from where it is hung and soiling it with its dejections (thus making it unconsumable to the grasscutter) why not cut off the stems and serve to the grasscutter and feed the leaves to the rabbit.

By the way Collecting left overs from the cage of the rabbit and or grasscutter is additionnal work to the farmer and additional stress to the caged animal. I think chopping off the leaves and serving differentially to both animals is a wise choice.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 12:40 pm

Subject: Re: Re: administrative info: website for Rabbit Network Cameroon

Please, I don't understand if the question is general, for all the participants or only for people actually working in Cameroon.

Thank you. Alessandro Finzi

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

From: Jacky Foo

To all participants from Cameroon

In webpage:

<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm#CONTACTS>

I have listed your name in "Contacts"

(i) if I missed your name. pls let me know. Pls check that info is correct.

(ii) pls send photo of yourself to me for the webpage

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 3:39 pm

Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Jacky,

You wrote

- > So my question is : Why does backyard rabbit farming usually a small
- > scale hobby ?
- > What makes the Group de producteur de lapin de L'Ouest (President
- > Mbutakeh Agbor) different ?
- > <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/17>
- > (6 of 20 members have upto 40 producing females) ?
- > What took these 6 members from 8 producing females to 40 producing females
- > ?

Your observation about farming systems in Africa are quite pertinent but should help us (development workers)redefine the way we work local people. I am one of those who will hesitate in concluding that rural farmers are not innovative because i have seen a lot of initiatives skillfully handled by these people.

If local farming systems don't change i strongly believe it is the fault of actors (governments, NGOs.....) who fail to introduce projects that will help farmers innovate. There is always a reason for every innovation because it is an investment, why should we for example expect a local farmer to source for ways of improving his productivity when there is no system in place to help him/her commercialize his excess product???

There are many questions we may need to answer before accusing the local farmer and some of these are;

* Are there enough incentives for the farmer to invest his/her time and resources? i.e source of income for the family, ready market for products etc

*Is the farming operation well organized that it can attract youths who are generally more innovative?? In Cameroon and most parts of Africa agriculture is viewed as a poor mans affair and very few youths are attracted to it. The consequence is an ageing farmers population that is less attracted to innovations

*Will innovating bring any substantial improvement in standards of living?? If not why innovate

I think the Era has come where agriculture development in Africa must be planned in a framework that ensures that the principal actors (farmers) substantial improvement in their social standings.

A simple example i will raise is the problem of middlemen in the agricultural system in Cameroon. Farmers are left on their own by gov't and NGOs and middlemen trick them of their profit. A typical farmer in Cameroon only gets an average of 30 percent of the profit from his/her product the rest is being enjoyed by middlemen.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#219 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 4:11 pm
Subject: Rabbit network Cameroon

Dear participants from Cameroon,

I am particularly happy with the contributions from Cameroonians present in this Internet seminar although only 50 percent of the people invited were able to participate.

One of the principal objectives of this internet seminar was to lead the way for the creation of a rabbit network in Cameroon. To achieve this i am working with Jacky Foo to create a website for our rabbit network:

I hereby invite every individual or organization to volunteer and participate in the creation and functioning of the rabbit network Cameroon. Participants from Cameroon should also help me invite other rabbit interest groups and individuals not present in the internet seminar.

I am thinking it is good for us to create a rabbit network committee in Cameroon that will ensure proper functioning of our rabbit network.

Thanks for participating and together lets help the growth of the rabbit sub-sector in Cameroon.

Jackson Ntapi Nk:
Production Manager Esperance-Essor-Estime group
P O Box 1020 Yaounde Cameroon
Phone +237 96134784

#220 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 3:58 pm
Subject: Re: Organizations dealing with rabbits in Cameroon

Dear Jacky,

To the best of my knowledge there are no organizations that are specialized in rabbit keeping but if i should mention organization that are dealing/have dealt with rabbits i will include

Institute of agricultural Research Bambui
University of Dschang-Faculty of Agronomy and agricultural Sciences
Heifer Cameroon
Presbyterian training center Bambui

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#221 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 3:52 pm
Subject: Re: Cameroon: Endogenous Rabbit Project Development

Dear Jacky,

Jacky asked

- > What makes the Group de producteur de lapin de L'Ouest (President
- > Mbutakeh Agbor) different ?
- > <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/17>
- > (6 of 20 members have upto 40 producing females) ?
- > What took these 6 members from 8 producing females to 40
- > producing females ?

The answer is simple, they are making profits out of it. The farmers of producteur de lapin de L'Ouest came into rabbit keeping to make money. They received training from a retired government worker, made their cages using bamboo, bought their animals and started business. They are very keen to learn (easily try and adopt ideas that works) and invest enough time to their rabbit farm. They

produce feed, buy feed and try to ensure a good diet for their rabbits because they know that is the only way to make profits from the rabbit.

We really need to think on the way we enter communities with projects. I think the best way to ensure good result in a project(that is already an activity in an area) is to start off with local people who are already into it. They will be good pilots to attract others as the chances to obtain good results with them are high:

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 4:52 pm

Subject: Organizations: <http://www.heifercameroon.org>

2009/4/20 jacksonntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com> :

- > To the best of my knowledge there are no organizations that are specialized
- > in rabbit keeping but if i should mention organization that are dealing/have
- > dealt with rabbits i will include
- >
- > Institute of agricultural Research Bambui
- > University of Dschang-Faculty of Agronomy and agricultural Sciences
- > Heifer Cameroon
- > Presbyterian training center Bambui

I checked <http://www.heifercameroon.org>

All the links are not connected and thus no direct info on Heifer's project(s) on rabbits in Cameroon.

