The Rwanda Senate has summoned Prime Minister Dr. Justin Nsengiyumva to explain government plans to address ongoing challenges in the livestock sector, as farmers grapple with soaring feed prices, limited veterinary services, and inadequate insurance coverage.

The request followed a review of a report compiled after senators visited districts across the country to assess livestock development. The report revealed multiple obstacles affecting farmers, including delays in delivering cattle semen due to a shortage of nitrogen for storage and transport. In some remote areas of Rusizi and Nyamasheke, drones used to deliver pig semen have failed to reach farmers.

Senators raised concerns about poor adherence to grazing regulations, with livestock still observed grazing on hillsides, and the lack of clear pricing rules for veterinary drugs. Current livestock insurance only covers animal deaths, leaving farmers to bear treatment costs.

Infrastructure also emerged as a challenge. Poor feeder roads make it difficult for farmers to transport livestock and feed to markets. High feed costs were attributed to low maize and input production, compounded by insufficient quality control in processing factories.

Lawmakers emphasized that small-scale livestock farming could play a critical role in food security and income generation. Senator Jean Pierre Dusingizemungu highlighted the potential of rabbit farming, which can produce high-quality meat without specialized feed. Senator Cyprien Niyomugabo urged broader support for small livestock, noting that cultural perceptions sometimes undervalue smaller animals despite their nutritional benefits.

Senators called for stronger regulation of veterinary medicines and more equitable distribution of laboratory services, noting that some provinces lack facilities, leading to delayed test results and potentially harmful treatments.

“This is about ensuring farmers can thrive, livestock can be properly cared for, and Rwanda’s growing livestock sector can meet both domestic and regional demand,” said Senator Marie Rose Mureshyankwano, highlighting the need for independent oversight in livestock insurance disputes.

The Senate will continue to push the government to implement policies that address

these structural gaps and promote a more professional, sustainable livestock sector across Rwanda.