Rabbit Farming In Nigeria.
(How to start & Make Money)
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Rabbit Farming in Nigeria (How to Start & Make Money)

by Steve Olorun-Ni

ABC loves you.

For the entrepreneur who is interested in animal husbandry or livestock farming, a rabbit farming venture can prove to be very lucrative.

We have discussed many business ideas on this website and today we want to discuss commercial rabbit farming

To start a rabbit farming business in Nigeria, farmers do not require an extensive capital investment, and turnover period is low. This makes rabbit business easy to start.
For the farmer with the technical knowhow, the low cost outlay – high profit output can be very enticing.

Reasons for rabbit farming

There are several reasons why someone might consider starting a rabbit farming business in Nigeria.

Success stories from several rabbit farmers from different parts of Africa prove that the market has potential that has lain largely untapped till now.

Below are five reasons you might want to consider rabbit farming:

A **growing market**: As earlier mentioned, there is an increasing demand for rabbits, particularly because it is a white meat, and health conscious persons are moving from the consumption of red meats such as beef and pork to the consumption of white meats, rabbits included.

**Wait!**

People like you said, this is the best business book in Africa

Click Here to download it for FREE today because ABC is 10. This is simply because there is an increased awareness of the harmful effects of cholesterol, which is usually high in red meats, in the African diet.

Rabbits are also touted to contain the highest amount of protein and the lowest fat when compared to other types of meat. Rabbit is said to contain less calories and sodium, but more calcium and phosphorus, and the combination of these is beneficial to the human body.

Moreover, it is said that no part of the rabbit goes to waste, and it is one of the livestock reared by man today that can be sold from nose tip to tail tip.
Products that can be gotten from rabbits include high quality skins (used to make fur garments, clothing, hats and boots), meat, and bones etc.

One other way in which rabbit is significantly used is in medical, cosmetic, and pharmaceutical research laboratories.

Finally, there is a growing demand for rabbits as pets. Online markets in Nigeria such as jiiji.ng are now advertising rabbits in their livestock section, a sign that there is now a huge market for the product.

**High multiplication rate:** Rabbits have the innate capacity to grow very rapidly and are known to attain maturity and market size in 6 months or less, one reason for this fast growth rate being that rabbits are efficient converters of the food they eat.

Rabbits also breed throughout the year and it takes just between thirty and thirty five days for a pregnant doe (female rabbit) to give birth to its kits (baby rabbits).

Does can have up to 40 kits in a single year, so beginning a rabbit farm with two mature rabbits (one male, one female), a rabbit farmer could end up with 40 rabbits in the span of one year.

What more, rabbits are polygamous in nature, so beginning with one male and two or more does will guarantee a whole farm full of rabbits by year end.

This rapid multiplication rate means a higher yield and higher profits for farmers, hence the new interest in rabbit farming.

**You can begin your rabbit farming small:** For low scale farmers or entrepreneurs looking for ways to diversify their funds, rabbit farming is ideal because its initial cost outlay is low.

As previously mentioned, your rabbit farm could be started with just two rabbits. And because rabbits don’t require as much space as other livestock (especially grazing or foraging ones), farmers may begin with a basic cage made of wood and chicken wire, and progress to proper hutches as time goes by and profits flow in.

Rabbit farming is not labour intensive:

Raising rabbits is not labour-intensive like raising poultry or cattle farming. These animals are quiet and relatively tame, not particularly prone to infections and diseases,
and are relatively easy to feed. As a result, a rabbit farming business could be ran on a part time basis.

Health benefits of consuming rabbit meat

Rabbit is a good source of meat because of its health benefits. Below are some health benefits of consuming rabbit meat, and they can form the building blocks for the farmer’s marketing strategy when he develops one:

Rabbit is said to be very low in cholesterol, with a percentage concentration that is lower than that of pork, turkey, chicken and beef.

It also has a lower fat content than turkey does, as well as beef and pork.

It is especially recommended during the hot months as it does not contain the heating properties of other meats.

