**Assessment of knowledge sources in animal disease control – lost in translation**

Seminar presented by Jonathan Wastling & Sophia Latham

Defra, London

21st February 2011

Jonathan Wastling and Sophia Latham, presented findings from the Relu ‘Assessment of Knowledge Sources in Animal Disease Control project to staff within Defra’s Disease Surveillance Team on 21st February 2011.

The seminar, part of a series of Relu presentations to various staff within Defra was attended by economists, veterinarians and members of the research and evidence team. In their presentation, Jonathan and Sophia explained how they had developed a conceptual model for analysing the complexities, risks and uncertainties associated with animal disease containment strategies across three specific disease areas (avian influenza, cryptosporidium and foot and mouth disease). Their model considered those involved in the operational arena, the tactical arena and the command arena. Presenting the results of interviews with over 50 experts, the team identified a number of key themes generated from preliminary analysis of the data including the uncertainty surrounding communication, the costs of disease, R&D prioritisation and the role of new technologies. In the discussion that followed the presentation a number of key issues were raised which generated lively debate including the role and contribution of social science research in animal disease communication and the role economics and economists specifically play in assessing uncertainty. The team also talked about the international perspectives explored in the research and reflected on how approaches differ between the UK and other countries. The team were invited back to Defra to present their final conclusions before the project ends in the Autumn.

Jonathan Wastling and Sophia Latham are from Liverpool University’s School of Veterinary Sciences.

“Assessment of knowledge sources in animal disease control” is a collaboration between Lancaster University (Lancaster Environment Centre, CESAGen, the School of Health and Medicine and Sociology), experts from The Natural Environment Research Council’s Centre for Ecology and Hydrology as well as the University of Liverpool’s Faculty of Veterinary Science and the National Centre for Zoonoses Research (NCZR).