

Main topics:

- ★ Letter from the WRSA President
- ★ Scientific-technical rabbit courses
- ★ Selected Publications
- ★ International and National Congresses
- ★ Rabbinout: no cage system for rabbits
- ★ In memory of Professor Alexandro Finzi

Dear WRSA officers and members,

Six months have passed since our eighteen Newsletter. In this new year, we will try to summarize the main news of these last six months in the current issue.

Letter from the WRSA President

Dear WRSA members and followers,

This year marks a very meaningful anniversary for our Association: the 50th anniversary of the WRSA, founded in 1976 by François Lebas. Reaching half a century gives us a wonderful opportunity to honour the work, dedication and scientific progress that so many colleagues have contributed to over the years. Our community has grown, evolved and strengthened thanks to the commitment of researchers from all around the world. Today, the WRSA remains an active and collaborative voluntary network. The vitality of our field is reflected in the quality of research and the continued interaction among our members.

In this newsletter you will find updates from the WRSA branches, including past and upcoming scientific events. I want to express my gratitude to those who contributed by sending information, and I encourage you to continue sharing any news you may have from around the world related to rabbit science, so that our newsletter can represent the full diversity of our international community.

We also wish to acknowledge the recent passing of Professor Alessandro Finzi, a distinguished WRSA member and esteemed colleague whose contributions left a lasting impact on our community. He will be remembered with gratitude and respect.

Please remember that all news related to rabbit farming that you would like to see featured in our newsletters is 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/>
and 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)

Scientific-technical courses

Online Course in Animal Welfare for Rabbitries

The Spanish Cuniculture Association (ASESCU) organizes an online course on animal welfare and biosecurity in rabbit farms.

The course is a training initiative aimed at professionals in the sector who are required by current regulations to certify specific training in the handling of live animals. The course is delivered entirely in Spanish and has a total duration of 20 hours.

Places are limited. Book your place before 17 February 2026 at:

<https://asescu.com/cursoasescubienestarexpcunicolas/>



Curso de Bienestar Animal en explotaciones cunícolas

20 horas

Fecha 23-24 febrero 2-3 marzo 2026
DE 15.00 20.00 MODALIDAD AULA VIRTUAL

Este curso asegura la competencia requerida en materia de bienestar animal atendiendo a la normativa vigente sectorial. Impartido por Organismo Autorizado Administración Pública.

Las plazas son limitadas, el plazo es hasta el 17 de febrero 2026

El precio es 100% bonificable en FUNDAE y nos encargamos de la gestión

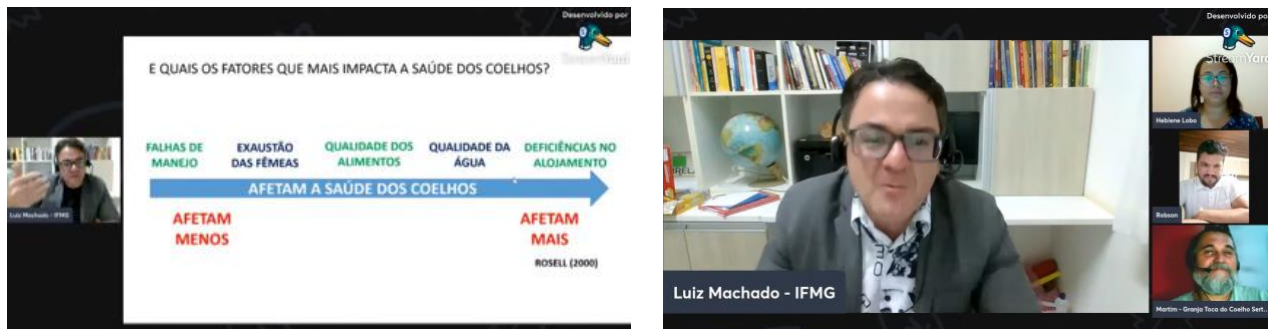
INFORMACIÓN Y RESERVAR PLAZA:

