

## OPENING CEREMONY

WORKSHOP ON RABBIT HUSBANDRY IN AFRICA, MOROGORO, TANZANIA  
DECEMBER 16 - 21, 1978

A welcome address to the participants by Professor M.L. KYOMO,  
Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary  
Science of the University of Dar Es Salaam

The Hon. Minister of Agriculture

The Hon. Representative of the International Foundation for  
Science of Sweden

The Hon. Director-General of the Tanzania National Scientific  
Research Council

Distinguished Workshop Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of my Vice-Chancellor to this Campus of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. My Faculty has been greatly honoured by the sponsors of the workshop, namely, the International Foundation for Science (IFS) of Sweden and the Tanzanian National Scientific Research Council in being chosen as the host of the Workshop on Rabbit Husbandry in Africa. The importance my country has attached to this workshop is manifested by the fact that the Minister of Agriculture in my Government has agreed to come and open the workshop. We are quite aware of the fact that there are several countries in Africa which are ahead of us in promoting rabbit production. You have already seen what some of our farmers are trying to do in this field and we expect that you will have some comments and suggestions on our rabbit management systems. We shall look forward to learning from these suggestions.

Before calling upon the Minister of Agriculture to address to you, I would like to tell you something about this Faculty. It was started in July, 1969 as part of the University of East Africa and in July 1970 it became part of the University of Dar es Salaam. It is currently offering three undergraduate degree courses, namely in Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Science. In addition, higher degrees by either coursework and thesis or by research only are being offered in all disciplines of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Science. The Faculty has received students from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Gambia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Nigeria, Zambia, Swaziland, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda as well as from within the country. We do not wish to compare our courses with those being offered in other Universities but at undergraduate level we emphasize very much the integration of theoretical and practical training. We have for this reason been given permission by the Senate of my University to start our Academic Year in January instead of July, which is the normal commencement period for the rest of the University. This will enable us to have students from the beginning to the end of the growing season for most of the agricultural crops. When we start in January 1979 we shall have for the first time students from Ghana in our forestry and Veterinary Science Courses. We hope that while you are here you will take an opportunity to meet some of our staff and students and that when you get back to your countries you will encourage some of your people to come and study in my University. Although, the Faculty is 200 kilometers from the Main Campus in Dar es Salaam the good road joining Morogoro and Dar es Salaam enable us to cover this distance in about two hours. We do not therefore have a feeling of isolation at all. Furthermore, the beauty of Uluguru Mountains compensate for the beauty of the beaches at the coast. In addition, the Faculty is located near Morogoro Town which at present has a population of nearly 65,000 and can provide all the amenities we require.

With these few words I would like to call upon the Minister of Agriculture the Honourable Dr J.S. MALECELA M.P., to open the workshop.

THE OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON RABBIT HUSBANDRY IN AFRICA

by

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, THE HON. DR. J.S. MALECELA, M.P.,

MOROGORO, TANZANIA

DECEMBER 18 - 21, 1978

Mr Vice-Chancellor,

The Hon. Representative of the International Foundation for Science,

The Hon. Director-General of the National Scientific Research Council,

Distinguished Workshop participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed an honour and privilege to have been invited to address you at this opening of the workshop on rabbit husbandry in Africa. I am very pleased to note that my country was chosen as a venue for the workshop and I take this opportunity to welcome all of you to Tanzania. The subject you will be discussing here might seem unimportant to some people, but in the continent where about two thirds of the human population are hungry and malnourished the subject should stimulate a lot of interest.

In 1974 the World Food Council noted that in most of the developing countries food output has been rising more slowly than effective demand. Again, at the Ninth and Tenth FAO Regional Conferences for Africa which took place in Freetown and Arusha, respectively, member countries noted the worsening food situation throughout the Continent and attempted to find solutions to alleviate the situation. Although several parts of Africa have experienced in recent years severe droughts which have led to starvation and death of thousands of people, the problem in normal years has been that of eating of unbalanced diet. In several African countries people subsist on starchy foods such as cassava, yams, rice, maize and millets which have low protein content. The deficiency of protein in the diets of infants and pre-school children leads to poor physical and mental growth and development and in extreme cases causes death. The FAO has estimated that about 50% of all young children in developing countries are inadequately nourished, and several of these will die prematurely. Furthermore, the health of pregnant and lactating mothers can be severely impaired if there is inadequate protein in the diet. The situation can be corrected by providing to these groups of the population adequate protein from pulses and animal products such as meat, eggs, milk and fish. However, this is easier said than done. For example, from sheer numbers of 12 million head of cattle, 7 million sheep and goats, 40 000 pigs, 18 million chickens and a large body of water where fish can be obtained, my country would have been expected to have adequate protein for its human population. There are several reasons to point out why this is not the case.

