

WRSA News

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- ★ New Board and New Destiny

Dear WRSA officers and members,

Six months have passed since our sixteen Newsletter. In this new year, we have appointed a new executive committee and have embarked on a new path towards the next world congress, after the success of the one celebrated a few months ago. We have tried to summarize the main news of these last six months in the current issue.

Letter from the WRSA President

Dear WRSA members and followers,

The new year begins with the positive afterglow of the 13th World Rabbit Congress that we all celebrated in September 2024 in Tarragona. Now, we begin with changes in our board team and in the direction of one (among others) main objective: the 14th World Congress, which will be held in Brazil thanks to the can-do spirit of our new Vice President Professor Leandro Castilha (Universidade Estadual de Maringá, Brazil).

Meanwhile, we will go on with the aim of strengthening rabbit farming while prioritizing animal welfare. One of our main goals must be to showcase to society the commitment and dedication of the various stakeholders in the supply chain.

Please remember that all news related to rabbit farming that you would like to see featured in our newsletters are welcome.

Do not forget to use our discussion forum for every question to our community:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/world-rabbit-science-asso>

Publish in the WRSA journal, World Rabbit Science <http://polipapers.upv.es/index.php/wrs>

Visit our WRSA website <http://world-rabbit-science.com/>

our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/wrsaface/>

or our new page in LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/world-rabbit-science-association/posts/>

Best wishes

Mariam PASCUAL 

WRSA President

Institut de Recerca i Tecnologia Agroalimentàries, IRTA (Spain)

Overview of the 13th World Rabbit Congress

Last 2nd to 4th October 2024, the city of Tarragona (Spain) hosted the 13th edition of our World Rabbit Congress (WRC), the leading global event in rabbit science. This time, the event was organized by ASESCU, as the Spanish branch of the WRSA, and the Institute of Agrifood and Technology (IRTA) from Barcelona, under the auspices of the World Rabbit Science Association (WRSA).



The event, held at the Tarragona Conference and Exhibition Centre from October 2 to 4, serves us as a platform for knowledge exchange among scientists, technicians, companies, and producers worldwide.

The congress attracted 295 participants from 34 countries, with Spain representing the largest group (34.2%), followed by China (15.8%), France (13.4%), and Italy (11%). Throughout the congress, attendees had the opportunity to engage with nine main sessions, four round tables, 129 oral presentations, and 105 posters. Topics covered a wide range of subjects, including nutrition, genetics, pathology, reproduction, product quality, animal welfare, economics, and physiology.



The 1st October, the day before starting the WRC, participants could enjoy the Pre- Congress Course “Experiment and You’ll See”, addressed to key concepts of experimental design and sample size determination for meaningful statistical analysis.

During the first day of the congress, three plenary talks were presented. Yee Huang (Zhejiang Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Hangzhou, China) presented a talk about new vaccines and adjuvants for infectious diseases; María Cambra (Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain) talked about alternative methods in animal nutrition experiments; and Davi Savietto (INRAE, France) presented a speech about the environmental impact of intensive rabbit production. On that day, the participants could enjoy also two roundtables: one of them was addressed to new directions in genetic improvement and was moderated by Agustín Blasco (Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain); the other one discussed about strategies to reduce antibiotic use in rabbit farming, and was led by Luca Bano (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie, Italy). The day finished with a welcoming reception and a guided tour of Tarragona, courtesy of the City Council.

The second day, other three plenary talks and two roundtables were exposed. The plenary talks were about welfare indicators in rabbit farms, presented by Angela Trocino (University of Padova, Italy); cryopreservation of rabbit semen and cryobanks, exposed by Nicolaia Iafaldanno (Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Food, Campobasso, Italy), and rabbit meat quality and natural antioxidants, offered by Simone Mancini (University of Pisa, Italy). The round tables were focused on the Current Status of Alternative Housing Options due to the movement The End of the Cage Age, under the moderation of Juan José Pascual (Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain), and about specific needs for the sustainability



of rabbit production worldwide, under the control of by Saidu Oseni (Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria). After the round table, most of the participants joint the gala dinner at the renowned L'Orangerie restaurant in Vila-Seca (Tarragona).

