

# Animal health security and organic farming – a UK perspective

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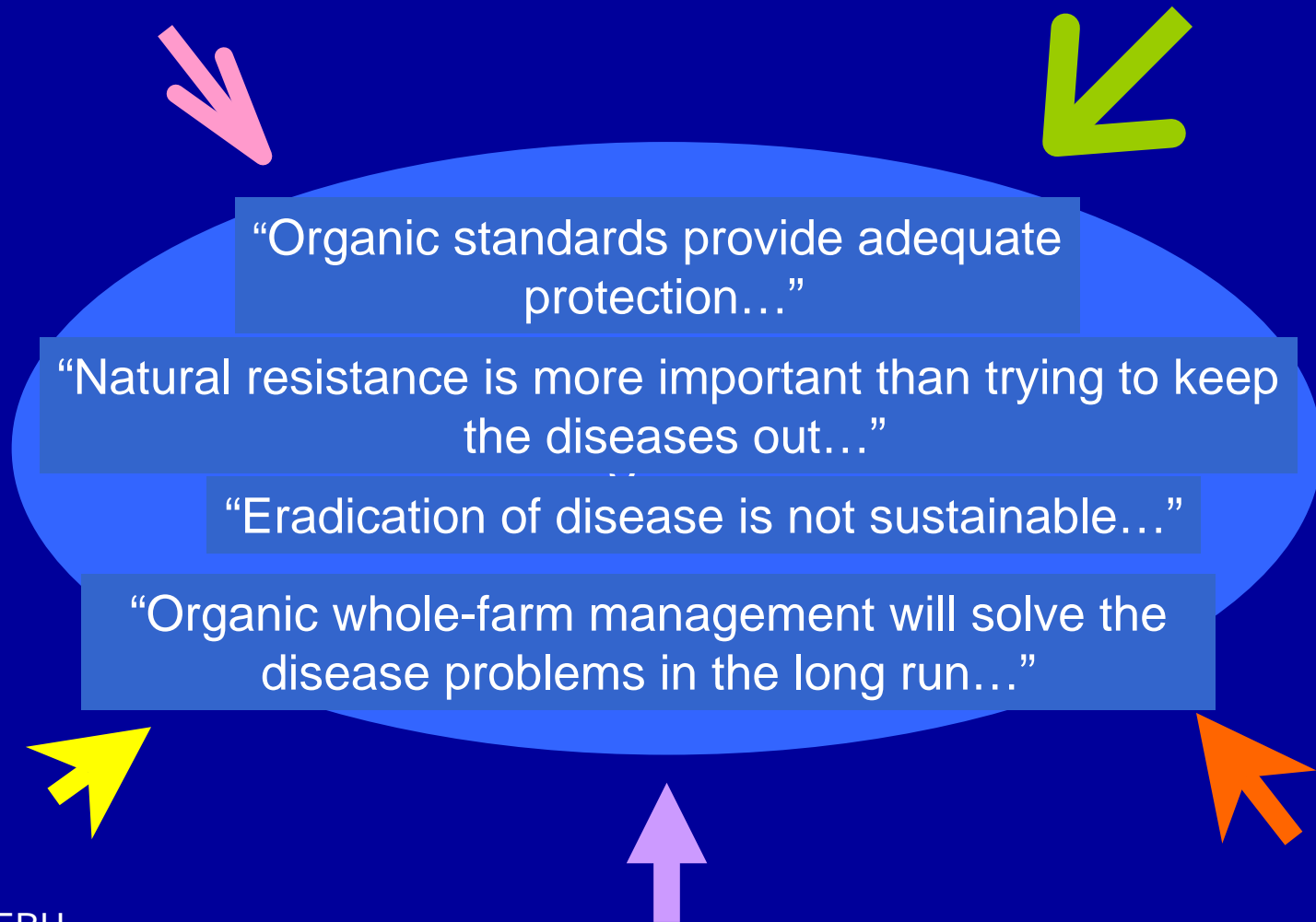
# Animal health security - biosecurity

‘Management systems that reduce the risk of introducing infectious diseases to the farm’

