

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING MORTALITY AMONGST BACKYARD POULTRY IN YUCATAN, MEXICO

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As in many rural communities throughout the world, backyard poultry are an important source of protein for many *campesino* families in Yucatan. These animals utilise harvest and household waste and scavenge for their feed, forming an integral part of the diverse strategies which such families adopt to protect their livelihoods. They also represent an activity that falls entirely within the domain of women. High mortality has been identified as a major constraint to productivity, yet interventions for specific diseases such as fowl pox have proven disappointing both in efficacy and acceptability.

An alternative approach is to identify management changes which can be expected to enhance poultry health generally and thus reduce overall mortality. Before these practices are promoted at a wider level, their potential impact must be estimated.

This paper presents the estimated benefit : cost ratios for specified interventions and discusses the limitations for putting them into practice.

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