Eva Núñez tel. 611 636 885
enlace: <https://forms.gle/aADgbuQVxB4WjIV7>

Initial training course for rabbit farmers

Between September 2025 and January 2026, an initial training course for rabbit farmers was held, promoted by the Federal Institute of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and broadcast on the Dr. Cuni YouTube channel. The course was completely free and more than 100 people enrolled, with dozens completing it. The 160-hour course had 40 classes in total. The course materials, slides, and links to the classes are available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s5ZpHPNcGChV_AM1mp7XTuJzkpAGSlIz/view?usp=sharing

Provided by Dr. Luiz Machado



CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR CORREÇÃO DA QUARTA LISTA DE EXERCÍCIOS DISCURS 1:43:09 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - Aula 40: Correção da 4ª lista de exercícios... 121 visualizações • Transmitido há 2 dias	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR BATE PAPO COM OS PARTICIPANTES SOBRE GRANJAS CUNICULAS 1:39:31 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 39: Bate papo sobre o trabalho de visit... 191 visualizações • Transmitido há 5 dias	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR TÉCNICAS DE VENDA E PÓS VENDA EM CUNICULTURA 1:26:25 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 38: marketing e técnicas de venda e... 147 visualizações • Transmitido há 9 dias	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR TEORIA DO MARKETING E ASPECTOS ESPECÍFICOS DE VENDAS EM CUNICULTURA 1:33:27 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 37: Teoria do marketing e aspectos... 204 visualizações • Transmitido há 12 dias
CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR ENVIO DE COELHOS AO ABATEDOURO 1:37:50 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 36: Envio de coelhos ao abatedouro... 215 visualizações • Transmitido há 2 semanas	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR PLANEJAMENTO E INSTALAÇÃO DE NOVAS GRANJAS CUNICULAS 1:51:02 INÍCIO 28:59 - CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 35:... 298 visualizações • Transmitido há 2 semanas	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR USO DO CHECK LIST E AGENDA PARA AUXÍLIO NA GESTÃO DA GRANJA C... 1:20:50 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 34: Uso de check list e agenda para... 156 visualizações • Transmitido há 3 semanas	CURSO DE FORMAÇÃO INICIAL CUNICULTOR GESTÃO DA GRANJA CUNICULA E FERRAMENTAS 1:42:20 CURSO FIC CUNICULTOR - AULA 33: Gestão da granja cunicula e... 241 visualizações • Transmitido há 3 semanas

Selected Publications

As you well know, **World Rabbit Science** (WRS) is one of the few indexed journals (JIF2024: 1.3; Q3) 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. Rabbit production in Nigeria: some aspects of current status and promotional strategies (10665 views; 5658 downloads) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.1999.380>
2. Vitamins in rabbit nutrition: literature review and recommendations (12057 views; 5011 downloads) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2000.438>
3. Rabbit meat trade of major countries: regional pattern and driving forces (734 views) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2022.13390>

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

1. Pregnancy toxaemia/ketosis in female rabbits (83 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2025.24558>
2. The effect of organic zinc on seminal quality and sperm production in rabbit bucks (71 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2025.23488>
3. Characterization of movement in reproducing does kept in a part-time group housing system with different group size and grouping time (62 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2025.24198>
4. Meta-analysis of association of polymorphisms in growth hormone encoding gene with growth performance traits of rabbits (58 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2025.23454>
5. Pheromones and behaviour of rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*): a review (30 downloads/month) <https://doi.org/10.4995/wrs.2025.22920>

Other publications of interest in the last 6 months:

1. Variations in conventional and non-conventional semen characteristics of selected rabbit breeds. Animal Biotechnology <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495398.2025.2548300>
2. Temporal action localisation in video data containing rabbit behavioural patterns. Scientific Reports <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-89687-6>
3. Epitope mapping of a neutralizing antibody against rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus GI.2. Veterinary Research <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13567-025-01505-z>
4. In Vitro Effects of Lipopolysaccharide on Rabbit Sperm: Toll-like Receptor 4 Expression, Motility, and Oxidative Status. Antioxidants <https://doi.org/10.3390/antiox14040431>
5. Use of mulberry leaf meal in fattening diets for rabbits: a comprehensive approach from animals to consumers. Animal <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.animal.2025.101546>
6. Maternal microbiota in relation to mortality, culling, and offspring survival in rabbits. Journal of Animal Science <https://doi.org/10.1093/jas/skaf432>

International and National Congresses

In the last months, WRSA has news about three events held around the world.

