

Reports turns spotlight on animal influenza



A new report has been published which provides an overview of research conducted across the major fields of animal influenza in the last six years.

[STAR-IDAZ IRC](#), a global initiative focused on coordinating international research programs related to animal health, particularly infectious animal diseases including zoonoses, commissioned [an influenza research review report](#) in collaboration with United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS).

CABI runs the STAR-IDAZ IRC secretariat, alongside the UK [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#) (DEFRA), [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI), the [World Organisation for Animal Health](#) (WOAH) and [Kreavet](#).

High priority research

Research on influenza is a high priority research topic for the STAR-IDAZ IRC, which aims to speed up the delivery of improved control methods for animal influenza outbreaks. Influenza outbreaks are currently having a major impact at global level, causing major economic losses in the poultry sector of affected countries.

The report aims to provide an overview of the research conducted across the major fields of animal influenza in the last six years. The research findings fed a gap analysis workshop held on 14-15 June 2022 at NADC in Iowa.

The key objective of the three workshops, held online from 30 January to 1 February 2023, were to develop research roadmaps for control strategies, diagnostics, and vaccine development for influenza. The report in the latest influenza workshops is

now available ([Report of the STAR-IDAZ workshops on influenza research roadmaps development](#)).

The workshops included over 40 international experts who used generic [STAR-IDAZ research roadmaps](#) to draft influenza research roadmaps for epidemiology and disease control strategies, diagnostic tests, and candidate vaccines.

The research roadmaps provide a way of visualizing complex problems and breaking them down into manageable components.

The steps in the roadmaps were completed with a body of scientific knowledge outlined by research questions, scientific and technological challenges/knowledge gaps, possible solution routes, dependencies, and existing knowledge including success and failures.

Roadmaps presented

At the end of each session, the moderators presented the roadmaps, and the participants provided additional inputs. A prioritization of the research needs was conducted using interactive brainstorming tools.

Among the several research needs raised, the development of DIVA vaccines associated with adequate diagnostic tests and surveillance systems, design of vaccination strategies that fit species, age, and production type.

Also of concern are the varied stages of an outbreak, and the need for multi-stakeholder co-creation solutions and control strategies focusing on socio-economic acceptability and feasibility of the solutions were highlighted.

In addition, the need to develop multivalent vaccines and safe and immunogenic adjuvants was stressed. The cost-benefit of mucosal vaccination and the maternal antibody role should be better investigated.

Moreover, the role of environmental, ecological, animal, and human variables in virus transmission patterns should be better explored.

International research coordination

The research roadmaps, after validation by the [STAR-IDAZ Scientific Committee](#), will be published on the [STAR-IDAZ website](#). The main objective of the roadmaps is to support international research coordination and cooperation on influenza, in line with the STAR-IDAZ strategy.

[Gregorio Torres](#), Head of the Science Department at WOA, said, "It is important that the scientific community share knowledge on animal influenza and have a common vision on current research needs.

"STAR-IDAZ's participative approach, defining research roadmaps together with influenza's global leading experts, will surely have an impact on future research achievements that can help control influenza outbreaks."

The secretariat for STAR-IDAZ would like to thank everyone who participated in the Influenza roadmap development workshops.

Additional information

Main image: Research on influenza is a high priority research topic for the STAR-IDAZ IRC, which aims to speed up the delivery of improved control methods for animal influenza outbreaks (Credit: Pixabay).

STAR-IDAZ IRC report

You can read the STAR-IDAZ IRC '[Report of the STAR-IDAZ workshops on influenza research roadmaps development: on-line workshops 30,31 January and 1 February 2023.](#)'

STAR-IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC)

The overall objective of the STAR-IDAZ IRC is to coordinate research at the international level to contribute to new and improved animal health strategies for at least 30 priority diseases/infections/issues.

Find out more by visiting: <https://www.star-idaz.net/organisation/>