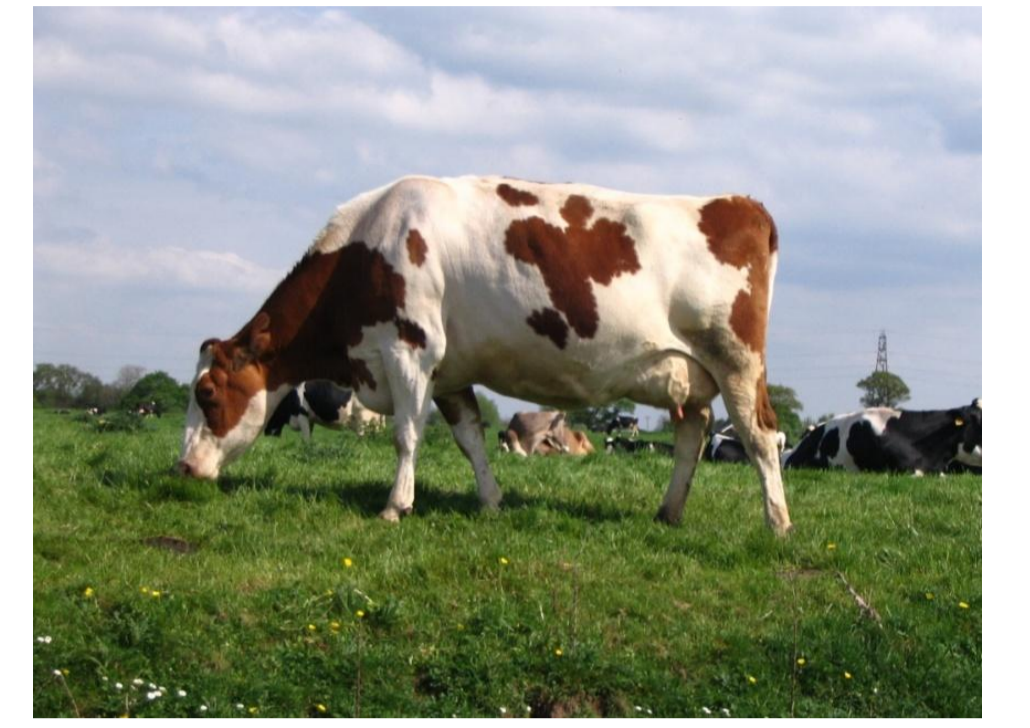


Biosecurity and perceptions of risk in a farming community



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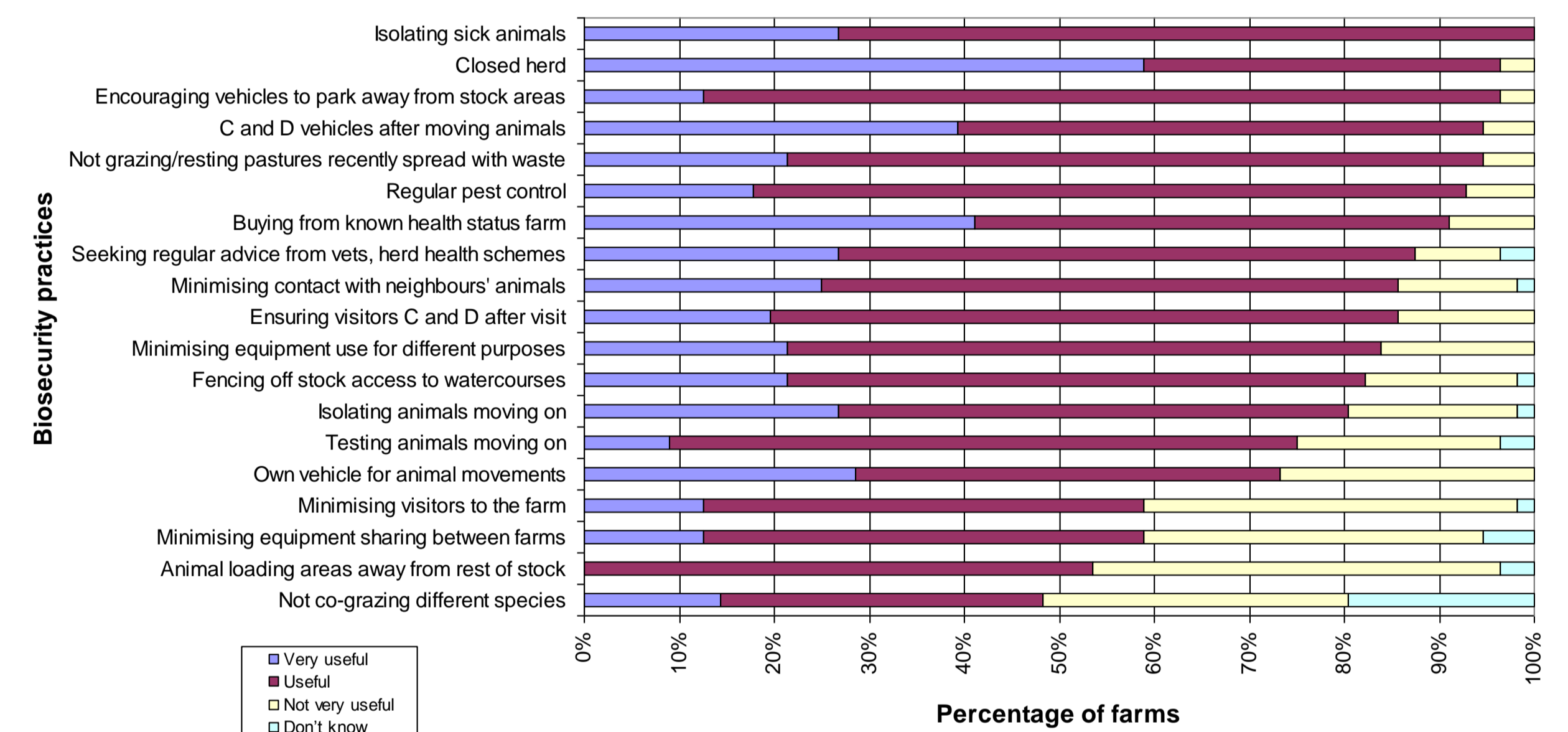


- It is possible that motivators other than financial gain, such as risk perception and attitudes towards production and industry, play a role in the uptake of biosecurity practices by the farming community
- Exploration of the sociological motivations of producers may assist in understanding how to engage more individuals in disease preventative activities
- The general understanding of the term biosecurity and producer attitudes towards 19 recommended biosecurity practices were studied by interviewing 56 cattle farmers within a 100km² study area in north-west England

Most producers were familiar with the broad concept of biosecurity, although risks due to indirect contacts were highlighted more than risks via direct contacts