Regards jacky

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 5:21 pm

Subject: Re: ethnoveterinary for rabbits in Cameroon

fu lucas wrote in msg #159:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/messages/159>

- > ...there are numerous.
- > 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.

I found a paper from "Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor" 3(3) December 1995 that is available on the web

<http://www.iss.nl/ikdm/IKDM/IKDM/3-3/articles/toyang.html>

"Ethnoveterinary medicine practices in the Northwest Province of Cameroon" by Ngeh J. Toyang, Mopoi Nuwanyakpa, Christopher Ndi, Sali Django, Wirmum C. Kinyuy.

Nuwanyakpa (1995) documented indigenous treatment of 21 rabbit diseases and ailments.

Maybe someone can contact (Tel nrs are from 1995)

* Mopoi Nuwanyakpa. Tel/fax: +237-363822/363284.

* Dr Wirmum Clare Kinyuy Tel: +237-363135

Medicinal Foods and Plants (MEFOPLA) Referral Research Center

Regards jacky

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 5:46 pm

Subject: grasscutters and rabbits

To contribute to the discussion about grasscutters and rabbits to get the best utilisation of forage, I think this figure is sufficient to show if it can be convenient or not to integrate grasscutter and rabbit (or guinea pig) keepings. Of course other points must be considered, mainly transport, manpower and marketing conditions.

Grasscutters eat only the stems of Pennisetum. For this reason the foliage is stripped off in the field. Transported load is reduced but it can be seen how much is the lot of leaves that is wasted.

Attachment: (image/jpeg) image002.jpg [not stored]



#225 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 9:13 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-seminar177-224.doc
Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Description : Discussion messages 177-244

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar177-224.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>

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 8:29 pm

Subject: Re: administrative info: website for Rabbit Network Cameroon

"Alessandro Finzi" asked:

> Please, I don't understand if the question is general,
> for all the participants or only for people actually
> working in Cameroon.

Hi Alessandro

what I wrote was intended for people in Cameroon so that they can contribute to
<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm#CONTACTS>

Jackson is coordinating the launch of the Rabbit Network Cameroon. He can respond to your question on whether "foreigners" could join the network in some other capacity.

I do understand your interest. I have also visited Cameroon and it would be good if we could also maintain our links and esp. in this topic that is next to our hearts.

Regards jacky

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

Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 10:13 pm

Subject: Re: grasscutters and rabbits

2009/4/20 Alessandro Finzi wrote:

> Grasscutters eat only the stems of Pennisetum. For this reason the foliage
> is stripped off in the field. Transported load is reduced but it can be seen
> how much is the lot of leaves that is wasted.

thanks for the picture and info above.
Looks like the people are really caring for grasscutters.

How much does the meat sell in Cameroon and can someone give comparative prices for other meats ?

Regards jacky

#228 From: Jacky Foo <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 10:23 pm
Subject: Re: Rabbit Network Cameroon

2009/4/20 jacksonntapi wrote:
> One of the principal objectives of this internet seminar was to lead the way
> for the creation of a rabbit network in Cameroon.

Hi Everyone
I thought it is also useful to raise this question:
Is there anyone who thinks it is useless to have "Rabbit Network Cameroon"

Q: is there another national rabbit network that we do not know of ?
if yes.... will the proposed "Rabbit Network Cameroon" just duplicate existing work ?

regards jacky

#229 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Mon Apr 20, 2009 10:56 pm
Subject: Incentive programs

Greetings everyone,
An organization in Haiti just sent me this email:

<I think we have shared with you our wish to provide incentives for increase healthy rabbit production. The sale of rabbits to Baptiste is a wonderful start. We also would like to build on the production by purchasing additional rabbits for distribution in the Greater Grand Boulage area. This is an idea we are tossing around:

As an example, Adremene would provide a male and a female to someone from her newly formed women's group. We would pay her the going rate for the rabbits. Andremene would then be responsible for training and mentoring the woman, who in turn would give two babies rabbits to the women's organization for distribution. As an incentive to mentor, Andremene for the next 12 to 18 months would receive \$2 or \$3 US for each baby rabbit in her friends litter/s that survives past 6 months and is in good health. Can you comment on whether you think this would work or suggest some alternative. Once people find profitability in rabbits, more attention will be given to production by the community.>

I am curious if anyone has used incentive programs and if they worked. Haitians are in a very desperate situation at the moment so people are looking for alternatives to handouts that can serve in the short as well as long term. I'd appreciate your input.

Myriam

#230 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 12:41 am
Subject: rabbits and drinking water

Several people asked or commented about drinking water for rabbits.

Rabbits are very adaptable and many will survive without access to water if they are fed a fresh forage diet with adequate moisture content. As farmers we want the rabbits to do better, produce more offspring and have more offspring survive. In Haiti we found that the survivability of the kits tripled when we introduced the water bottle nipples. These nipples are purchased for US \$.90 each retail. I am looking for a wholesale connection to get them cheaper. In Haiti we collect empty plastic purified water bottles and screw the nipple on. This keeps the water clean and keeps the rabbits from spilling it. The bottle is mounted on the outside of the cage with the tip pointed inside. The rabbit licks the tip to get water and can not reach to



eat the plastic bottle. Because the rabbits can not defecate in the water bowl, this system reduces exposure to coccidia. The rabbits in the photo were fed both concentrates and forage. Water is of course more important for rabbits fed concentrates.

Dr. Fayeye, Timothy Rotimi, from Department of Animal Production, University of Ilorin , Nigeria. is hoping to do some experiments to see how much difference the water bottle nipples can make. I am hoping to send him some nipples very soon. We are also hoping to do some trials in Haiti once we can get a research appropriate facility.

Does anyone know if this type of study has been done before?