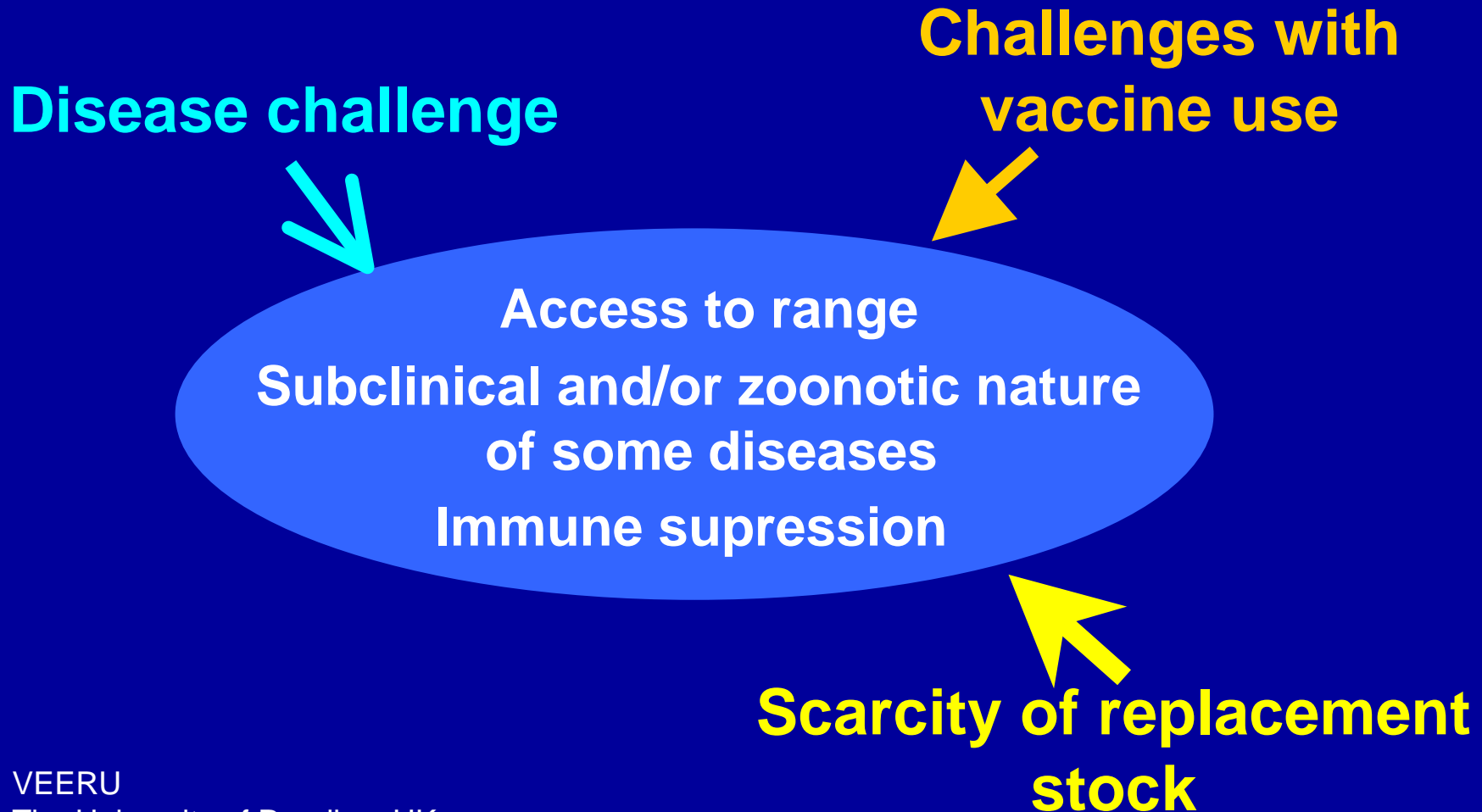
‘Management systems that reduce the risk of introduction or accumulation of infectious agents to/on the farm’



# Is animal health security an issue on organic farms?



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# The level of challenge varies: cattle

Country	Br. abortus	Bovine TB	IBR	Para TB	BVD	Enteric salmonella
UK	(+)	++	+++	+++	+++	+++
NL	-	(+)	+++	+++	+++	+++
France	++	(+)	+++	+++	+++	+++
Germany	-	(+)	++	++	++	++
Spain	+	+	+++	+++	+++	(+)
Greece	+	(+)	+	+	+++	-
Austria	(+)	(+)	(+)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Finland	-	-	-	+	+	(+)

Source: OIE/WHO, 2002



# The level of challenge varies: pigs

Country	Swine Fever	AD	TGE	PRRS	AR	Trichinella
UK	-	-	+++	+++	+++	-
NL	-	+	-	+++	+++	+
France	-	+	+++	+++	+++	+
Germany	(+)	-	-	+++	+	(+)
Spain	+	+	n/a	+++	+	(+)
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	-	-	n/a	-	n/a	n/a
Finland	-	---	-	---	-?	+