Firstly, our livestock are not evenly distributed throughout the country and therefore there are meat surplus and meat deficient areas. In the latter areas because of

expensive distribution and storage systems the meat is so costly that some sections of the community can not afford it. Secondly, even where animal protein is available such as in the urban areas, there are, due to low GNP, poor sections of the community which cannot afford to buy these sources of protein regularly. It is therefore worth looking for other sources of protein particularly those which can be produced cheaply.

There have been good agricultural schemes which have been introduced in developing countries but due to poor supply of inputs, some of these schemes have not produced the desired results. It is therefore gratifying to note that in addition to the general management of rabbits you will be discussing also the feeding aspects. In the tropics there are abundant crop and animal by-products which go to waste and which could be used in feeding to livestock. My Ministry will be anxious to receive cheap feed formulations for rabbits from this workshop.

Rabbit production was introduced in my country in the late 1950s. We started raising them at the Farmers Training Centres where farmers were taught how to take care of them. I am pleased to report that from these centres rabbit production has spread to the villages and schools. Our problem at present is to teach rabbit owners management systems which can lead to maximum returns in terms of meat and pelts on labour and capital investment. The other problem is that of providing farmers with good breeding animals. My ministry is therefore looking into ways of importing breeding animals from outside the country. Animal Research Scientists in my Ministry and in the University of Dar es Salaam have already initiated programmes to compare performances of

different breeds as well as to produce strains and breeds of rabbits which will do well in our different environments. It is expected that these scientists will work hand in hand with the extension workers and spread to the farmers good breeding stocks as well as improved management techniques. It is gratifying to note from the programme for the workshop that reports on rabbit husbandry in various African Countries as well as from other parts of the tropics will be presented here. We expect to learn a lot from them.

Honourable guests, I wish you success in your deliberations and hope that your stay during the workshop will be both worthwhile and enjoyable.

With these few remarks I have pleasure in declaring the workshop open.

TANZANIA NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COUNCIL

ADDRESS GIVEN BY DR J M LIWENGA VICE-CHAIRMAN OF TANZANIA  
NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COUNCIL AT THE OPENING CEREMONY  
OF THE WORKSHOP ON RABBIT HUSBANDRY IN AFRICA, MOROGORO 19-21  
DECEMBER 1978:

On behalf of the Chairman INSRC, the Council, and in my capacity as Vice-Chairman of Tanzania National Scientific Research Council which is a member of the International Foundation for Science it gives me much pleasure to welcome distinguished participants to this Workshop. I note with pleasure that delegates come from mine African Countries besides a number of observers from Overseas. It is also gratifying to note the interest taken by the Ministry of Agriculture (Livestock Division) which has encouraged its officers to attend this Workshop. The Tanzania National Scientific Research Council wishes to thank you all and especially all overseas delegates for being able to respond to our invitation. This is the second International Foundation for Science supported activity in Tanzania which has been partly organised by Tanzania National Scientific Research Council. The first was held at the University of Dar es Salaam Main Campus and consisted of lectures and demonstrations of research work being undertaken by International Foundation for Science research grantees.

The Tanzania National Scientific Research Council attaches much importance to these activities as they not only provide a forum for scientists and scholars to read their papers but also they provide an opportunity for the public to question and comment on the relevance of their research. The credit for the success of this workshop goes to our two co-sponsors, namely International Foundation for Science and Faculty of Agriculture, University of Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, who had the foresight to suggest this Workshop. I should like to stress here that the Tanzania National

Scientific Research Council Act empowers us to collaborate with Scientific Organizations inside and outside Tanzania. For this reason Government has plans to strengthen the Tanzania National Scientific Research Council so as to enable it to be more effective.

Allow me now to give a brief history of our association with International Foundation for Science. Tanzania has been associated with International Foundation for Science since its inception in 1972. The Tanzania National Scientific Research Council has been honoured by being elected to its Board of Trustees. Currently there are twelve research projects supported by International Foundation for Science in Tanzania including the one on Rabbits Husbandry.

This project is of particular interest to us because it is an example of work that could be translated from theoretical studies to practical reality. I have been informed by the Director-General of Tanzania National Scientific Research Council that participants took the opportunity to visit Kilimanjaro Region where they met and discussed problems of rabbit keeping with local people. The authorities in the region are planning to provide the farmer with an animal that does not require too much resource for its management because of land availability. The answer to this is the pig and the rabbit. Farmers are taking much interest in both animals. The Tanzania National Scientific Research Council therefore feels very much privileged to be associated with these recent developments in farming in Kilimanjaro Region. We shall recommend to the Council the need of continuing to associate ourselves with this work and see it to fruition.