Myriam

Attachment: (image/jpeg) slide show (44).jpg

#231 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 12:51 am
Subject: Standardizing data collection from farmers

Hello Again,

I am curious what types of data collection strategies are being used in other LDC's.

What numbers are the most useful to collect both from a farmer perspective and a project perspective? and what formulas are being used?

I think it might be useful for WRSA to create a standardized form so that we could compare better. I think it might also be helpful to create a rabbit health questionnaire as health issues are having a more global impact now days.

Having a standardized form might help us stop an epidemic in an LDC before governments need to be involved.

Any thoughts?

Myriam

#232 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 10:19 am
Subject: underground cell housing system

I have seen that, in the photo gallery of the webpage :
<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm#CONTACTS> , the photo of may alternative rabbit keeping system is reported.

If someone wants to utilise this model, he must know that rabbits must be trained not to make their faeces inside the cell. Thus it is absolutely necessary that rabbits be kept inside the cage, blocking the passage to the cell, at least for 2-3 days. In this way they choose a place where to deposit their drops and get out from the cell to do it, leaving the cell clean. If this is not done the cell will be dirtied and the keeping will become practically impossible.

Regards. Alessandro
<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/127>

#233 From: Dayo Ajayi <dayoajayi218@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 11:52 am
Subject: Re: Standardizing data collection from farmers

Dear All,

I appreciate the concern of the participants in this e-seminar on data collection. Sincerely, I think it is high time we took issue of data seriously.

The problem which had been referenced too often was the literacy level of African farmers. They were always described as not having what it takes to keep records. And researchers in Africa seems to take that as a good excuse. Researchers only collect pockets of data that seems suitable for a given study without emphasis on the importance of other relevant data to the real growth of the concerned sector. We need more data than usually collected during a study if we would be concerned with development of the sector in Africa.

On the issue raised concerning the standard data collection instrument required, I want to say that such instrument would require the contribution of animal scientists (of different specialisations), extensionists, agricultural economist and even consumers to mention but a few. Such contributions would include items that are very important to the development of rabbit production. Contribution from every stakeholder would make the data useable in addressing the issues relating to rabbit production in Africa. Also, the very common situation in which estimates were usually presented if not NA (Not Available) as was and perhaps is still in the case of some African Countries when data on world situations were being presented would be scientifically addressed.

In Nigeria, I am aware of the move by our own association to establish a data bank which would serve as data base for interested researchers. The plan is still underway.

Femi Ajayi

AJAYI, Adedayo Olufemi Ph D.
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology,
Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Nigeria

#235 From: jackkson ntapi <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 2:14 pm
Subject: Re: Organizations: <http://www.heifercameroon.org>

Dear Jacky,

I presume the real actors in the rabbit sub sector in Cameroon today are farmers especially those who are doing rabbit farming to make money. Actually Heifer is moving out of rabbit farming as Fu Lucas mentioned in his mail where he explained that rabbits were not included in the new strategic plan.

The other institutions i mentioned are not directly involved in assisting farmers. IRAD and the university of Dschang are involved in research.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#236 From: "Dr S.O Oseni" <soseni@oauife.edu.ng>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 3:26 pm
Subject: Re: Organizations: <http://www.heifercameroon.org>

Jackson Ntapi Nk wrote,
> Actually Heifer is moving out of rabbit farming as Fu Lucas
> mentioned in his mail where he explained that rabbits
> were not included in the new strategic plan.

Dear Jackson Ntapi Nk,

After many years of championing rabbits for development, it would be interesting to know why rabbits were not included in the new strategic plan by Heifer.

Saidu Oseni

#237 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 2:50 pm
Subject: Re: Standardizing data collection from farmers

Dear Myriam,

Yes data collection and management in most LDC countries is a big big problem. Information on the least issue like number of large scale farmers are rare to come by.

I think this must be one of the principal role of the rabbit network Cameroon. If we can get the major actors in the rabbit sub sector volunteer for the functioning of the website then we can have frequent updates of basic production and health information in major farms.

- > What numbers are the most useful to collect both from a farmer
- >perspective and a project perspective?
- >and what formulas are being used?

When i was with Heifer Cameroon information collection was mainly guided by the reporting format proposed by the donor. Other useful farm production information are left with the farmers and are not really stored in an accessible form at the office level.

- > I think it might be useful for WRSA to create a standardized form so that we
- >could compare better. I think it might also be helpful to create a rabbit
- >health questionnaire as health issues are having a more global impact now days.
- >Having a standarized form might help us stop an epidemic in an LDC before
- >governments need to be involved.

For the standardization of information collection, we need to develop a draft and allow participants make updates.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#238 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 3:03 pm
Subject: Re: Organizations: <http://www.heifercameroon.org>

Dear Oseni,

Dr Oseni Wrote

- > After many years of championing rabbits for development,
- > it would be interesting to know why rabbits were not
- > included in the new strategic plan by Heifer.

The new strategic plan had one of its main vision the emergence of livestock based micro enterprises in local community. In this respect rabbit farming was judged (by the people involved in drafting the plan) as not having the economic viability to enable the emergence of such livestock enterprises. It was certainly concluded that rabbits are only good for programs aimed at improving the nutritional status of

empoverished households. This judgement was obviously made using information from the farmers but i doubt if the weaknesses of the Heifer Rabbit for development program as a tool to promote economic growth in a community was considered.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#239 From: "fayetiro" <fayetiro@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Apr 21, 2009 6:03 pm
Subject: Re: underground cell housing system

The underground cell in the photo gallery may not be very useful for rabbit kits as it may be hard to train the highly inquisitive kits on were to put their droppings. It seems however that the underground cell with the attached hutch may be very useful for breeding does. The underground cell will, in this case, serve the purpose of protection for the doe as well as a nest box for the rabbit kits.

