



 Congress for Wildlife and Livelihoods on Private and Communal Lands: Livestock, Tourism and Spirit  
 SEPTEMBER 7 - 19, 2014 • YMCA OF THE ROCKIES • ESTES PARK, COLORADO

## THE GAME MEAT SCHEME IN SOUTH AFRICA


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 WILDLIFE RANCHING SOUTH AFRICA

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool
- Producing leather



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool
- Producing leather
- Producing milk



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool
- Producing leather
- Producing milk
- Producing velvet



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool
- Producing leather
- Producing milk
- Producing velvet
- Vicuña wool



### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

- Producing meat
- Producing wool
- Producing leather
- Producing milk
- Producing velvet
- Vicuña wool
- Producing rhino horn

**THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE...**



### SOUTH AFRICA: THEN AND NOW...

- By the middle of the 20th century, some game species were extinct in SA, and dwindling numbers of game animals (2050) could be found on a mere few game farms
- Today, the wildlife industry encompasses approximately 12,000 private landowners and an estimated 16 million to 20 million game animals!
- Kenya, who banned all hunting in 1977, has since lost 60-70% of its wildlife population. In contrast, South Africa's wildlife population continues to increase, and thrive as a result of wildlife having a sustainable economic value (Reilly, 2013)
- **WRSA, being the official mouthpiece for game ranchers in SA has a voluntary obligation to promote food security in Africa**

### Game Animals reflect the spirit of their owners...

The proof lies in the SA 2013 live animal sales that exceeded 100 million U.S. dollars, and represents the highest official sales in the South African nation's history! (Reilly, 2013)

Humans failed wildlife many times, however, wildlife has never failed humans! (Oberem, 2014)

### Global demand for meat

- It is estimated that global livestock production will have to double by 2050 to satisfy demands, which suggests a faster expected growth than any other agricultural sector (Webb, 2013)
- SA currently exports 2000 tonnes of game meat to the EU, but the demand is estimated to be in the excess of 200 000 tonnes (SA Exporters, 2014)
- Retail prices of game meat in Europe per kilogram tend to be 10 times greater than those in SA

### South Africa's meat demand

- SA imports more than 48% of its total annual red meat demand (SAMIC, 2012)
- More than 20% of fresh meat consumed in SA during the hunting season is game meat (SAMIC, 2012)
- Unpublished figures of 41% of animal protein used in the food industry is from game meat (van der Merwe, 2013)
- Currently, 90% of game meat in the SA market is not legally produced and not traceable (EH report, 2013)

### Game meat: the South African status quo

- The wildlife industry still faces strong resistance from outdated, conventional attitudes to game meat production and consumption which still heavily influence current regulations and consumer attitudes, and continue to stifle its full potential.
- However, the signs of shifting awareness relating to dietary health, and increasing recognition of holistic landscape management practices for optimal ecosystem function bode very well for the future († Sas-Rolfes, 2014)

### Game meat: the South African status quo

- It is worth examining to what extent game meat needs to be controlled by Government and to what extent certification standards and self-regulation could play a role in food security and provide an income to improve local livelihoods
- Meat demand will ensure breeding to serve the demand
- A counter of social conflict. Direct link between wildlife decline and social conflict such as human exploitation, poverty and illicit wildlife trades (rhino horn and ivory) (Brashares *et al.*, 2014)



### Background on the Game Meat Scheme

- Standards and regulations applying to abattoirs for conventional livestock were used to draft the Game Meat Regulations in 2004. These were shown to be overregulating, impractical on game farms and limit the potential of game meat production for local markets.
- Wildlife Ranching SA proactively started a process in 2006 with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to negotiate a Game Meat Scheme that would practically and cost-effectively guide game meat production in SA.
- As early as 2006, the role-players in the process concurred on the significant growing potential of game meat.

### Background on the Game Meat Scheme

- The intention of the Game Meat Scheme was to assist smaller ranchers to bypass the onerous conditions of the Meat Safety Act 40 of 2000 and the draft Game Meat Regulations.
- Despite the written promise in 2013 from SA Government, to gazette and implement the scheme (following some 10 years of groundwork and negotiations) the process has now been derailed.
- Instead of implementing the scheme, the SA Government has unexpectedly decided rather to revise the draft regulations.
- This new process could take another 8-10 years to finalize and to come to legal implementation.
- The result: 90% of game meat on the local market is without legal guidelines and control!

### Background on the Game Meat Scheme

- This failure to deliver / delay / incompetence / expensive exercise in futility, is unfortunate in an exploding market that is increasingly clamouring for fresh, good-quality sources of local game meat.
- WRSA was compelled to rethink its strategy, and unanimously decided to develop an industry standard to produce and guide safe, quality game meat to the local meat market.

### WRSA - branding of game meat

- The WRSA Standard is built on international standards, i.e. ISO 22000 and the EU Standards for Export (VPN's) to ensure an international level of compliance
- Among other things, the WRSA Standard aims to: place the ownership and profitability of game meat back into the hands of the game rancher
- The Standard will promote bona fide pride to strengthen production of plains game
- The Standard will ultimately address food security, not only in SA, but expand into Africa

## Objectives of the WRSA Standard

- Compliant with International Standards for quality and safety
- Ensure safe meat of a high quality
- Guiding the process of harvesting on the ranch
- Game meat inspection
- Registered facilities for all slaughter processes
- Training requirements
- Traceability
- Independent auditing process

## WRSA's Code of Conduct

Game ranchers (members of WRSA) adhere to a "Code of Conduct" and pledge to prioritize safe game meat by following these principles:

- To adhere to all relevant meat legislation
- To adhere to WRSA's Standard for game meat
- To prioritize meat safety from farm to fork
- To refrain from misleading and misrepresentation of labelled game meat and game meat products and to strictly follow the Labelling Guidelines of WRSA

## WRSA STANDARD

### HAS



- Slaughtering facilities
- Hygiene checklist for hygiene audit

### Traceability



- Product identification to ranch / species comply with Labelling Reg. 146

### Training



- Game meat examiner for meat inspection
- Ranch registration- WRSA to pre-screen game farms
- Basic meat hygiene course for all slaughter staff

## WRSA STANDARD

### Hygiene Assessment System (HAS)

- Hygiene checklist based on WRSA Standard
- Three level training
- Daily hygiene record-keeping
- Compliance audits from independent body, annually renewable, and full audit every 3 years
- Database for research and marketing

## Game Meat Examiner's Training



Photos: © Van der Merwe, 2010

## Meat Inspection on Blue Wildebeest



Photo: © Van der Merwe, 2010

## Traceability



Photos: © Bergh, 2009

- Disease control
- Legal requirement
- WRSA Standard
- Recall

## Health attributes of game meat

- More protein than other meats (34% vs 22% p/g)
- No steroids / growth hormones / antibiotics
- Iron 33% Zink 32%
- High in Selenium, Vitamin B3+B6 and phosphor
- Lower fat and lower cholesterol than other meats (4.3% vs 25-39%)
- High in Omega 3, that fights inflammation, and low in Omega 6 that activates inflammation.
- Enhance weight loss (calories needed to digest > calorie content of game meat) in line with the Paleo diet & lifestyle movement.

**TO EAT GAME MEAT IS AN  
EXPERIENCE, TO PREPARE IT  
IS AN ADVENTURE!**

**ARE YOU HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY?**

**IT IS YOUR CHOICE ...  
BECAUSE YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!**

**BON APPETIT!**



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