

Alone or a combination: ascertaining factors associated with choice of pig health management strategies amongst smallholder farmers in northern Uganda. Undergoing corrections – Preventive Veterinary Medicine.

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Abstract

Pig production is an important farm enterprise for an increasing number of smallholder farmers due to its potential for improving household incomes. The sector is however faced with high burden of health issues that limit most farmers from realizing the benefits. In order to improve management of pig health for smallholder farmers, an understanding of the major health issues and factors associated with farmers' choice of the pig health management strategies are paramount. Using a cross-sectional survey of 240 smallholder pig farmers in northern Uganda, this study assessed the factors associated with the use of different pig health management practices adopted by smallholder pig farmers. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and two different regression models. Binary Probit Regression model was used to assess factors associated with the use of a single pig health management strategy, while, Generalized Poisson Regression model was used to assess the factors associated with the number of pig health management strategies used by the farmers. Results showed that the common health issues were African Swine Fever, lice, worms and mange, while the common strategies for health management involved self-administering antibiotics, consulting veterinarians, deworming, spraying with acaricides, selling the sick pigs, treatment with local herbs, and burying dead pigs. These pig health management strategies were influenced by farmers location, experience, age, access to extension, use of information and communication technologies, and use of processed feeds. This study recommends improving farmers' access to relevant information and expanding veterinary extension services by promoting the use of radio and mobile phones in pig health management.

Keywords: Health management strategies; Pigs; Smallholders; Uganda.

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