I should like to take this opportunity to encourage scientific communities to think of such collaborative programmes. Dr. Bo Gohl is going to explain the catalytic role which organizations like IFS could play in

iding research in developing countries. Mr Chairman,  
adies and Gentlemen, let me also join the previous  
peakers in wishing your Workshop every success and  
ope that those of you who come from abroad will find  
ime in future to come back to Tanzania and collaborate  
ith us in some other endeavours. Thanks.

ADDRESS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF IFS

Dr. Bo Göhl  
Project Secretary  
International Foundation for Science

The Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture,  
The Representatives of the Tanzania National Scientific Council,  
The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary  
Science of the University of Dar es Salaam,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Representing the International Foundation for Science at  
this workshop on rabbit husbandry in Africa, it is a pleasure  
for me to wish you welcome and to convey greetings and good  
wishes of the IFS.

This is the first scientific meeting on rabbit husbandry  
covering the African continent. Today we have present among  
us delegates from Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, the Sudan, Togo,  
Zambia, Malawi, Ghana and Mauritius. There are also participants  
from England, Germany and Sweden. It is very pleasing to note  
the great interest and high expectations this workshop on rabbit  
husbandry in Africa has aroused. The interest in rabbits as  
meat producers is increasing rapidly in a number of countries  
all over the world. The reason for this is that the rabbit has  
several advantages over other animals: it reproduces rapidly,  
the keeping of rabbits does not require access to much land,  
rabbits can be maintained on home grown feeds and it has a  
convenient size suitable for a family dinner, just to mention  
a few.

There are, of course, also problems associated with this  
animal, but taking into consideration that the rabbit has  
received comparatively little research attention there is great  
scope for improvements. I think it is fair to say that the  
rabbit is both a neglected and under-exploited animal. During  
the next three days it will be discussed whether the rabbit is  
an animal that has a hidden potential that can be exploited by  
research and in such a case what kind of work will be needed  
to make full use of this animal.

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Hopefully, the discussions will assist in finding the proper place of rabbits in African agriculture, whether it will be in the form of backyard farming or in large intensive units. Heated discussions on this subject have already started among the delegates. Also a possible outcome from this meeting will be an outline of a package of guidelines for the practical farmer on how to keep rabbits and how to solve problems associated with rabbit keeping.

Support to research on an under-exploited animal like the rabbit is very much in line with the philosophy of the International Foundation for Science. This workshop is in fact the fourth scientific meeting sponsored by IFS during the last four months on subjects that have great potentials but have not attracted the attention of researchers. Of these three earlier meetings one was held in Kumasi, Ghana, on mycorrhiza, one in Buea, Cameroon, on Yam and one in Penang, Malaysia, on aquaculture. The workshops are new adventures for IFS. We hope meetings of this kind will promote personal contacts amongst research workers, particularly IFS research grantees. We also hope that the workshop on rabbit husbandry in Africa will promote research interest on rabbits and on the practical use of results of research. A workshop as this one may also stimulate transfer of knowledge from one region to another or from one continent to another continent, and encourage future applicants to foresee new or better uses of the resources of the IFS.

The International Foundation for Science is a young, non-governmental organization founded in 1972, based on the support of scientific academies and research councils, of which about 15 are from nations in the developed world and 28 amongst the less developed countries. Of these 43 nations, ten contribute to the Foundation's budget, of which one, namely Nigeria, belong to the less developed world. The budget last year was about one million dollars. This can support only modest and very selective programmes of research. So far the IFS has awarded more than 300 research grants in the seven major scientific

Subjects covered by IFS: Animal Production, Aquaculture, Vegetable Production, Mycorrhiza Studies, Food Science, Natural Products Chemistry and Rural Construction.

A number of people have worked hard to organize this workshop, first suggested by Mr. Muze Mgheni who is also an IFS grantee. When organizing this workshop, the organizers have been encouraged by the interest that has been shown by the Ministry of Agriculture. From IFS I also wish to convey thanks for good cooperation both to the Tanzania National Scientific Research Council and the University authorities.

We will now, after a coffee break, all have the occasion to hear reports on most aspects of rabbit husbandry in a number of African countries. Let us hope that our discussions will be productive so that rabbit husbandry will find its proper place in African agriculture.