
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

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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 shipping and food
9 supply; and

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

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

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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

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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



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1 WHEREAS, developing a rabbit meat industry in Hawaii may
2 contribute positively to Hawaii's sustainability goals, allow
3 for increased food self-sufficiency, and support economic
4 development and more diverse product lines for Hawaii ranchers;
5 and

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7 WHEREAS, demand for rabbit meat in the United States is
8 gradually increasing due to growing demand from restaurants and
9 consumers interested in sustainable and exotic meats; and

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11 WHEREAS, producers on the island of Hawaii are successfully
12 cultivating rabbits for subsistence consumption, but the lack of
13 a regulatory framework that would allow for the commercial sale
14 of the rabbit meat prevents them from establishing a viable
15 business selling rabbit meat; and

16
17 WHEREAS, according to title 9 Code of Federal Regulations
18 part 354 entitled "Voluntary Inspection of Rabbits and Edible
19 Products Thereof", the United States Department of Agriculture
20 does not require the federal Food Safety and Inspection Service
21 to inspect the slaughter of rabbits, and the inspection is
22 voluntary and subject to fees and charges by the Food Safety and
23 Inspection Service; and

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25 WHEREAS, the Department of Health, pursuant to
26 section 11-50-31(g)(1), Hawaii Administrative Rules, allows for
27 the sale of game animals, including mammals such as rabbits,
28 that are commercially raised for food; provided they are raised,
29 slaughtered, and processed under a voluntary inspection program
30 conducted by the agency that has animal health jurisdiction, or
31 a routine inspection program conducted by a regulatory agency
32 other than the agency with animal health jurisdiction; and

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34 WHEREAS, currently, there is no United States Department of
35 Agriculture voluntary inspection program in Hawaii, and there is
36 no comparable state voluntary inspection program for the
37 inspection of rabbit meat for commercial sale; and



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1 WHEREAS, Hawaii has no routine inspection program for game
2 animals that allows rabbit meat producers to commercially sell
3 their product as an approved food source under the Department of
4 Health's administrative rules; and

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6 WHEREAS, establishing a state voluntary inspection program
7 that would meet the federal requirements is costly and would
8 require additional state funds, personnel, and facilities; and

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10 WHEREAS, establishing a routine inspection program for game
11 animals under state agencies may also be cost-prohibitive; and

12
13 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has previously amended
14 section 11-50-31(g) (4), Hawaii Administrative Rules, to allow
15 for the commercial sale of field-dressed wild game animals;
16 provided that the animals receive a postmortem examination by an
17 approved veterinarian or veterinarian's designee; and

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19 WHEREAS, the lack of a clear and specific process for the
20 inspection of rabbits commercially raised for food is a
21 deterrent for producers to cultivate rabbits for intrastate
22 commerce; now, therefore,

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24 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
25 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
26 of 2021, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Health is
27 urged to amend its administrative rules to allow for the
28 commercial sale of rabbit meat for consumption; and

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30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
31 requested to consider adopting a rule similar to
32 section 11-50-31, Hawaii Administrative Rules, that would allow
33 for the commercial sale of rabbit meat for consumption; provided
34 that the rabbit herd receives inspections by a veterinarian who
35 holds a valid license to practice in Hawaii; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
38 urged to consider including other game animals, as defined in
39 section 11-50-2, Hawaii Administrative Rules, in its amended
40 rules; and



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director
3 of Health, and Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.
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OFFERED BY:

Daryl Carnes

MAR 10 2021