I wish this model is promoted to reduce the high mortality often recorded in the cage system under tropical condition.

regards. Fayeye Timothy.

#240 From: rabbit-cam@yahoogroups.com
Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 6:48 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-seminar225-239.doc
Uploaded by : elfoo5000 <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Description : Discussion messages #225-239

You can access this file at the URL:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files/rabbit-cam-seminar225-239.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>

#241 From: Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak <myriamsemail@gmail.com>
Date: Sat Apr 18, 2009 1:25 am
Subject: Re: Re: Factors influencing project success/failure

"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??"

I agree that using people who are experienced and want to be involved with rabbits should be included. With some creativity, such as a mentoring component to a program, both new and experienced rabbit raisers can be integrated and the idea sold to an NGO. This would likely take some initiative on the part of the local people. The beneficiaries should not be afraid to speak up. Many new NGOs fund village based organizations directly and want proposals to come directly from the beneficiaries. Any NGO that is not willing to listen to the beneficiaries, probably has a list of failed projects. Some other ideas for experienced producer activities are development of support services such as sale of ready made cages or cage materials, feed concentrates where appropriate, trainers/ technicians for follow up, centralized processing facilities, centralized marketing and distribution, veterinary care and development of by product markets. All of these ideas will help expand the industry and increase income to the individuals.

I think it is important that we stop looking at rabbit projects as charity to the poor, but rather entrepreneurial opportunities designed to bring income to families, enhance nutrition of the community and to expand the industry and related support services. Rabbit projects need to be integrated into a thriving business model to be sustainable and of true value. We should also look for investors through collaborations between non profit, for profit and government programs that will ultimately result in a bi-directional flow of money and goods (a sustainable business).

Here are some new groups following this new development model:

<http://www.acumenfund.org/about-us.html>

From <http://www.nextbillion.net/about>

A New Approach to Development - Business Meets the Base of the Pyramid

While development aid and political reform are essential components in poverty eradication, equally important are business models that engage low-income communities as producers and consumers in their own robust economies. Successful business models - inherently versatile, innovative, and driven by the profit motive - can sometimes tackle development challenges more quickly and effectively than government and aid mechanisms. Innovative models that bring together the objectives of business and development to create sustainable, market-oriented approaches are the focus of NextBillion.net.

What is Base of the Pyramid or BoP?

BoP, an acronym for "base of the (economic) pyramid," is a term first introduced by Professors C.K. Prahalad and Stuart Hart in their 2002 article, "The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid." It has come to designate not the poverty but the potential of the world's poorest citizens as entrepreneurs, employees and discerning consumers. It also refers to the approximately four billion people whose incomes are less than \$3000 per year (PPP), based on analysis done at the World Resources Institute.

<http://www.paulpolak.com/>

<http://www.ideorg.org/>

<http://www.d-rev.com/news.html>

I hope these articles inspire you to look for more creative ideas that can lead to sustainable change.
Myriam

#242 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 1:32 pm
Subject: Re: rabbits and drinking water

Dear Myriam,

Myriam wrote

> Dr. Fayeye, Timothy Rotimi, from Department of Animal Production, University of
> Ilorin, Nigeria, is hoping to do some experiments to see how much difference
> the water bottle nipples can make. I am hoping to send him some nipples very
> soon. We are also hoping to do some trials in Haiti once we can get a research
> appropriate facility.

I asked a question about the flow of research results to farmers in Nigeria as I strongly think this is a problem in most African countries. Research may not necessarily be helping development. I hope the creation of rabbit networks will help enhance the flow of research information between members.
Myriam i salut your initiative.

Myriam asked

> Does anyone know if this type of study has been done before?

Not in Cameroon, actually rabbit farming is mostly practiced in the south of the country where average rainfall is high and rabbits are served large quantities of fresh foliage. With very few farmers adopting a feeding scheme based on concentrates, watering is not really a problem. But the issue linking watering of animals and the prevalence of coccidia is very pertinent. What we do in Cameroon is to encourage farmers to change water and wash drinkers frequently. Such a watering system can reduce the work load to farmers while simultaneously reducing the risk of coccidiosis.

Jackson Ntapi Nk

#243 From: fu lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 4:46 pm
Subject: Re: grasscutters and rabbits

Jacky Foo asked,

> How much does the meat sell in Cameroon and can someone give comparative prices for other meats ?

Quite an interesting question indeed. A live grasscutter two months and above sells at US \$30.00- \$60.00 depending on the weight. A corresponding grasscutter from the wild that has been killed ranges US\$7- \$15 no matter the size.

A mature rabbit sells at US 8- \$15 depending on the weight as well. A kilogram cow meat is approximately US\$4 where as pork is about \$3.5

So you can really see the disparity Jacky

Regards, Fu lucas

#244 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 6:52 pm
Subject: Re: grasscutters and rabbits

fu lucas answered:

> A live grasscutter two months and above sells at
>US \$30.00-\$60.00 depending on the weight. A corresponding
>grasscutter from the wild that has been killed ranges
>US\$7- \$15 no matter the size.
>A mature rabbit sells at US 8- \$15 depending on the weight
>as well. A kilogram cow meat is approximately US\$4
>where as pork is about \$3.5

thanks for the info.

In my Kenya project, I am trying to sell rabbit meat cheap, and that would be comparable to your \$3.50 per kg for the cheapest meat.

Beef is purchased by schools at about 200 Ksh/kg (\$3.00). At the local butchery beef is 240 Ksh/kg (\$3.70). I would like to be able to sell rabbit meat to the local butchery at 3.00 so that they can sell it for <\$4.00. At this price, consumers would quickly create a demand and the idea is that backyard rabbit farmers will go commercial.