Source: OIE/WHO, 2002



# UK case study: health security in sheep and cattle systems



# UK case study: farmer attitudes to biosecurity

## Biosecurity definitions by farmers:

- Two clearly positive definitions (“ours”):
  - Disease prevention
  - Good husbandry
- Two clearly negative definitions (“theirs”):
  - Disinfection
  - Bureaucracy/rules



# Farmer attitude to biosecurity: TORA

## Outcome perceptions:

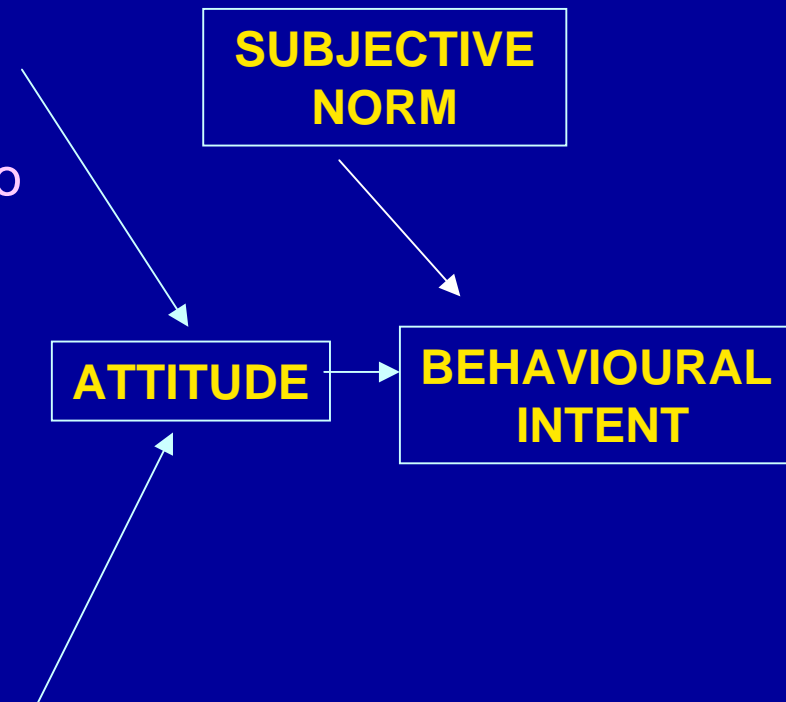
Positive: Improves **profit**, better health and welfare, increases professional pride/job satisfaction, gets rid of 'bad' farmers

Negative: **Efficacy questionable** in the absence of action by others, too costly, too much work, **increased bureaucracy/decreased freedom**

## Importance of outcome:

Positive: The need to implement BS is a **reality/responsibility**, only way to have future in farming and to maintain control

