Factors influencing On-Farm-Biosecurity measures: steps towards On-Farm-Biosecurity management
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In veterinary science it is a basic assumption that farms with high level of biosecurity contribute less to the spread of contagious animal diseases and to zoonotic pathogen load in the food chain. Within the last decade the terms ‘Biosecurity’ and ‘On-Farm-Biosecurity’ became more and more popular. On-Farm-Biosecurity is regarded as an essential part of concepts like compartmentalization or food defense and it is explicitly named in the third pillar of the EU animal health strategy. In contrast, there is not yet a commonly accepted definition of the term On-Farm-Biosecurity for science, veterinary administration and farming practice. And most concepts of On-Farm-Biosecurity miss soft factors like compliance, feasibility, necessity of special skills and necessity of coordination. As part of a general trend towards evidence based policy and towards private food safety management systems livestock policy makers, researchers and private actors of the food chain need concepts to assess and evaluate On-Farm-Biosecurity measures. Hence, our study had two research aim: First, to find a definition of the term On-Farm-Biosecurity and second to elaborate on factors that mainly influence the applicability and feasibility of On-Farm-Biosecurity measures. Within the framework of the cross-border research project SAFEGUARD we conducted desk research, expert elicitation and on-farm surveys on that topic. The main outcome of our study is a proposal for a definition of On-Farm-Biosecurity that can be used by scientists, veterinary authorities and private actors within the food chain and a model explaining the main factors influencing On-Farm-Biosecurity measures. As an outlook, our results might be a first step towards a strategy of On-Farm-Biosecurity management.