

How to control HPAIV in Poultry? Exploring Vaccine Acceptance of Poultry Farmers as a Key Element in the One Health context

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Zoonotic highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses (HPAIV) are endemic in Europe and a threat to poultry but also mammalian health. Control strategies relied on culling of infected birds. The Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 enables now the European Union member states to decide for vaccination. However, the impact of a vaccination campaign depends on the successful implementation at farm level.

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study investigated HPAIV-vaccination acceptance of poultry farmers (PF). A Knowledge, Attitude and Practice online survey was conducted (n=98; 27 with outbreak experience) and revealed knowledge gaps and feasibility concerns: over 50% of PF were unaware of key requirements going along with HPAIV-vaccination, and less than half considered them feasible. While 75% supported emergency and 41% preventive vaccination, acceptance increased with outbreak experience.

Narrative interviews allowed a deeper insight into the structural barriers, including gaps in knowledge transfer, mismatches between regulation and farm realities, and tensions in trust toward authorities. The farmer's acceptance of a vaccination approach was conceptualized as a socially embedded decision process framework. Integration of the PF perspectives in the decision-making process is critical for vaccination acceptance, which subsequently allows reduction in HPAIV field pressure by reduced shedding rates of vaccinated birds and transmission dynamics within the One Health context.

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Professional status of the speaker

PhD student

Junior scientist status

Yes, I am a junior scientist.

Registration ID

INF26-12

Authors: HEYNEN, Sarah (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Clinic for Poultry); Mr MÜNKEL, Andreas (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Clinic for Poultry); Mr WINKELMANN, Tristan (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Institute of Biometry, Epidemiology and Information Processing); Mrs SCHNEIDER, Bettina (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Institute of Biometry, Epidemiology and Information Processing); Dr CAMPE, Amely (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Institute of Biometry, Epidemiology and Information Processing); Prof. RAUTENSCHLEIN, Silke (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Clinic for Poultry)

Presenter: HEYNEN, Sarah (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover, Clinic for Poultry)

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