

HR-71

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 6:12:14 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/23/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Candi Hololio Johnson	`Ihilani Farms	Support	No

Comments:

Rabbit meat is the fastest easiest source of animal flesh protein available for families to utilize. Our islands make noise about food security, but little is done on an administrative level to support producers large and small in moving toward a true island economy. We need processing facilities for small stock like rabbits, poultry, etc. but also a system that supports neighbors feeding neighbors and local communities. Farm-fresh direct sales and local market sales need to be allowed and encouraged with minimal interference and regulation.

COVID-19 has exposed more need for this type of food production. Empty shelves, lack of choice, etcetera is highlighting the need for on-island production in vastly larger numbers. Over-regulation is crippling our Farmers! Let's make it easier to get good food produced locally.

HR-71

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 11:18:55 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/23/2021 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Total oppose. Have you ever eaten rabbit ? Dark wild meat, not a big seller any where on mainland either. A relative tried to raise rabbits on the mainland, and could not make a go of it.....just another wild idea of how to get rich. Use your common sense. Rabbits get out and breed and eat the plants up that we are growing. Another invasive species in Hawaii is the last thing we need. What we need is more pig harvesters, there are herds of them here on the Big Island in the Puna area ! Free meat, already here !

My name is Sandra Tsukiyama. I am the current president of the Hawaii All-Breed Rabbit Club and have been a continuous member since its founding in 1986. The Oahu-based Club is sanctioned with the American Rabbit Breeders Association, an international organization, dedicated to the promotion, development and improvement of the purebred, domestic rabbit. I also serve as its representative for the State of Hawaii.

The introduction of H.R. 71 and H.C.R. 83 fully supports the current practice of local people raising rabbits for self-sufficiency. Considering the limited land area on our islands to raise rabbits, this makes sense as they are the most efficient meat producers, regarding the use of space, plant-based feed, water and time. Historically, during World War II, there was a shortage of meat in the islands and many people raised rabbits.

Rabbits are efficient meat producers; gestation is 31 days. Average litter size varies from four to ten young. After weaning the litter at approximately six to eight weeks, the doe can be rebred, producing up to four litters per year. A 12-week-old, fryer rabbit dresses out to 3 pounds and can easily feed a family of five. The edible portion of the carcass is all white meat, is easily digested and produces the highest level of protein and lowest of fat, compared to that of other animals, according to the USDA Circular #549.

Currently, I can think of over 30 people across the islands, actively raising rabbits for meat. It can replace chicken or pork in local, favorite dishes such as Adobo, Nishime, Katsu, Stir Fry, Kalua, Lau Lau, Smoke Meat, Vinha d'Alhos and Portuguese Sausage, delighting the previously uninitiated consumer. Rabbits are consumed worldwide, and in fact, in Southeast Asian, Caribbean and African countries they have been introduced as a viable protein alternative to replace beef, etc. Locally, there has been a considerable demand from upscale, resort-type as well as neighborhood restaurant chefs who want to include it as a regular item on their menus.

The passing of this resolution would lead to a win-win situation for Hawaii's agricultural industry, the economy and overall health of the people of this State. I ask that all who are interested in improving those areas, to please give it their hearty support.