It is tested and certified suitable for special diets such as diets for people living and dealing with diabetes and/or hypertension.

It is said to have the highest protein content of all meat, and the highest level of unsaturated fatty acids.

Starting a rabbit farming business in Nigeria

Before beginning a rabbit farm, prospective investors would do well to do three basic things:
Learn all you can about rabbit farming: It would be gross stupidity to begin a venture you know nothing or next to nothing about. If you can gain access to farmers who are already into rabbit farming, you will do well to understudy them.

There are lots of free manuals and videos online that can be of further help, and there are a multitude of written resources out there that can be accessed for same.

This is very important to avoid unnecessary that may arise from diseases and/or a high mortality rate.

Get to know everything you can about rabbit farming e.g their common diseases and ailments, feeding pattern, and gestation period e.t.c

Begin with good rabbit breed:

There are several breeds of rabbit, and some are better suited for commercial farming than others, because these ones grow into large sizes and produce faster.

Show rabbits are often slighter in size than commercial breeds are, and are popularly used as pets or raised for their fur. They are not well suited for commercial meat production.

Get a good veterinary doctor: Make sure to secure the services of vet a doctor for regular checkup and vaccination as well as feeding and nutrition advice. This is non-negotiable when one is into livestock farming.

Listed below are some materials a first time rabbit farmer will need to purchase:

Cages or hutches: Rabbits can be housed in cages, hutches or in a house, and these should be constructed in such a way that they are able to protect the rabbits from heat and humidity.

Rabbit feeders and drinkers: For food and for water

Kits/baby rabbits: As earlier discussed, you will need a minimum of two rabbit kits to begin with. If money and space allows, farmers may use a ratio of one buck (male rabbit) to five does, as one male can service up to five does. It is advised that baby rabbits not be removed from their mothers until at least eight weeks.
This is to help them develop proper immune and digestive systems. Always insist on kits that are at least 8 weeks old or older. This will improve the kits’ chance of survival, and lower mortality rate drastically.

**Rabbit Feeds:** the rabbit feeds may be processed feed or edible dark leafy vegetable and leaves, elephant grass, potatoes and different kinds of herbs. A rabbit’s diet can also consist of good quality pellets that are rich in fibre, fresh hay, and water.

Hay is essential to a rabbit’s good health, providing roughage which reduces the danger of hairballs and other blockages.

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**Commercially viable rabbits breeds**

Below are the breeds usually farmed for commercial purposes in Nigeria, the reason being that they are usually bigger than other breeds and therefore produce more meat:

**New Zealand White:**

![New Zealand White Rabbit](Image credit; good free photos)

It is all white in colour and usually weighs 3 to 5 kg when mature.

**Californian:**
This is the second most popular breed for meat production. It is also an all-white coloured rabbit, but has a black tip on the nose, ears, feet and tail. Weight usually ranges from between 3 and 4.5 kg when mature.

**Chinchilla:**

This is a blue-grey in colour breed. It usually has a white belly and ranges in weight between 3 and 4.5 kg when fully grown. One distinguishing characteristic of Chinchillas is a thick fold around the front of the chest when rabbit is in good health, more obvious when it is sitting in a resting position.

**Rabbit Diseases, Symptoms and Prevention**

Just as it’s in [poultry](#), [fishery](#), [piggery](#), [snail farming](#) or even in humans, rabbits do get sick.
There are a lot of common diseases that rabbits can be besieged with. However, if farmers pay close attention to his/her rabbits, early signs of problems can be picked up and such diseases can be prevented.

Below are some common problems and diseases of rabbits:

**Hairballs:** Scientifically called trichobezoars, this occurs when hair that is normally found in a rabbit’s stomach (as they self-groom) does not pass through the gut, as it should. When this happens, it will form an obstruction and can cause serious complications.

**Prevention/treatment of the Hairballs**

There is really no way to prevent hairballs, and they are considered common. However, they are more likely to become a problem if the rabbit already has gastrointestinal tract problems and/or is not receiving enough fibre in its diet.

