

Information Needs of Fish Farmers in Osun-State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT This study investigated information needs among fish farmers in Ife Central Local Government area of Osun State, South West Nigeria. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 80 of the 160 fish farmers registered by the Zonal Office of Osun State Agriculture Development Project. A self-developed questionnaire segmented into sections was used to elicit information covering respondents' background, information sources, their credibility and usefulness as well as information needs. The findings revealed that sixty-five percent were males while thirty-five percent were females. The majority (65%) was married and fell within active years (30 years) and had primary education. Catfish was mostly farmed (40%) followed by Tilapia (23%) and Heterobranchus (20%). Monoculture was predominant (42.5%) and locally formulated feed was used by the majority (34%). Homestead concrete (30%) and earthen pond (30%) were commonly used among respondents. The majority of respondents (76.3%) were new entrants. Information needs of respondents covered both technical and economic areas. The greatest information needs of fish farmers was on the construction of the modern pond at 73.8 percent, feed formulation techniques at 71.3 percent, feeding operation at 66.3 percent, method of improving fingerling breeds and stocking operation at 62.5 percent and 61.3 percent respectively. It can be concluded that the most useful information means and sources are through mobile phones, radio, professional colleagues, religious organizations and the internet. The study recommends that Agricultural extension should identify information needs of fish farmers as well as prominent sources of information so that they can be targeted properly for extension activities.