Rabbit Production and Scientific Outreach in Mexico: The Querétaro International Livestock Fair 2025

Last November Queretaro celebrated the Queretaro International Livestock Fair 2025 in Querétaro, Mexico. The fair combines traditional livestock exhibitions with modern entertainment, making it one of the most important cultural and economic events in the state. Visitors can enjoy agricultural and cattle shows, amusement rides, food and commercial pavilions, and a wide range of concerts and live performances at venues such as the Teatro del Pueblo and the Palenque. The event attracts hundreds of thousands of attendees each year and generates significant economic activity for the region.

At this event, as part of the livestock exhibition program, the "Casa Conejo" hall was located, in which various activities related to rabbit production took place, such as live animal exhibitions, product exhibitions, sale of handicrafts, breed competitions, carcass competitions, and conferences with internationally renowned specialists. Among other presentations, the following lectures were delivered: "Trends in Rabbit Research Worldwide", presented by Dr. Yazmín Elizabeth Felipe, from the Autonomous University of Mexico State; "Importance and Characterization of a National Rabbit Breed: Maringá and Botucatu from Brazil", given by Dr. Leandro Castilha, President of the Associação Científica Brasileira de Cunicultura (ACBC) and Vice-president of the WRSA; and "The Importance of the World Rabbit Science Association in Global Cuniculture", presented by Dr. Mariam Pascual, president of the WRSA.

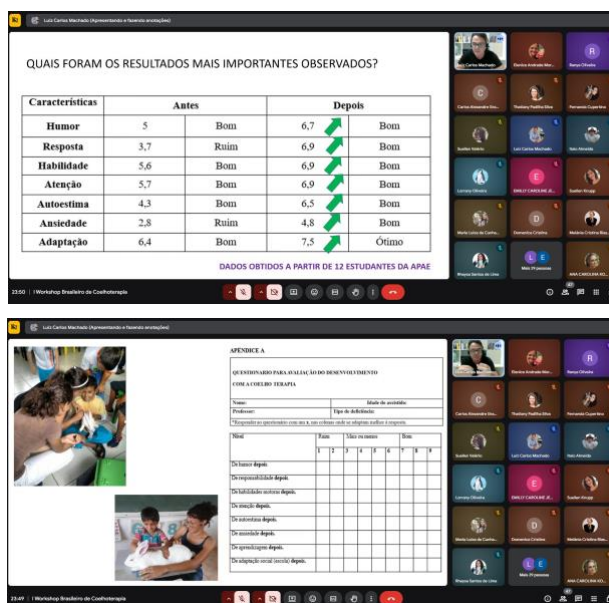
You can find more information at <https://www.feriaqueretaro.com>



1st Brazilian Workshop on Rabbit-Assisted Therapy

The 1st Brazilian Workshop on Rabbit-Assisted Therapy, held on December 1 and 2, 2025, in an online format, was the first national scientific event dedicated exclusively to the discussion of rabbit-assisted interventions and activities in Brazil. The initiative brought together researchers, faculty members, students, and professionals from the fields of health, education, agricultural sciences, animal behavior, and extension services, establishing an interdisciplinary space for the collective construction of knowledge and for strengthening a field that is still emerging in the country.

The event was designed with the purpose of promoting scientific, technical, and ethical dialogue on rabbit-assisted therapy, articulating theoretical foundations, scientific evidence, and practical experiences developed in different institutional contexts. The diversity of the areas involved reflected the inherent complexity of



QUAIS FORAM OS RESULTADOS MAIS IMPORTANTES OBSERVADOS?