Finally, the last day three plenary talks were exposed: Sylvie Combes (INRAE, France) talked about gut microbiota in rabbits; Juan Pablo Sánchez (University of Córdoba, Spain) exposed about the sustainability in rabbit production from a genetic perspective, and Tomas Norton (KU Leuven, Belgium) treated the challenges and opportunities in precision livestock farming.

It must be highlighted that, along the WRC, three key figures of the cuniculture were honoured. First, during the Opening Ceremony, Ceferino Torres. He was a main pillar in ASESCU and he was one of the organisers of the WRC, but unfortunately he could not join it because he passed away two days before the congress. On the other hand, the WRSA had the pleasure of honouring François Lebas Professor, founder of the WRSA, officially retired, but still supporting behind the scenes; and Agustin Blasco, which will be retired in some months.



Selected Publications

As you well know, **World Rabbit Science** (WRS) is one of the few indexed journals (IF: 0.800) that remains in the hands of academia (Universitat Politècnica de Valencia) and our scientific association. Thanks to this, WRS is a **free access** journal for readers **with no publication fees** for authors.

Currently, our institutions and PhD students ask us to publish in Q1 open access journals to increase our indexes. Consequently, publishers, that are aware of this situation, make us must **spend a significant amount of money** to publish our knowledge yearly. However, **we have the solution in our hands**, a journal that publishes in open access and without fees. We are completely sure that, if WRSA members send high quality papers to WRS for 2-3 years we would place it in Q1, solving all these problems forever.

Here you can find the most Popular Articles in World Rabbit Science (views in the last 180 days):

1. Energy balance and body reserves in rabbit females selected for longevity (1903 views)
<https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2017.5216>
2. Screening of virulence genes in Staphylococcus aureus isolates from rabbits (1538 views)
<https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2015.3961>
3. Technical note: Characterization of key volatile odorants in rabbit meat using gas chromatography mass spectrometry with simultaneous distillation extraction (734 views)
<https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2016.4464>

Recent publications (last 5 months) in World Rabbit Science with high interest:

1. Measuring on-farm welfare in rabbits: a review with emphasis on animal-based indicators (70 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2024.22647>
2. A Multi-Factor analysis of profitability drivers of local rabbit production in Zamboanga Peninsula Region, Mindanao, Philippines (59 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2024.21913>
3. Preslaughter feed withdrawal and sex influences on rabbit physiological response and meat quality (54 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2024.21002>

4. Dietary inclusion of white lupine seeds and their byproducts in rabbits can contribute to EU agricultural sustainability: a review (53 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2024.22017>
5. Descriptive analysis of the environmental impact of intensive rabbit production (49 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2024.22642>

Other publications of interest in the last 6 months:

1. Genetic selection for postweaning growth rate shows no relevant negative impact on reproductive performance in breeding rabbit does. Animal <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.animal.2024.101394>
2. Unravelling the mechanisms underlying the social interaction effects on the feed efficiency of rabbits. Animal <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.animal.2024.101272>
3. Evaluation of type of grinding of lucerne hay and wheat straw in diets for growing rabbits with two levels of neutral detergent fibre. Ani Feed Sci Tech <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anifeedsci.2024.116193>
4. Partially replacing dietary starch with soybean oil improved production performance of weaned Rex rabbits J Anim Sci <https://doi.org/10.1093/jas/skaf381>
5. Cannabidiol can affect morphology, morphometry, enzymatic and microbial activity of rabbit digestive system J Anim Sci <https://doi.org/10.1093/jas/skaf376>
6. Potentials of Phyllanthus amarus, Viscum album and Moringa oleifera supplements to mitigate heat stress in female rabbits in humid tropics. J Anim Sci Tech <https://doi.org/10.5187/jast.2022.e123>

International and National Congresses

In the last year, WRSA has news about two events held around the world.

VIII National Seminar of Science and Technology in Cuniculture - Senacitec 2024, Bambuí (Brazil)

On the 15th, 16th and 17th of March 2024, the city of Bambuí-MG was the stage for the largest scientific event of Rabbit Production in Brazil: VIII National Seminar of Science and Technology in Cuniculture - Senacitec 2024. For the first time, the event was held in a hybrid format, with activities taking place in person, with lectures and round tables also been broadcasted online to those registered for the event. Under the joint organization of the Federal Institute of Minas Gerais (IFMG) and the Brazilian Cuniculture Scientific Association (ACBC), the event's program consisted of lectures, mini-courses, presentation of scientific works, rabbit fair, debates, testimonials and exchange of experiences between Universities, Production Sectors, Rabbit Farmers and other interested parties. Around 50 in-person participants were registered, in addition to participants on a remote platform.



