

Media Usage by Poultry Farmers in the Control of Avian Influenza in Lagos State, Nigeria

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KEYWORDS Avian Influenza (Bird Flu). Media Usage

ABSTRACT Lagos State, Nigeria, witnessed the outbreak of Avian Influenza in March 2006. The state is the commercial nerve centre of the country. The disease affected nine of the 20 Local Government Areas in the State with consequent devastating losses to poultry farmers. The State Government responded by launching a media campaign to combat the spread of the disease. This study was carried out to ascertain how poultry farmers utilized the media in obtaining information for the control of the disease. It specifically found out the media preference and reliance of the poultry farmers for information. Systematic random sampling was used to select 200 poultry farmers. The study found that majority (82.4%) of the farmers relied on the media for information. It also found that poultry farmers prefer traditional mass media for information. Of these, radio was the most preferred medium by the poultry farmers, which was followed by television. These findings showed among others the primacy of the media in educating the farmers and as a reliable institution in the control of the disease. It is hereby recommended that Lagos State should continuously employ radio, television, newspapers, magazines and interpersonal communication as partners in progress in mobilising the poultry farmers/public in eradicating the disease or any other that can affect the well-being of the public.