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## Preference traits of farmers for indigenous local chicken breeds in southern Benin

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### Abstract

A diversity of ecotypes characterises local chickens in Benin. However, the characteristics of these ecotypes have been poorly documented, yet this information is essential for better valorisation and sustainable conservation of these local avian resources. This study aims to identify local chicken ecotypes' distinctive traits and farmers' preferences for their attributes. The snowball sampling method allowed the sampling of one hundred twenty local chicken farmers keeping one of the four local chicken ecotypes Fulani, Holli, Sahouè, and Koklo yaya. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data on the production system used by farmers and their preferred traits for the ecotype of chickens reared. Farmers were asked to give scores ranging from 1 (most important) to 5 (less important) for each preferred trait, and the preference index (PI) was calculated. According to the farmers, the main distinctive characteristics of the local chicken ecotypes were the size, the format, the growth, and the quality of the eggs. The Fulani ecotype had large size (17.3 %) with big eggs (12.7 %). Holli and Sahouè ecotype had a medium size (10,9 % and 16,5 %) with small egg in Holli. However, the Koklo yaya was of small size (9,1 %). The preference index revealed that the ecotypes Holli and Sahouè were preferred for the high egg-laying rate (PI. 0.95 and 0.73) and the disease resistance capacity (PI. 0.69 and 0.52). Koklo yaya was preferred for its easy handling (3.33) and disease resistance (2.33) traits. Complementary studies could evaluate the comparative disease resistance capacity of the different ecotypes of local chickens in Benin.

**Keywords:** Fulani, Holli, Koklo yaya, poultry, Sahouè