In the words of Prof. Dr. Luiz Carlos Machado, General Coordinator of the Event and former president of ACBC, "SENACITEC represents the celebration of Brazilian Rabbit Farming, as in addition to bringing together different actors in the activity, it brings together knowledge and disseminates technologies."

We congratulate everyone involved in organizing the event, as well as the participants.

The PROCEEDINGS of the event have already been made available on the Revista Brasileira de Cunicultura (RBC) website and can be accessed via the following link: http://www.rbc.acbc.org.br/images/RBC_-_Edi%C3%A7%C3%A3o_especial_-_Mar._2024.pdf



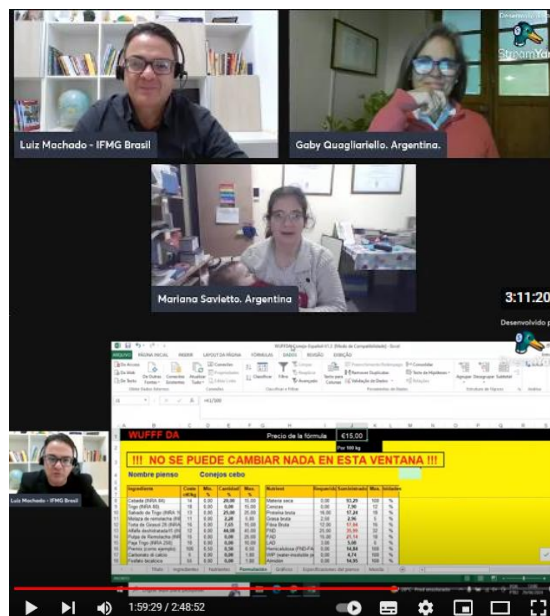
Provided by Dr. Luiz Machado

Training in rabbit feed formulation (AB-WRSA; on line)

The 1st international training in rabbit feed formulation took place on the 28th and 29th of June, this event being organized jointly between the American branch of WRSA and the intertropical rabbit farming society.

The broadcast was carried out from the SIC AB WRSA YouTube channel and included lectures and a practical course of feed formulation. Hundreds of people participated, including rabbit farmers, professionals, teachers, researchers, students and other interested parties from several countries.

Provided by Dr. Luiz Machado



The first day of the broadcast can be accessed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thwZNIjnlc&pp=ygULc2ljIGFiIHdyc2E%3D>

The second day can be accessed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4FjRPcCfAw&pp=ygULc2ljIGFiIHdyc2E%3D>

UPCOMING 2025 CONGRESSES:

Cuniculture in FIGAN (Zaragoza, Spain)

From the 25th to the 28th of March the 17th International Animal Production Show (FIGAN) will take place in the Zaragoza Fair. The event is celebrated biannually, and the Spanish Association of Cuniculture (ASESCU) organizes a seminar that will be held the 27 March.

The first topic exposed will be the 13th World Rabbit Congress. Mariam Pascual, as manager of the congress, will present a general resume about the congress and the plenary sessions and roundtables presented. Daniel Serrano (CIAGRO-Universidad Miguel Hernández of Elche) will explain the key points of the communications from the reproduction and genetics sessions. Patricia Mascarós (CEU-San Pablo of Valencia) will resume the pathology session. Jesús Comenge (NANTA Zaragoza) will talk about the communications included in the nutrition and feeding session. Finally, Virginia Resconi (Universidad de Zaragoza) will indicate the main points of the communications presented in the sessions of welfare, economy and product quality.

The other main theme exposed during the event will be the Project WELFARECUN, led by the Spanish interprofessional organization to promote the rabbit sector, INTERCUN, with the objective of improving animal welfare of the rabbits during housing, transport and stunning at the abattoir. The different entities involved in the project are the production and commercial companies Grupo Hermi and Cogal, the company specialized in animal housing solutions Gomez y Crespo, the consulting firm IMASDE, the research centers Valencian Institute for Agricultural Research (IVIA) and the Institute of Agrifood Research and Technology (IRTA). During the conferences, some representatives of these entities will briefly explain the project and will participate in a roundtable.