Negative: Outcome is **impossible**; farming has no future



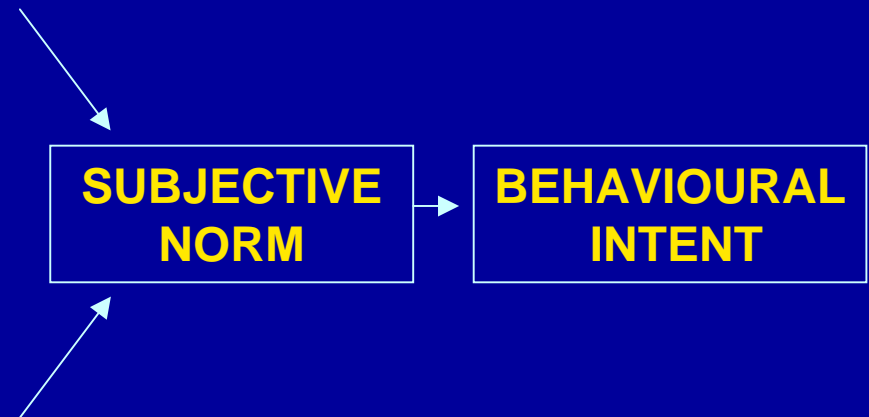
# Farmer attitude to biosecurity: TORA

## Referents:

**Vets, Gov, Other farmers,**  
Farm assurance, Science,  
Media

## Importance of referents:

**+/- vets, other farmers, farm  
assurance, science**  
**- media, gov**



# Drivers and barriers for improved implementation of BS (farmers)

## Drivers:

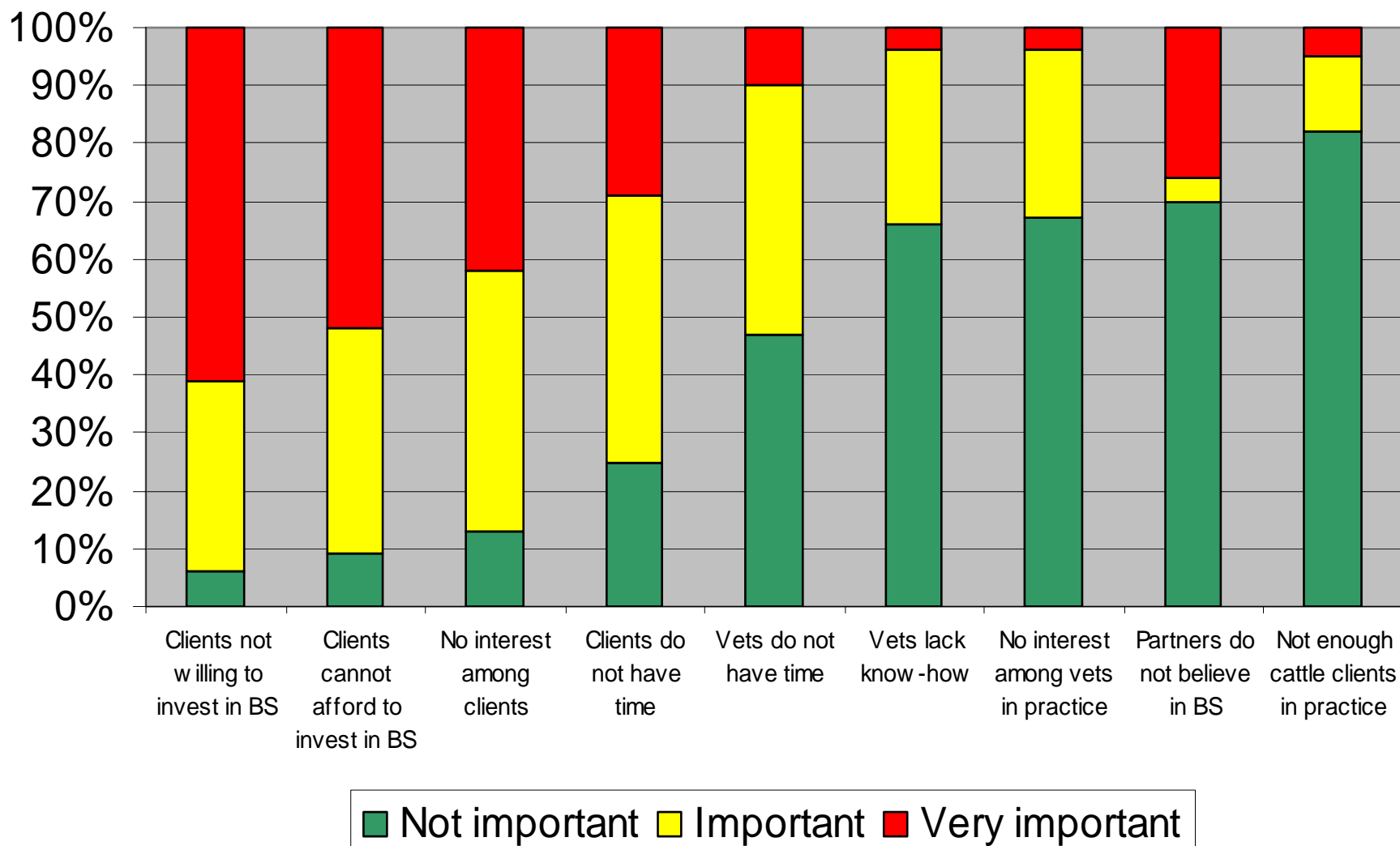
- Referents: vets and other farmers
- Attitude drivers: Others do their bit, financial benefit is real, image/future of farming, autonomy