A high fibre diet is therefore a preventative measure. While some medication can help the gut to work properly again, sometimes surgery is the only treatment if the hairball causes a blockage in the gut.

**Pasteurellosis/snuffles:** This bacteria usually affects the eyes of the rabbits causing redness, discharge, and squinting; and/or the nose, causing sneezing and discharge. It can also the ears resulting in a head tilt, abscesses and uterine infections.

**Prevention/treatment of the Pasteurellosis/snuffles**

Because this disease is usually passed from rabbit to rabbit, it is advisable to separate sick animals from the rest through de-crowding. Treatment involves a long and sometimes repeated course of antibiotics.

**Uterine tumours:** This affects female rabbits and symptoms include blood stained vaginal discharge, violent behaviour, mammary gland cysts and lethargy. It is a form of cancer called uterine adenocarcinoma and it should be suspected anytime a doe becomes sick.

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**Prevention/treatment of the Uterine tumours**

This disease cannot really be prevented if the aim of the farmer is to have reproducing does. Once a rabbit is affected though, desexing can help before the cancer spreads throughout the body.

**Overgrown teeth:** Because a rabbit’s teeth grow throughout its lifetime, there is the risk of the teeth becoming overgrown, especially if the rabbit is not constantly grinding the teeth down by eating enough fibre. In severe cases, the incisors at the front of the mouth grow around in a curl such that affected rabbits cannot close their mouth or eat at all. This will inevitably lead to death.

**Prevention/treatment of the Overgrown teeth**

A rabbit farmer should ensure that at least eighty percent of his/her rabbit’s diet is fibre. This can come in the form of oaten or grass hay. The rest of the diet should be leafy greens, with pellets and other treats given in minimal quantities.

Once the condition has already begun, a vet may have to apply general anesthetic and burr the teeth flat.

**Myxomatosis:** This is a virus transmitted by mosquitoes, fleas or through close contact with an infected rabbit. Symptoms include swelling and discharge from the eyes, nose and genital region.

**Prevention/treatment of the Myxomatosis**

To prevent, farmers should invest in mosquito proof hutches. Unfortunately, there is no treatment once a rabbit is infected, and the disease is often fatal.

**Calicivirus:** This is also spread by infected mosquitoes or direct contact with an infected rabbit. This disease damages rabbits’ internal organs such as the liver and gut, and can also cause hemorrhage. Symptoms include nose bleeds, and loss of appetite.

**Prevention/treatment of the Calicivirus**

There is a vaccination against calicivirus. It is also advisable to have mosquito proof hutches for prevention. Unfortunately, there is no treatment available.
Marketing your rabbits in Nigeria

If the end purpose of starting a rabbit farm is to generate income and make profit, then it is only reasonable to begin with a marketing plan in place.

For beginners, the marketing process can begin by creating awareness among individuals such as families, friends and colleagues.

Farmers can then take it a step further by contacting establishments such as restaurants, hotels, eateries and supermarkets that can purchase rabbit meat in large quantities.

The key however, is education. Educate your potential clients about the nutritional value of rabbits as well as the economic importance.

Also, locate other end users of rabbit products such as fur industries and establish a business relationship with them.

Conclusion

Rabbit farming in Nigeria has more merits than demerits, but the responsibility still rests on the would-be rabbit farmer to make a success of his rabbit farming business.

This calls for personal characteristics such as commitment to task at hand, a thirst for knowledge, proactiveness, discipline, doggedness and goal-mindedness.

We love you and wish you good success in your rabbit farming venture.
I started my first business before I was 15 years old. All my life, I have started more than 7 businesses of my own. My journey was not easy but your own could be easier, if you take time to learn from my experience. I have written a book that will change your life. Download it for FREE [HERE](#). Read our [50 best business tutorials](#). Go to our [Home Page](#) and read more, then bookmark and visit this website 2 times each week as I share more of my business experience, wisdom and strategies with you. I love you.

![Book Cover](image)

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