
HOUSE 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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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
31 development and more diverse product lines for Hawaii ranchers;
32 and



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1 WHEREAS, demand for rabbit meat in the United States is
2 gradually increasing due to growing demand from restaurants and
3 consumers interested in sustainable and exotic meats; and
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5 WHEREAS, producers on the island of Hawaii are successfully
6 cultivating rabbits for subsistence consumption, but the lack of
7 a regulatory framework that would allow for the commercial sale
8 of the rabbit meat prevents them from establishing a viable
9 business selling rabbit meat; and
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11 WHEREAS, according to title 9 Code of Federal Regulations
12 part 354 entitled "Voluntary Inspection of Rabbits and Edible
13 Products Thereof", the United States Department of Agriculture
14 does not require the federal Food Safety and Inspection Service
15 to inspect the slaughter of rabbits, and the inspection is
16 voluntary and subject to fees and charges by the Food Safety and
17 Inspection Service; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Department of Health, pursuant to
20 section 11-50-31(g) (1), Hawaii Administrative Rules, allows for
21 the sale of game animals, including mammals such as rabbits,
22 that are commercially raised for food; provided they are raised,
23 slaughtered, and processed under a voluntary inspection program
24 conducted by the agency that has animal health jurisdiction, or
25 a routine inspection program conducted by a regulatory agency
26 other than the agency with animal health jurisdiction; and
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28 WHEREAS, currently, there is no United States Department of
29 Agriculture voluntary inspection program in Hawaii, and there is
30 no comparable state voluntary inspection program for the
31 inspection of rabbit meat for commercial sale; and
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33 WHEREAS, Hawaii has no routine inspection program for game
34 animals that allows rabbit meat producers to commercially sell
35 their product as an approved food source under the Department of
36 Health's administrative rules; and
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38 WHEREAS, establishing a state voluntary inspection program
39 that would meet the federal requirements is costly and would
40 require additional state funds, personnel, and facilities; and



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1 WHEREAS, establishing a routine inspection program for game
2 animals under state agencies may also be cost-prohibitive; and
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4 WHEREAS, the Department of Health has previously amended
5 section 11-50-31(g) (4), Hawaii Administrative Rules, to allow
6 for the commercial sale of field-dressed wild game animals;
7 provided that the animals receive a postmortem examination by an
8 approved veterinarian or veterinarian's designee; and
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10 WHEREAS, the lack of a clear and specific process for the
11 inspection of rabbits commercially raised for food is a
12 deterrent for producers to cultivate rabbits for intrastate
13 commerce; now, therefore,
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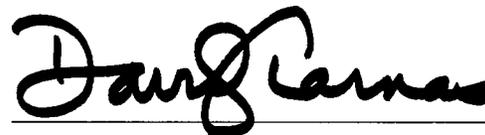
15 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
16 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
17 of 2021, that the Department of Health is urged to amend its
18 administrative rules to allow for the commercial sale of rabbit
19 meat for consumption; and
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21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
22 requested to consider adopting a rule similar to
23 section 11-50-31, Hawaii Administrative Rules, that would allow
24 for the commercial sale of rabbit meat for consumption; provided
25 that the rabbit herd receives inspections by a veterinarian who
26 holds a valid license to practice in Hawaii; and
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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health is
29 urged to consider including other game animals, as defined in
30 section 11-50-2, Hawaii Administrative Rules, in its amended
31 rules; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Health,
35 and Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.
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OFFERED BY:



MAR 10 2021