Características	Antes		Depois	
Humor	5	Bom	6,7	Bom
Resposta	3,7	Ruim	6,9	Bom
Habilidade	5,6	Bom	6,9	Bom
Atenção	5,7	Bom	6,9	Bom
Autoestima	4,3	Bom	6,5	Bom
Ansiiedade	2,8	Ruim	4,8	Bom
Adaptação	6,4	Bom	7,5	Ótimo

DADOS OBTIDOS A PARTIR DE 12 ESTUDANTES DA APAE

APÊNDICE A

DESENVOLVIMENTO PARA AVALIAÇÃO DE BOM DESENVOLVIMENTO COM A TERAPIA

Nome: _____ Data de avaliação: _____

Professor: _____ Tipo de atividade: _____

Classificação de desempenho com a atividade antes e depois da intervenção:

Nível	Antes	Depois	Notas							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
De interação social										
De comunicação										
De habilidades motoras										
De atenção										
De aprendizagem										
De adaptação social										

animal-assisted interventions, especially when non-conventional species such as rabbits are involved, whose therapeutic use requires specific protocols, rigorous attention to animal welfare, and solid scientific grounding.

The program was structured over two days, with one talk in a roundtable format each day, followed by moments of interaction with the audience, exchange of experiences, and clarification of questions. The sessions were conducted by professionals with recognized academic and practical experience in the field of animal-assisted interventions: Prof. Dr. Paula Gomes Rodrigues – Federal University of Sergipe (UFS); Md. Tiziane Cotta Machado; Prof. Dr. Ana Lúcia Michelotto – Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUC-PR); Dr. Kassy Gomes da Silva – Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUC-PR).

The dialogical format of the meetings enabled the integration of different bodies of knowledge and professional trajectories, strengthening the interdisciplinary approach and fostering the collective construction of knowledge in rabbit-assisted therapy.

In addition to the talks, the workshop included the presentation of scientific papers, culminating in the organization of the Proceedings of the 1st Brazilian Workshop on Rabbit-Assisted Therapy, which compile five abstracts representative of the diversity of approaches discussed during the event.

The studies addressed rabbit-assisted therapy from multiple perspectives, integrating discussions on:

- rabbit welfare and behavior in therapeutic contexts;
- ethical and regulatory aspects of animal use in assisted interventions;
- scientific foundations of AAI (Animal-Assisted Interventions);
- extension and applied experiences in educational, clinical, and community settings.

Despite methodological differences and distinct contexts of application, the studies converged in their commitment to the responsible production of knowledge, grounded in scientific criteria, respect for the animals involved, and sensitivity to the human demands addressed by rabbit-assisted therapeutic practices.

The 1st Brazilian Workshop on Rabbit-Assisted Therapy represented a milestone in the consolidation of rabbit-assisted therapy as an emerging field of study, practice, and extension in Brazil. By systematizing and recording the contributions presented, the Proceedings play a fundamental role in preserving the academic memory of the event and in disseminating initial references for researchers, professionals and students interested.

Thus, the event not only inaugurated a formal space for scientific debate on rabbit-assisted therapy in the country but also laid the foundations for the formation of collaborative networks, encouraging new research, extension actions, and qualified practices that integrate science, ethics, animal welfare, and social commitment. This event was organized through the Extension Project 064985 (UFSM).

Provided by: Frederico Westphalen and Ana Carolina K. Klinger

IX National seminar on science and technology in rabbit farming (SENACITEC 2025)

From August 15th to 17th, 2025, in Aracaju (Sergipe state, Brazil), the IX NATIONAL SEMINAR ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN RABBIT FARMING - SENACITEC 2025 was held, which included presentations of lectures, workshops, scientific papers, literature reviews, case reports, cultural presentations, a workshop with rabbit meat, and a great sharing of information about rabbit farming.