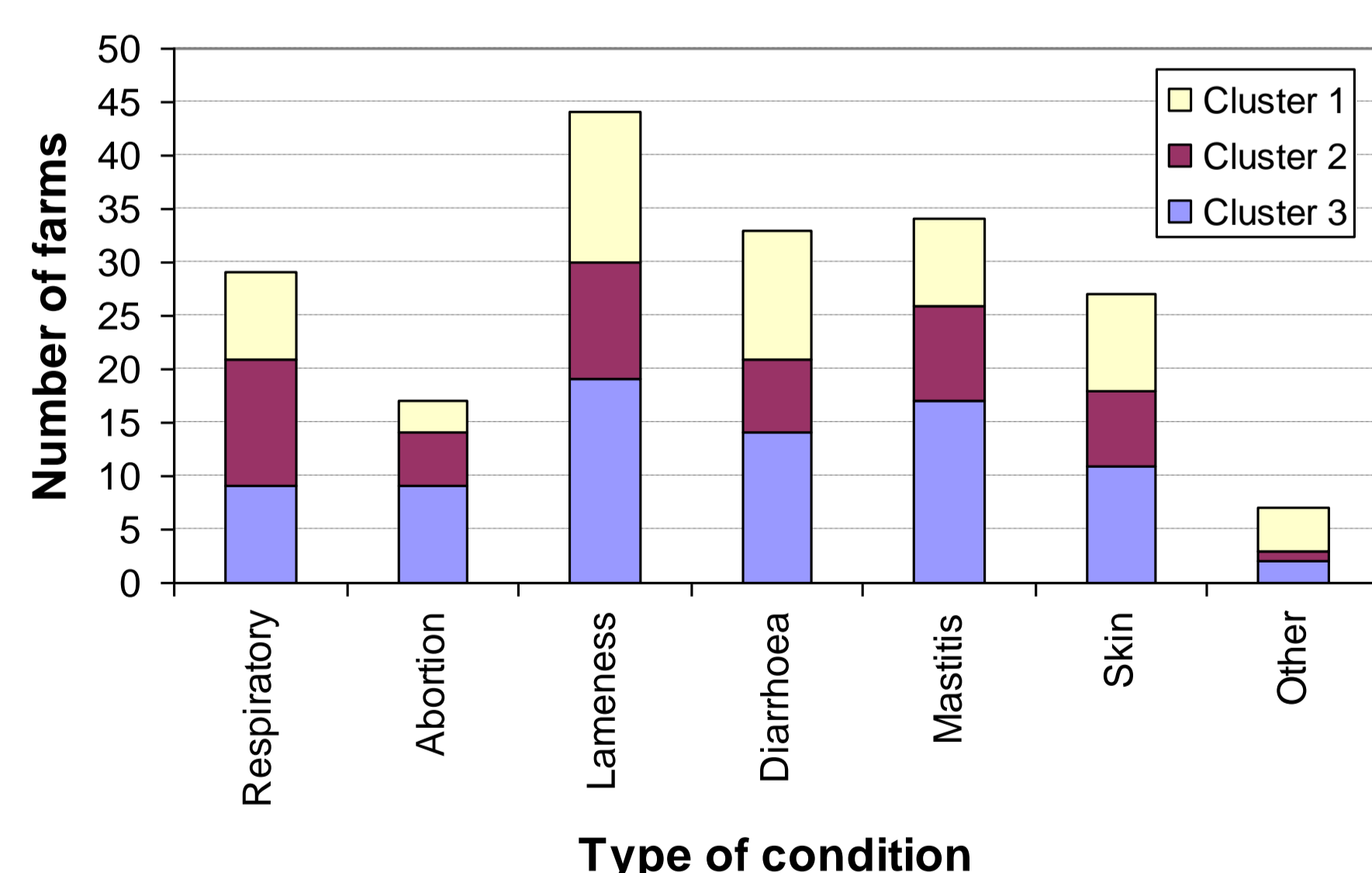
Concepts of biosecurity	Number of responses (% from total)
Basic concepts:	
Preventing diseases/pathogens on farms	52 (93%)
Managing diseases/pathogens within farms	14 (25%)
Security (not biosecurity)	4 (7%)
Don't know	3 (5%)
More specific concepts:	
Pathogen/disease/infection	20 (36%)
Direct contacts between premises	11 (20%)
Indirect contacts between premises	19 (34%)
Within-farm management	14 (25%)
Security (not biosecurity)	4 (7%)
Don't know	3 (5%)

The selected biosecurity practices were rated broadly as useful; farmers clustered into 3 groups, corresponding to practices being rated as either very useful, useful or not very useful



These clusters appeared to be somewhat related to certain contacts between farms, such as visits from deadstock collectors (P=0.06) and Trading Standards (animal health enforcement) officers (P=0.04)