Grasscutter meat is expensive in Cameroon. You get 8 young ones per year from a female compared to 40 for rabbits.

regards, jacky

#245 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 7:03 pm
Subject: Re: underground cell housing system

"fayetiro" wrote:

> The underground cell in the photo gallery may not be very
>useful for rabbit kits as it may be hard to train the highly
>inquisitive kits on where to put their droppings.

To Finzi:

how did the idea of an underground cell come about ?
What made you think of such a design ?

Under natural conditions, do does re-use their nests or do they make new ones every time ?

regards, jacky

#246 From: "fayetiro" <fayetiro@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 23, 2009 2:52 pm
Subject: Re: Incentive programs

Dear Myriam,

I know a little of the cockerel exchange program that was practiced in Nigeria some decades back, however I have not seen a replica of the mentorship you are referring to.

A critical look at your write up makes me feel that the pioneering mentorship work to be carried out by Andremele (<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/messages/229>) may succeed better than the previously used handouts, as rural dwellers believe in people than on papers which they may not be able to interpret correctly.

I also think that the incentive to Andremele could spur her to give her best attention to her trainees. The level of success will however, depend very much on the mentor's ability to relate and work well with rural people. The mentor must understand the cosmovision of rural people and be patience enough to be able to pass the required skill to the trainees.

Best Regards Fayeye Timothy Rotimi

#247 From: <pk.karikari@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 23, 2009 8:50 pm
Subject: Lukefahr et al. (2000): general comments

Dear ALL,

The following is the summary I have made on the article Lukefahr et al. (2000) and my comments and/or suggestions arising therefrom.

1. Rabbit projects are cost-effective means of:
 - a. making fryers available for family (home) consumption.
 - b. alleviating poverty and increasing living standards.
2. Most local farmers keep 3-5 doe units.
3. Local rabbits produce 16-28 kits per doe in a year.
4. A mean of 14-18 kits are weaned from 3-4 litters per doe per year.
5. Mean daily weight gain is 10.3 g from 2-6 months of age.
6. The low growth rate results from poor feeding practices.
7. Low-input-low-output system of production makes it possible to profit from rabbits in the villages.
8. Hutches should ensure warmth to kits and protect rabbits from predators and common thieves.
9. Only limited formal market opportunities exist for rabbit producers.
10. Other rabbit products (like skins and manure) should be sold in addition to meat to increase profitability. Also, rabbit production could be combined with vegetable/crop farming to raise more money for the family.

- * In my opinion, the performance of rabbits in Cameroon is similar to what pertains in many developing countries.
- * Farmers are always encouraged to try to construct their own hutches to reduce cost. This is good but the positive relationship between poorly constructed hutches and high kit mortality should also be stressed.
- * Local solutions should be found to improve energy and protein intake of rabbits. Where available agricultural by products and legumes should be fed. Producers in urban areas could also consider forage-concentrate combination.
- * Scale of production should be large enough to make economic impact. Otherwise farmers should not be expected to continue with rabbit production after project support is withdrawn.
- * The sale of other products (e.g. manure) should always be stressed to increase income.
- * Marketing strategies should be a major component of every rabbit production programme design. Farmers should be encouraged to form and operate trade groups in this regard.

Thanks.

P.K. Karikari

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

Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 1:02 pm

Subject: Re: Factors influencing project success/failure

Dear Myriam,

This is a prototype of an ideal observation i am expecting from this forum. In your mail you did bring out most if not all the limits of a charity based support approach to rural development which we must accept is not working.

Myriam wrote

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/message/241>

- >The beneficiaries should not be
- >afraid to speak up. Many new NGOs fund village based
- >organizations directly and want proposals to come
- >directly from the beneficiaries. Any NGO that is
- > not willing to listen to the beneficiaries, probably
- >has a list of failed projects

My comments

Yes you are right about the need for local people to lead the process of their development and to be at the center of any proposals or project involving them.

I will also like to caution on the need to be very vigillant when identifying partners in communities as history has shown that many village based organizations are actually individual ventures and investing in such may not necessarily assist the community. Thus the stage of identification of producer stakeholders must be methodically carried out with the use of appropriate investigative tools that will help outline the history and activities of the village based organ.

Myriam Wrote

- >Some other ideas for experienced producer activities are

- > development of support services such as sale of ready
- >made cages or cage materials, feed concentrates where
- >appropriate, trainers/ technicians for follow up, centralized
- >processing facilities, centralized marketing and
- > distribution, veterinary care and development of by
- >product markets. All of these ideas will help expand
- >the industry and increase income to the individuals.

My comments

Of course you are considering the use of a participatory approach to identify where the farmers need help. Your point is pertinent as many NGOs are viewed by farmers as not being useful because they basically duplicate work that has already been done certainly because of a poor baseline study during project design. An efficient development actor must be very skillfull in helping farmers to speak out as his compensational powers (power to give) deters farmers who will not want to take the risk of loosing all by speaking out.

Myriam wrote

- > I think it is important that we stop looking at rabbit
- >projects as charity to the poor, but rather entrepreneurial
- >opportunities designed to bring income to families,
- >enhance nutrition of the community and to expand the
- > industry and related support services. Rabbit projects
- >need to be integrated into a thriving business model to be sustainable and of true value.

My comment

I have personally taken the decision not to get involved in any project or program that does not look at agricultural development from the perspective you mentioned above.

It is because we as a nation, as development actors be it NGOs or gov't organs have failed to look at agriculture with a business lens that young people in particular and society in general (In Africa) is considering farming as an activity of the poor. Out here in Cameroon you can take any parameter to verify this example

- *% of farmers below 40 years of age in any farming sector (Very low)
- * Number of students enrolling into agricultural programs in university (Fast reducing)
- *Number of qualified young but unemployed graduate with major in agriculture (Very high)
- *Percentage of young graduate in agriculture moving into different fields (very high)

.....