The event had a high point of emotion with the awarding of the Laura de Sanctis Prize to two icons of Brazilian rabbit farming: Prof. Geni Salete Pinto de Toledo (UFSM) and Prof. Ronaldo Vasconcelos Farias Filho (UESB), both with a life dedicated to teaching, researching and extension in rabbit farming.

On the occasion of the event, the Organizing Committee of the XIV WORLD RABBIT CONGRESS was symbolically formed, to be held for the first time in Brazil in 2028.

In addition to promoting Science in Rabbit Farming, SENACITEC 2025 was the stage for the Inauguration of the New Board of Directors of the Brazilian Scientific Association of Rabbit Farming - ACBC, which was elected in July of 2025, under the presidency of Prof. Paula Gomes Rodrigues, professor at the Federal University of Sergipe and coordinator of Senacitec 2025.

ACBC congratulates the entire Organizing Committee for the excellent event held and thanks all supporters, sponsors, speakers and participants. Rabbit farming depends on everyone and together we are always stronger!



UPCOMING 2026 CONGRESSES:

ASESCU celebrates half a century of rabbit science in Valencia

The Spanish Association of Cuniculture (ASESCU) celebrates its 50th anniversary with a symposium in Valencia.

Organized by both ASESCU and the Institute of Animal Science and Technology (ICTA) at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV), the event will take place at the School of Agricultural Engineering and Environment of UPV from 3rd to 4th June 2026.

Valencia has been chosen as the venue because of its strong connection with ASESCU: several board members were born in or trained in Valencia. ICTA is known for its extensive research activity in rabbit production. Furthermore, Valencia is a popular tourist destination, famous for its traditional dish, paella, which originated there and includes rabbit.

You can find more information about the event at <https://asescu.com/symposiumvlc2026/>



VIII American Rabbit Congress - Argentina 2026

The Argentine Network of Rabbit Farming (RAC) is pleased to invite you to participate in the VIII American Congress of Rabbit Farming, organized by the RAC, endorsed by the World Rabbit Science Association (WRSA) and its American Branch (AB WRSA), as well as the Intertropical Society of Rabbit Farming (SIC).

Previous congresses have been successfully held in Mexico (1998, 2014), Cuba (2022), Brazil (2006, 2018), and Argentina (2010). These events have featured distinguished researchers and experts in rabbit farming, presenting works on genetics, nutrition, meat quality, health, and the economic, environmental, and social aspects of the industry. Participants include researchers, students, producers, and industry-related companies.

The AB WRSA has selected Argentina to host the VIII American Congress of Rabbit Farming in 2026. Additionally, during the recent World Rabbit Farming Congress in Tarragona, Spain, in October 2024, Brazil was proposed to host the next World Congress in 2028.

Recognizing the significant effort required to organize an international congress, we have formed a strategic alliance with the Argentine Association of Animal Production (AAPA), which organizes the annual Argentine Congress of Animal Production. Together, we will enhance the impact of both events by co-hosting the 49th Argentine Congress of Animal Production alongside the VIII American Congress of Rabbit Farming in Esquel, Province of Chubut, Argentine Patagonia.

We are currently working diligently on preparing materials for abstract submissions, establishing an evaluation committee, and finalizing the schedule, which we know is of great interest to you. We invite you to follow us on Instagram @rac_arg or email us at redargentinadecunicultura@gmail.com to be added to our contact list and receive updates regarding the VIII American Congress of Rabbit Farming, Argentina 2026.

We look forward to welcoming you to Argentine Patagonia in 2026!

M. Sc. Lic Gaby Quagliariello. General Coordinator of the VIII American Congress of Rabbit Farming for the Argentine Network of Rabbit Farming. AB WRSA Vice Pte for Argentina. General Coordinator of SIC.



RABBINOUT: no cage system for rabbits

On 23 January, at the Corte Benedettina, Campus of Agripolis (Legnaro, Padua), the final conference of the RABBINOUT project (PRIN 2022) entitled “No cage system for rabbits: indoor and outdoor scenarios” was held. The meeting aimed to present the main scientific results of the project, which addresses the transition from conventional cages to alternative rabbit housing systems in both indoor and outdoor conditions, in line with the European Citizens’ Initiative “End of the Cage Age”. The project adopted a One Welfare approach, allowing an integrated evaluation of animal welfare, environmental sustainability and socio-economic implications of alternative production systems.

