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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO AMEND ITS ADMINISTRATIVE  
RULES TO ALLOW FOR COMMERCIAL SALE OF RABBIT MEAT FOR  
CONSUMPTION.

1           WHEREAS, only fifteen percent of Hawaii's food supply is  
2 grown locally, and the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan  
3 identifies the goal of doubling local food production by 2030;  
4 and

5  
6           WHEREAS, due to Hawaii's remote location and reliance on  
7 imported food, Hawaii's food security is particularly vulnerable  
8 to natural disasters and disruptions of the shipping and food  
9 supply; and

10  
11           WHEREAS, by replacing only ten percent of the food Hawaii  
12 currently imports, an estimated \$313,000,000 dollars would  
13 remain in the State; and

14  
15           WHEREAS, in many countries and regions around the world,  
16 rabbit meat is a widely consumed, commercially-available protein  
17 source; and

18  
19           WHEREAS, rabbits have a high rate of reproduction, early  
20 maturity, rapid growth rate, high genetic selection potential,  
21 efficient feed and land space utilization, and high-quality  
22 nutritious meat; and

23  
24           WHEREAS, rabbit meat is lower in fat, cholesterol, and  
25 calories than beef, chicken, lamb, pork, and turkey with  
26 comparable protein levels; and

27  
28           WHEREAS, developing a rabbit meat industry in Hawaii may  
29 contribute positively to Hawaii's sustainability goals, allow  
30 for increased food self-sufficiency, and support economic



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1 development and more diverse product lines for Hawaii ranchers;  
2 and

3  
4 WHEREAS, demand for rabbit meat in the United States is  
5 gradually increasing due to increasing demand from restaurants  
6 and consumers interested in sustainable and exotic meats; and

7  
8 WHEREAS, producers on the island of Hawaii are successfully  
9 cultivating rabbits for subsistence consumption, but lack a  
10 regulatory framework that would allow for the commercial sale of  
11 the rabbit meat; and

12  
13 WHEREAS, according to title 9 Code of Federal Regulations  
14 part 354 entitled "Voluntary Inspection of Rabbits and Edible  
15 Products Thereof," the United States Department of Agriculture  
16 (USDA) does not mandate the federal Food Safety and Inspection  
17 Service (FSIS) to inspect the slaughter of rabbits, and the  
18 inspection is voluntary and subject to fees and charges by the  
19 FSIS; and

20  
21 WHEREAS, the Department of Health, pursuant to section 11-  
22 50-31, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), allows for the sale of  
23 game animals, including mammals such as rabbits, that are  
24 commercially raised for food; provided they are raised,  
25 slaughtered, and processed under a voluntary inspection program  
26 conducted by the agency that has health jurisdiction, or a  
27 routine inspection program conducted by an agency other than the  
28 agency with animal health jurisdiction; and

29  
30 WHEREAS, there is currently no USDA voluntary inspection  
31 program in the State of Hawaii, and there is no comparable state  
32 voluntary inspection program for the inspection of rabbit meat  
33 for commercial sale; and

34  
35 WHEREAS, Hawaii has no routine inspection program for game  
36 animals allowing rabbit meat producers to commercially sell  
37 their product as an approved food source under the Department of  
38 Health's administrative rules; and

39  
40 WHEREAS, establishing a state voluntary inspection program  
41 that would meet the federal requirements is costly and would  
42 require additional state funds, personnel, and facilities; and



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1  
2 WHEREAS, establishing a routine inspection program for game  
3 animals under state agencies may also be cost-prohibitive; and  
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5 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has previously amended  
6 section 11-50-31, HAR, to allow for the commercial sale of  
7 field-dressed wild game animals; provided the animals receive a  
8 postmortem examination by an approved veterinarian or  
9 veterinarian's designee; and  
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11 WHEREAS, the lack of a clear and specific process for the  
12 inspection of rabbits commercially raised for food is a  
13 deterrent for producers to cultivate rabbits for intrastate  
14 commerce; now, therefore,  
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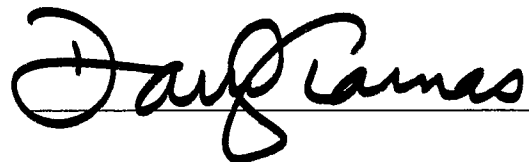
16 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
17 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of  
18 2020, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Health is  
19 urged to amend its administrative rules to allow for the  
20 commercial sale of rabbit meat for consumption; and  
21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health  
23 consider adopting a rule similar to section 11-50-31, HAR, that  
24 would allow for the commercial sale of rabbit meat for  
25 consumption; provided that the rabbit herd receives inspections  
26 by a veterinarian who holds a valid license to practice in the  
27 State of Hawaii; and  
28


29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Health is  
30 encouraged to consider including other game animals, as defined  
31 in section 11-50-2, HAR, in its amended rules; and  
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health  
35 and Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.  
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37  
38

OFFERED BY:



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