All this is an economy whose GDP greatly depends on agriculture, yes we of the LDCs need to change our views of rabbit farming and of agricultural development to ensure producers are EMPLOYED by their production activity.

Thanks for your wonderful observation
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

Date: Wed Apr 22, 2009 7:17 am
Subject: Re: administrative info: last week of e-seminar

Hello Everyone
We are now in the last week of the e-seminar.

A Request:

There are still a number of unanswered questions from participants. Kindly review messages to see if you can comment or answer these questions.

All discussion messages are now available at two websites:

(i) <http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/>
(2 pdf files)
Part 1 (Messages 01-195 (450 KB))
Part 2 (Messages 196-239 (346 KB))

(ii) <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/rabbit-cam/files>
(8 doc/pdf files)

discussion messages 01-17 (78 KB)
discussion messages 18-38 (85 KB)
discussion messages 39-57 (160 KB)
Discussion Messages 58-91 (146 KB)
Discussion messages 92-119 (113 KB)
Discussion messages 120-176 (239 KB)
Discussion messages 177-224 (188 KB)
Discussion messages 225-239 (261 KB)

If you have any problems downloading any of them, just send me an email.
regards, jacky

#250 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Thu Apr 23, 2009 9:30 am
Subject: underground cell

Fayeye Timothy wrought:

>"The underground cell in the photo gallery may not be
>very useful for rabbit kits as it may be hard to train
>the highly inquisitive kits on were to put their droppings".

To put the nest in the underground cell or inside a cage is exactly the same thing. A good rabbit keeper keeps the nests clean in both cases. When kits get out from the nest get out also from the cell. The many farmers that utilize the underground cell system from many years can confirm that the supposed problem is only supposed, but it is not at all related with reality. In Europe winter is cold and nest must be put inside the cell. I suppose in Africa, if one likes it, the nest can be put inside the cage without any problem.

I must remember here that the only important point to take care of is the need of closing the doors or bucks in the external cage at least two days before opening the passage to the cell. This to make them to choose the place where to deposit their droppings. Later on they will come out to the cage to do this. If this rule is not observed rabbits make dirty inside the cell and there is no way to teach them later.

Regards. Alessandro Finzi

#251 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 24, 2009 8:19 pm
Subject: Re: grasscutters and rabbits

Dear Lucas;

I think the issue of the high cost of animal protein is one of the major factor limiting consumption of meat by many people in Cameroon. Roasted pork whose price is relatively lower; has become over the years one of the favourite and most consumed meat in many urban towns. I am just from eating a slice of roasted pork at my favourite spot in Yaounde and the line of people waiting to buy was amazing.

If grasscutter and rabbit production should become competitive activities in the future; the farmers must produce at a level using the most cost effective means to sell at competitive prices. This is very important in our socio-economic context where average per capita income is still very low even in urban towns.

Kind regards
Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#252 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Apr 24, 2009 8:44 pm
Subject: Re: Incentive programs

Dear Myriam;

Myriam wrote;

> is an idea we are tossing around:
> As an example, Adremene would provide a male and a female to someone from
> her newly formed women's group. We would pay her the going rate for the
> rabbits. Adremene would then be responsible for training and mentoring the
> woman, who in turn would give two baby rabbits to the women's organization
> for distribution. As an incentive to mentor, Adremene for the next 12 to
> 18 months would receive \$2 or \$3 US for each baby rabbit in her friends
> litter/s that survives past 6 months and is in good health. Can you comment
> on whether you think this would work or suggest some alternative.

My Observation

The description suits a passing on the gift system where animals and knowledge are passed from one individual to another in a community.

My comments

*Andremene must accept willfully to this arrangement (Run of the risk of not finding many Andremene who will wait for 12-18 monthd ,to get payed for a service they render to a group)

*If Andreme receives \$2 or \$3 per weaned healthy bunny how much benefit will the farmer producing the rabbit get? assuming rabbits sell at \$3.5 :

*Are we certain Andreme is having the appropriate skills to be a trainer? if not we must have trained Andremene first

My recommendations

*Change Andreme for a group. When working with groups; there is a greater chance of having people keeping their engagements than with individuals. A group is more efficient in disciplining its members than a field coordinator. Also working with groups permit a faster spread of impact of our project

*Give each Andremene in the selected group more rabbits (4 does and 1 buck) to ensure faster impact in his/her life and facilitate him passing on

*Farmers should arrange how much they want to pay for their training and old groups should be responsible for training new groups not individuals.

Jackson Ntapi

#253 From: "Alessandro Finzi" <finzi@unitus.it>
Date: Tue Apr 28, 2009 10:59 am
Subject: underground cells

Jacky Foo asked:

To Finzi:

how did the idea of an underground cell come about ?What made you think of such a design ? Under natural conditions, do does re-use their nests or do they make new ones every time ?

I got the idea of the system during a consulting mission in Egypt many years ago. I was asked to suggest what was better about breeds and feeding, but I was puzzled observing that rabbits in cages where very much stressed during the summer days. They rested panting, not even eating to avoid to produce endogenous heathing. I was informed that rabbit keepers stopped mating rabbits when summer was coming because they don't reproduce and if does have parturition they have no milk enough to nourish the kits because of fasting.

Then I invented the system shown in the figure and I got both welfare and reproduction. It is clear that the idea is coming from imitation of natural conditions, in the same time avoiding rabbits could escape digging freely in the ground.

To give an idea of how the system looks, I add also a figure of 2 commercial units in Italy. I must remember the system needs a specific management.