The conference opened with institutional greetings from Prof. Gianni Barcaccia, Director of the DAFNAE Department of the University of Padua, and Prof. Enrico Sturaro, Deputy Director of the same Department, who highlighted the importance of research in supporting innovation and the transition toward more sustainable livestock systems.

Prof. Cesare Castellini (University of Perugia) then presented the objectives and main topics of the RABBINOUT project, outlining the scientific approach adopted to study rabbit production in alternative housing systems. Prof. Angela Trocino (University of Padua) followed with a presentation on the evolution of housing systems, framing the transition from conventional cages to alternative solutions within the current European context. Prof. Gerolamo Xiccato presented the results of trials on does reared in indoor alternative systems, while Dr.

Matteo Molin illustrated the outcomes of growth trials in indoor systems, focusing on productive performance under different housing conditions.



In the second part of the morning, Prof. Lucia Rocchi presented a multicriteria evaluation aimed at comparing different rabbit production systems by integrating animal welfare, environmental sustainability and management aspects. Prof. Patrizia Casagrande then discussed the expression of IL-6, TNF- α and IL-1 β in different rabbit genotypes reared in indoor and outdoor systems, providing insights into the physiological responses of animals under different housing conditions. Dr. Luigia Bosa presented outdoor experimental trials on free-range systems for rabbits, focusing on feeding strategies, behavioural observations and the testing of innovative outdoor management solutions.



At the end of the presentations, a general discussion was held on the feasibility of alternative housing systems, the definition of measurable welfare and sustainability indicators, and the practical implications for the future development of the rabbit sector.



In memory of Professor Alessandro Finzi

Last December, Professor Alessandro Finzi passed away. Here is a letter from the Associazione Scientifica Italiana Di Coniglicoltura (ASIC) in his honour:

Dear colleagues, It is with great sadness that we join the family and colleagues of University of Tuscia (Viterbo, Italy) in mourning the passing of our dear Prof. Alessandro Finzi, a distinguished member of our WRSA since 2011 and a highly esteemed colleague.

Professor Finzi dedicated his studies and research to the development of alternative rabbit farming, which has proven useful and sustainable in Italy and abroad, with personal passion and spirit. He graduated in Veterinary Medicine (1956) from the University of Pisa. He was a Full Professor of Special Animal Husbandry (1976-1986). He was Director of the Institute of Animal Husbandry - University of Palermo (1976-1980). Director of the Institute of Animal Husbandry (later the Department of Animal Production) of the University of Tuscia (1980-2006). He was a Full Professor of Rabbit Husbandry in 1987. He was President of the Italian Association of Rabbit Science (ASIC) (1982-1984) and the WRSA (1984-1988). He has served several terms on the Boards of Directors of ASIC (WRSA Italian Branch) and WRSA. He has conducted teaching and research in numerous countries in Africa and the Americas. He has served as a consultant to the FAO and various cooperation organizations, as well as to the Ministries of Agriculture of Argentina and Mexico. In 1988, he founded the Experimental Center for Alternative Rabbit Breeding at the University of Tuscia, where he developed the entire supply chain, with its own genetics (the Viterbo Leprino), unique structures, management, drug-free health monitoring, and complete supply chain traceability that allows tracing the producer and intervention in the event of concerns at slaughter or marketing. He remained active and present in the sector and constantly present at ASIC events even after his retirement.



You can find the publications of prof. Finzi at this page <https://www.bibliofiliacunicola.es/finzi>, set by Prof. Pedro Gonzalez Redondo.

Best regards and wishing you a great year 2026

Mariam Pascual
President of WRSA

Caldes de Montbui (Spain), January 31, 2026

Edited by: Juan José Pascual (UPV, Spain)