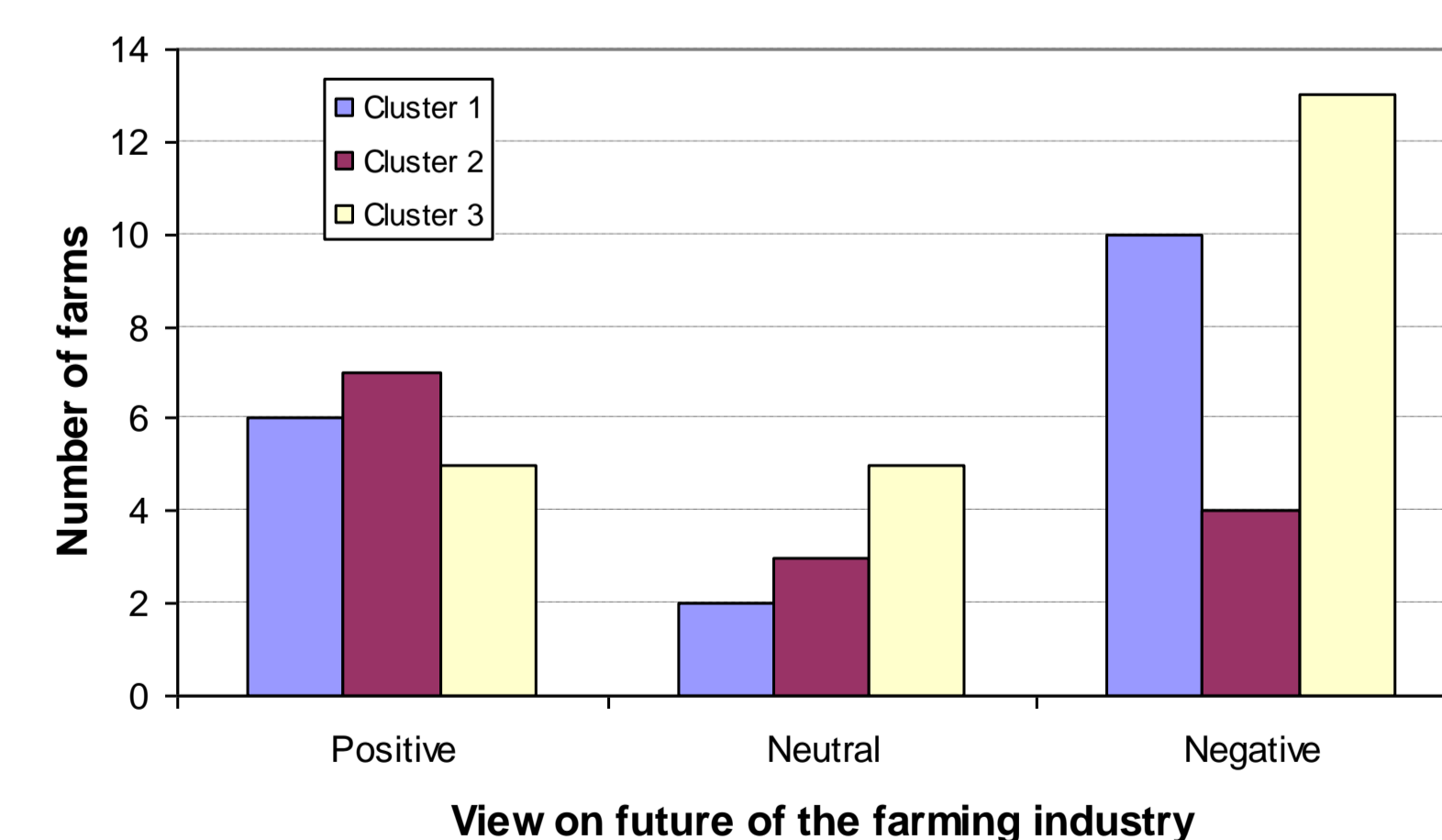
When compared with various diseases nominated by producers on the farms, there was a suggestion that farmers in cluster 3 (biosecurity not very useful) were more likely to report mastitis than in the either of the other two clusters (χ^2 test P=0.1)



The majority of farmers believed that biosecurity was more cost-effective and more time-efficient than treating disease on-farm

Farmers most preferred to obtain information and advice on biosecurity from private veterinarians

Farmers in cluster 2 (biosecurity very useful) appeared to be somewhat more likely to have a positive view of the farming industry whilst cluster 3 farmers (biosecurity not very useful) appeared more likely to have a negative view (χ^2 test P=0.1)



There appears to be an overall understanding of biosecurity in the farming community in this area, with farmer ratings towards recommended biosecurity practices dividing producers into 3 main attitudinal clusters

These attitudes and subsequent clusters appear to be somewhat related to contact behaviours between farms, general attitudes towards the farming industry and to some extent, nominated disease occurrence on farms. These results raise interesting hypotheses that should be tested further

In order for biosecurity to be utilised more for disease prevention, it may be beneficial to address sociological motivators along with other more traditional motivators, such as financial gain

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