## Barriers:

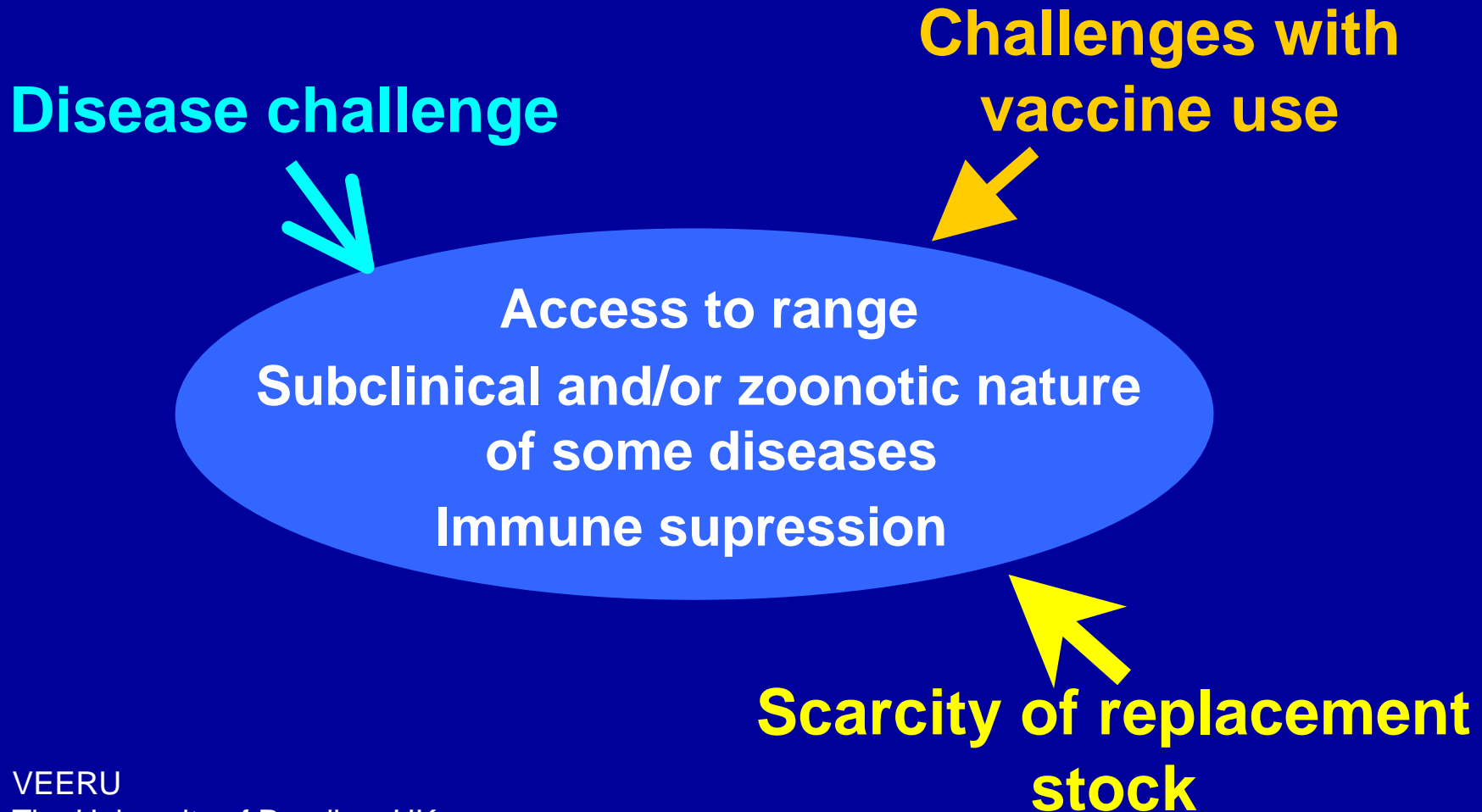
- Referents: no fully trusted source of advice; GOV is perceived as a necessary actor to co-ordinate but not trusted
- Attitude barriers: others not doing their bit, efficacy of measures, fear of losing freedom/autonomy



# Veterinary attitudes to BS: constraints to involvement



# Are organic farmers in the UK different/in a different situation?



# Challenges for the organic livestock sector in the UK

- Good biosecurity in compliance with organic principles:
  - Acceptance of the value-laden nature of health security issues at farm/veterinary level
  - Learn to market livestock without disease transmission and with minimal transport
  - Strengthening of the ‘closed herd/flock’-concept
  - Vaccine use based on farm-specific risk assessment
  - Sound knowledge of the herd’s/flock’s disease status!

HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS WITHOUT ADDED  
STANDARDS?



# Acknowledgements

- Colleagues at VEERU and the SAC
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