You can find more information about the conference in <https://www.feriazaragoza.es/figan>



El Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación ha concedido una subvención al Proyecto Innovador "Grupo Operativo Welfarecun: "Nuevos procesos de robo, transporte y sacrificio en cunicultura para la mejora del bienestar animal" para la preparación y ejecución de proyectos de innovación de interés general por grupos operativos supranacionales de la Asociación Europea para la Innovación en materia de Productividad y Sostenibilidad Agrícola (PAC-AGRI), en el marco del Plan Estratégico de la PAC de España (PEPAC), para el año 2023. La Innovación de estas ayudas se realizará en un 80 por ciento con cargo al Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (FEADER) y en un 20 por ciento con cargo al Ministerio de Agricultura Pesca y Alimentación. La ayuda total solicitada asciende a 588.908,92 euros. El organismo responsable del contenido de este Proyecto Innovador son los socios beneficiarios del GO Welfarecun.



figan

20emes Journées de la Recherche Cunicole (Rennes, France)

The event has been organized annually since 1973 by ITAVI (the Technical Institute for Poultry and Rabbit Industry) and INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), in collaboration with ASFC (French Association of Rabbit Farmers). It serves as a platform for presenting the latest research findings to various stakeholders in the rabbit farming industry, including breeders, groups of producers, cooperatives, feed manufacturers, equipment suppliers, slaughterhouses, and professional organizations.

The focus of the event is on the key areas of rabbit farming and meat production. Topics include nutrition, genetics, pathology, reproduction, breeding techniques, growth, meat and carcass quality, and the economics of the industry. The event provides a space for in-depth discussions about these areas, where industry professionals can exchange ideas and learn about the newest scientific developments. It's an excellent occasion for networking and learning about innovations that shape the future of the industry. You can find more info in

<https://evenements.itavi.asso.fr/evenement/20emes-journees-de-la-recherche-cunicole>



One day seminar of the ASFC (Nantes, France)

A one day seminar will be held by the French Association of Rabbit Farming (ASFC) the 27th March, 2025 at the Veterinary School of Nantes (France). This seminar called “Back to the 13th World Rabbit Congress: shadows and lights” will be mainly addressed to explore the last advances and new challenges presented in our last World Rabbit Congress to the French rabbit sector.



49th Symposium of Cuniculture (Burgos, Spain)

The Spanish Association of Cuniculture (ASESCU) will hold the 49th Symposium the 28th and 29th of May in the Congress Palace and Auditorium of Burgos (north of Spain). ASESCU celebrates the event every year in different cities of the country and this time the congress is coorganized with Unión de Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos (UPA). UPA represents and defends the interests of agricultural and livestock professionals in Spain, focusing on small and medium-sized family farms.



The symposium aims to present the main advancements made in the past year. As of now, the program includes two confirmed conferences about what are pheromones and how can we use them to our advantage in rabbit farming, and emerging diseases and issues following the reduction of medication in rabbit farming. It will also include a roundtable about advances and challenges in rabbit housing systems.

You can find more info in <https://asescu.com/symposiumburgos2025>



New Board in the WRSA and New Destiny

Finally, we did not want to close this newsletter without informing you that the 14th World Rabbit Congress (2028) will be held in Brazil.

During the congress, as is customary, the WRSA held its general assembly, where important decisions were made for the future of the organization. It was officially announced that the next WRC will take place in 2028 in Brazil, with the city of Iguassu as the likely host.

Additionally, several leadership positions within the WRSA board were renewed. Mariam Pascual (IRTA) was appointed as the new WRSA president; Leandro Castilha (Universidade Estadual de Maringá, Brazil) as vice president responsible for the upcoming congress; Zdeněk Volek (Institute of Animal Science, Czech Republic) as vice president supporting the congress organization, and Moussa Kimsé (Université Nangui Abrogoua, Ivory Coast) as secretary for developing countries.



With four years ahead, the rabbit science community will go on sharing knowledge and innovation in the national congresses of the different branches and at the next congress in Brazil.

Best regards and wishing you a great year 2025



Mariam Pascual
President of WRSA

Caldes de Montbui (Spain), February 5, 2025

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