I am not able to answer the last question. I am not a zoologist; may be does can both reutilize the old nest or make a new one. I know that , when simulated natural nests were done in the ground to study does milking behaviour through a glass previously disposed, the nests were reutilized.

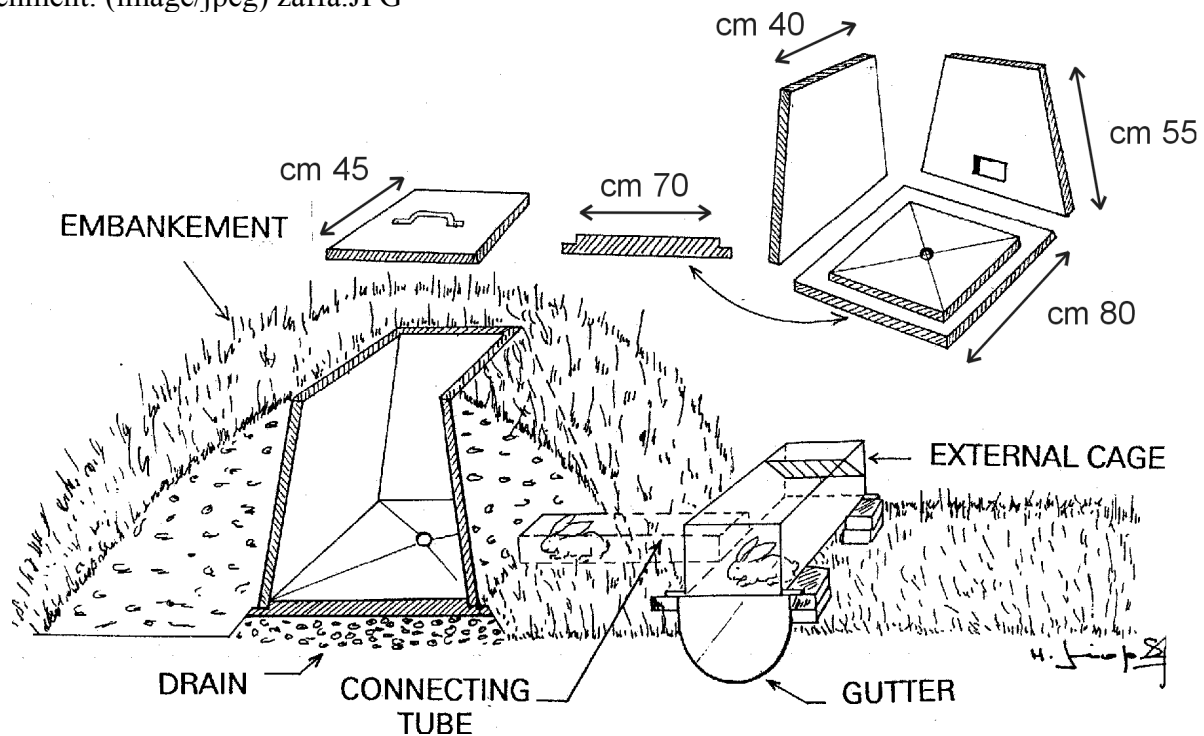
Regards. Alessandro Finzi



Attachment: (image/jpeg) pergolato.JPG



Attachment: (image/jpeg) zaffa.JPG



Attachment: (application/msword) underground cell.doc

Date: Tue Apr 28, 2009 1:09 pm

Subject: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

Jackson Ntapi Nk. <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Production Manager, Esperance-Essor-Estime Group
Yaounde

Mbutakeh Agbor
President, Group de Producteur de Lapin de L'Ouest
+237 77780525

Gueben Victor
Education Officer, Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (CWAFF)
Tel: 237 77 63 34 69

Jeta James Fawoh <jjjames2002@yahoo.com>
Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (CWAFF)

Eta Kelvin Ayuk <eta_yuk@yahoo.com>
Plan International - Cameroon

Sampson Deba <mbudeba@yahoo.com>
Mbam and Djerem National Park

Ms N.Gwendoline <ngwendy_nick@yahoo.com>
University of Yaounde I
Tel;+237 7609-0045

Dr Fu Lucas <fu_lucas@yahoo.com>
Heifer International Cameroon
Humid Rainforest Program Zone, Douala

Mr. Fosto Jean Marie
Institute of agricultural research Nkolbison
Yaounde Cameroon
+237 77981451

Please if anybody whose name is mentioned above wishes to withdraw from the group, do send a message to Jackson Ntapi for him to remove your name.

Thanks

Jackson Ntapi Nk

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

Date: Tue Apr 28, 2009 4:07 pm

Subject: Re: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

Thank you for the list of members.

The committee is essential to keep the Network alive. Most of us still work in isolation and through the Network you can keep others informed of your work and to be connected to foreigners who had projects in Cameroon before.

Jackson and I are planning the 2nd E-seminar now and hopefully we can announce it before we close this seminar.

Regards jacky

#256 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Wed Apr 29, 2009 1:16 pm
Subject: Re: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

"jacksonntapi" wrote:

- > Please if anybody whose name in mentioned above wishes
- >to withdraw from the group, do send a message to
- >Jackson Ntapi for him to remove your name.

For those who will remain in the Committee, I hope you can send me a picture of yourself so that I can put it in the website www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon

Thanks jacky

#257 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 11:12 am
Subject: Re: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

Dear Jacky,

Jacky wrote

- > The committee is essential to keep the Network alive.
- >Most of us still work in isolation and through the Network
- >you can keep others informed of your work and to be
- >connected to foreigners who had projects in Cameroon before.

