FarmVetCare app: A digital approach to improving disease reporting and surveillance for livestock farmers and authorities

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Introduction

The livestock sector is vital to Vietnam's rural livelihoods, food security, and agricultural productivity. Livestock farmers, however, face persistent animal health challenges, including recurrent disease outbreaks, limited access to veterinary services, and weak surveillance systems, which are exacerbated by delayed information flows that hinder outbreak response. To address these gaps, a mobile application is essential to engage livestock farmers, veterinarians and authorities in participatory-based surveillance, including reporting symptoms, early warnings and scheduled vaccinations, maintaining health records, and accessing professional guidance for improved farm and animal health management.

Materials and Methods

FarmVetCare is a mobile application which has been developed and implemented in Lao Cai and Phu Tho provinces under the ICT4Health project. *FarmVetCare* included one app for farmers, one app for veterinarians, and one website to manage app information. It serves as a digital platform for farmers to exchange information, report on animal health situations, keep farming records and rapid access to professional consultation. Through the app interface, farmers are offered free support and advice about disease diagnostic, treatment, disease notification, livestock care… from the local veterinarians and automatically Artificial Intelligence responses.

Results

To date, under pilot stage between Sep 2025 and Apr 2026, over 1,000 users, including 969 farmers and 36 local veterinarians, were installed and trained about the app.

Participating farmers actively use the app to report and seek support about clinical signs of suspected cases, as well as record their animal numbers. During follow-up surveillance, 10 reported cases from pig farms in Phu Tho and Lao Cai provinces were tested and positive with ASFV; two cases from chicken farms in Phu Tho provinces were positive with avian influenza type A/H5 virus, and two cases from pig farms in Phu Tho were positive with both CSFV and PRRSV.

From the reported and tested cases, farmers have received timely advice and consultations of local authorities to response and control the disease at early stage. Diverse information about livestock breeds, market price, vaccination and disease prevention, animal husbandry techniques, disease situation around their areas have been asked, exchanged and addressed through the app.

With the support from local authorities and veterinarians in the two studied provinces, the project will expand number of users to 10,000 livestock farmers in the 2ndhalf of 2026 to facilitate better digital application and effectiveness in livestock management, disease surveillance, prevention and control.

Conclusions

By enabling direct interaction and participation among farmers, veterinary staff and authorities, the app strengthens information flow, early reporting of animal health issues, and responses to disease threats. Given its low cost, ease of implementation, the FarmVetCare app shows a strong potential for better disease surveillance system and is well positioned for scaling to larger number of livestock farmers and areas.

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