Prevention of Zoonotic diseases: Knowledge, attitude and practices of arable crop farmers in Osun state

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Humans can be exposed to pathogens from poorly managed animal feces. There has been a lot of emphasis on the knowledge of livestock farmers about zoonosis but paucity of information on crop farmers’ knowledge on this subject in South-West, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire which consisted of 28 items to evaluate knowledge, attitude and prevention practices of fifty-one arable crop farmers as related to zoonotic diseases was administered through the use of google form. The link to the form was posted on whatsapp and telegram to four farmers’ groups located in Osun state. Sixty-five (65%) of the farmers were male, with the least educated having a high school education. Swine, cattle, goat, poultry manure were used by the farmers with Poultry manure was the predominantly used manure by farmers, followed by cattle, rabbits, goat and swine manure respectively. Higher educational status was significantly associated with both knowledge of zoonotic diseases among the farmers. More than two thirds (88%) of farmers were aware that diseases could be transmitted through manure. About 65% of the farmers were about to identify correctly at least a symptom of zoonotic disease related to manure transmission. Despite this, for practices, 37% farmers reported the use of gloves when handling manure, 27% used face mask while 60% wear boots. The higher percentage wearing boot did so to protect them from injury not specifically for prevention. Most of the farmers (88%) used the manure fresh as fertilizer and broadcast method was the preferred method of application. Respondents have no knowledge of the health status of animals that they get the manure from except for those that use manure from their own livestock. The use of digital technology among arable farmers was found to be fast, cheap and easy. On the other hand, it was skewed towards the educated farmers as the less educated farmers did not fill the form. This method of information dissemination was only useful for educated farmers, therefore there is the need to investigate digital technology that can capture uneducated farmers who made up an appreciable percentage of arable farmers in Osun state.