I travelled to the west province on Sunday last weekend and created time to visit some actors in the field of rabbit production. Actually i was hoping to get some photos for the network but all the farmers i visited were out of the house and i could not take any pictures in their absence.

I am mentioning this because i think we can still increase the size of the committee to involve people who were unable to participate in the e-seminar. E-seminars is still new out here and i hope we can motivate many more rabbit actors to participate in the second one and we can prepare better with sufficient pictures and stories.

Also i find Finzi particularly interested in rabbit production in Cameroon, maybe we can include him in the committee if he approves.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#258 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 11:29 am
Subject: Re: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

"jacksonntapi" wrote:
>i find Finzi particularly interested in rabbit production in
> Cameroon, maybe we can include him in the committee

I would suggest an "international advisory committee" so that your local team (the current committee) can have the opportunity to implement their own ideas and initiatives without being heavily influenced by what "foreigners" want to do in Cameroon. It does sound "anti-cooperative" but there are benefits to enable local teams do things their way. Of course this does not stop the local committee to interact with others from abroad. In fact Finzi and I have been exchanging private emails as we have a strong interest to return to Cameroon. We are investigating opportunities for funding.

In this context, if there is an international advisory committee, it can even strengthen our request for funds.

If the National Committee of the Rabbit Network Cameroon will entertain the creation of an International Advisory Committee, I would like to join this Committee.

Regards jacky

#259 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 11:33 am
Subject: pictures

"jacksonntapi" wrote:
> I travelled to the west province on Sunday last weekend
>and created time to visit some actors in the field of rabbit
> production. Actually i was hoping to get some photos for
>the network but all the farmers i visited were out of the house

I hope you and others will send pictures (to me) of cages and rabbit farmers for the website :
<http://www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon/index.htm>

regards jacky

#260 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 11:56 am
Subject: Re: pictures

Dear Jacky,
> I hope you and others will send pictures (to me)
>of cages and rabbit farmers for the website :

I had problems with my computer in Heifer and the files containing field pictures were corrupted. I will be going out again next week to get pictures.

The website need a pictoral representation of rabbit farming in Cameroon. I think we are aware of this and will do our best to have good pictures.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#261 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 11:47 am
Subject: Re: Rabbit Network Cameroon

Dear Jacky,

- > Hi Everyone
- > I thought it is also useful to raise this question:
- > Is there anyone who thinks it is useless to have "Rabbit Network Cameroon"
- >
- > Q: is there another national rabbit network that we do not know of ?
- > if yes.... will the proposed "Rabbit Network Cameroon" just duplicate existing work ?

This is a very important point you raise and i want to seize this opportunity to outline the need to improve the organization of producers and production systems in Cameroon.

If rabbit network is created and becomes functional in linking producers and playing an important role in information sharing, it will be the example for other sub-sectors to copy. Such networks are inexistent in Cameroon and intruders like the middlemen are profiting from this. Farmers (mostly small farmers) are not informed of the existence of market channels and or opportunities to have information on techniques of production. They are isolated and are not motivated to take initiative.

We are hoping to use "Rabbit Network Cameroon" as a tool to demonstrate how proper organization of actors in a sector can help in promoting the sector. I am looking forward to go to these actors, sensitize them to come together and get involved in the promotion of this sector which like many other sectors is disorganized.

Take any livestock sub-sector in Cameroon and you will be surprised of the lack of any channel (even in sub regions) through which the main actors can share and improve their performance. We need a reference network in Cameroon where farmers and other actors in a sub-sector can come to share. Rabbit Network Cameroon might be it.

Jackson Ntapi Nk.

#262 From: "jacksonntapi" <jacksonntapi@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Apr 30, 2009 12:10 pm
Subject: Re: Tentative list of members for the Cameroon rabbit network committee

Dear Jacky,

> If the National Committee of the Rabbit Network Cameroon will
>entertain the creation of an International Advisory Committee,
>I would like to join this Committee.

We in Cameroon do not have any complex in learning from others and in sharing what we know. I am favourable for the creation of the international committee, it can only help our network to be more performant.

We will be original in our work as there are great potentials here in Cameroon to be exploited, but i also think success stories from else where will inspire us to grow faster.

Jacky when i was a student i did my research work on smallholder dairy farming and when doing literature review, i was really inspired and captivated by the way dairy in Kenya was organized.

This inspired my work as a development agent and helped me achieve a lot. I really think authenticity in approach is not applicable in development. Viable endogenous systems are usually those that receive frequent inputs from other systems to resolve its constraints while maintaining its strengths.

Thanks for the proposal
Jackkson Ntapi Nk.

#263 From: "Jacky Foo" <jacky.foo@gmail.com>
Date: Sat May 2, 2009 1:29 pm
Subject: Closing of e-seminar

Hello Everyone

The e-seminar on Rabbit Meat Production in Cameroon (06-30 April) is officially closed. It is our first e-seminar and will have many more in the future. I think we had a very good start with the participation from some members of the "Rabbit Researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa" of WRSA (World Rabbit Science Association).

The seminar was based in 2 background papers about Heifer International's rabbit program in Cameroon and a scientific paper on rabbit diets. 262 discussion messages were distributed.

I would like to say that the activity was an "energizer" and for some people an "awakening" of the sleeping rabbit.

Alessandro Finzi (Italy) agreed to give a presentation on his work in Cameroon on underground rabbit houses and we also had a positive indication from Myriam Kaplan-Pasternak that she welcomes the idea of presenting her work on rabbit production in Haiti. All of you will be informed later on the date for the next e-seminar.

I take this opportunity to thank all the contributors to the discussion and I will look forward to the next e-seminar.

Regards jacky foo
www.globetree.org/africa/rabbit-net
www.globetree.org/africa/cameroon

