

# HEAT STRESS IN LATE GESTATION: EFFECTS ON DAM PERFORMANCE

**Selko DairyNutriVision 2024**  
**11 September 2024**

G. E. Dahl

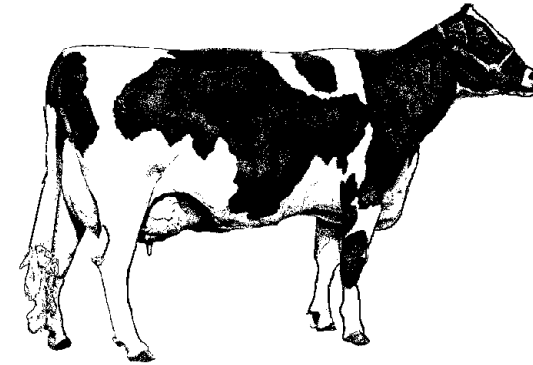
Department of Animal Sciences

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

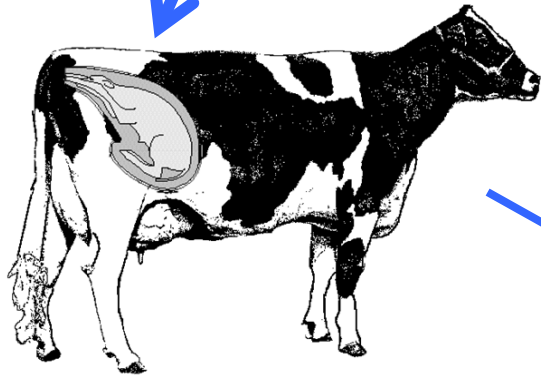
[gdahl@ufl.edu](mailto:gdahl@ufl.edu)



Milk yield?  
Metabolism?  
Immune function?  
Placental Function?



*Late gestation*



**DAM**  
vs.  
**DAUGHTER**

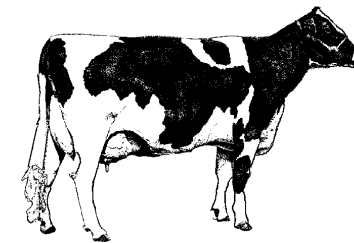
Calf health?  
Calf growth?



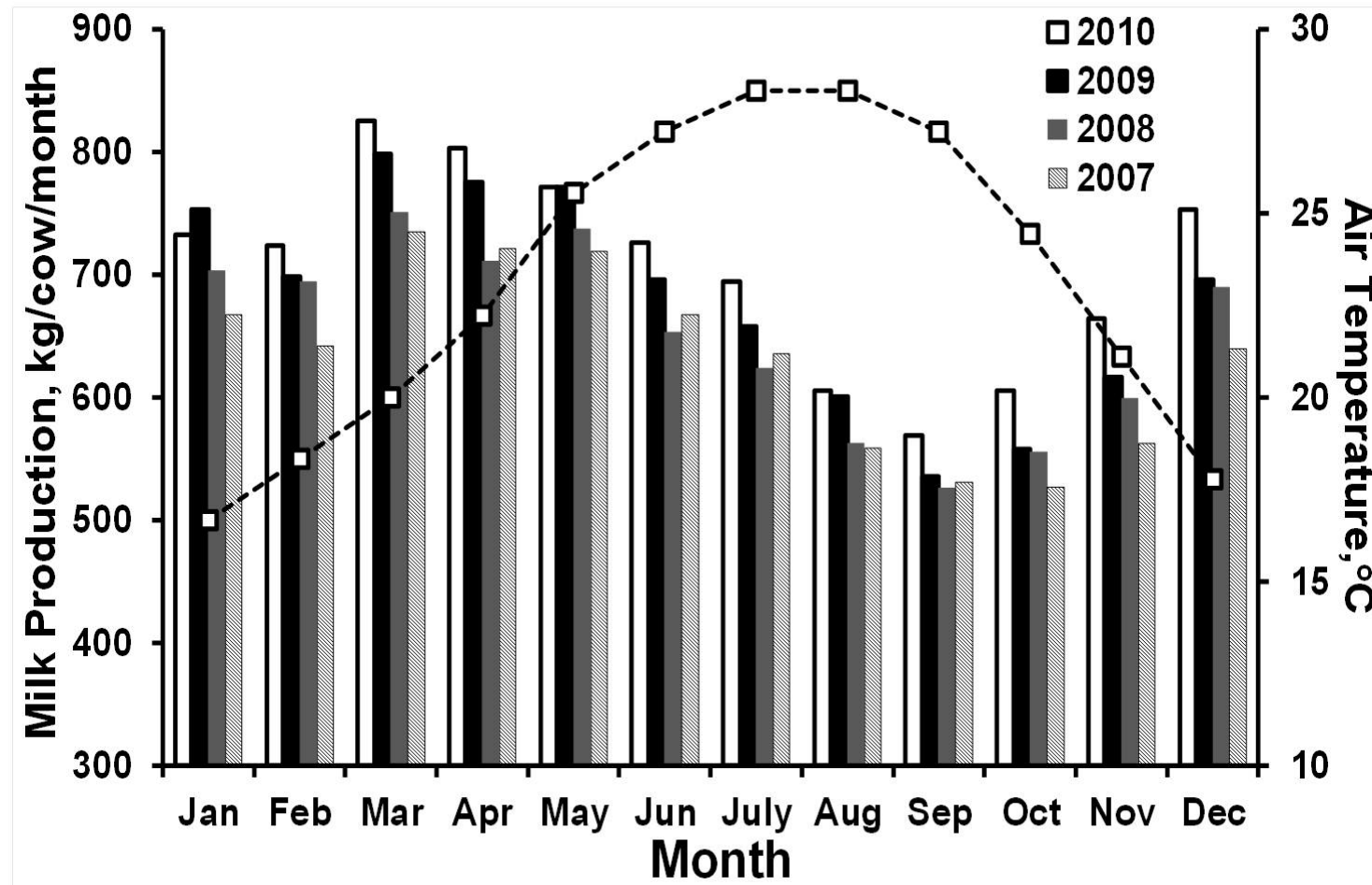
Heifer growth?  
Reproduction?



Cow performance?  
Thermoregulation?  
Survival?



# HEAT STRESS EFFECTS ON YIELD PERSIST

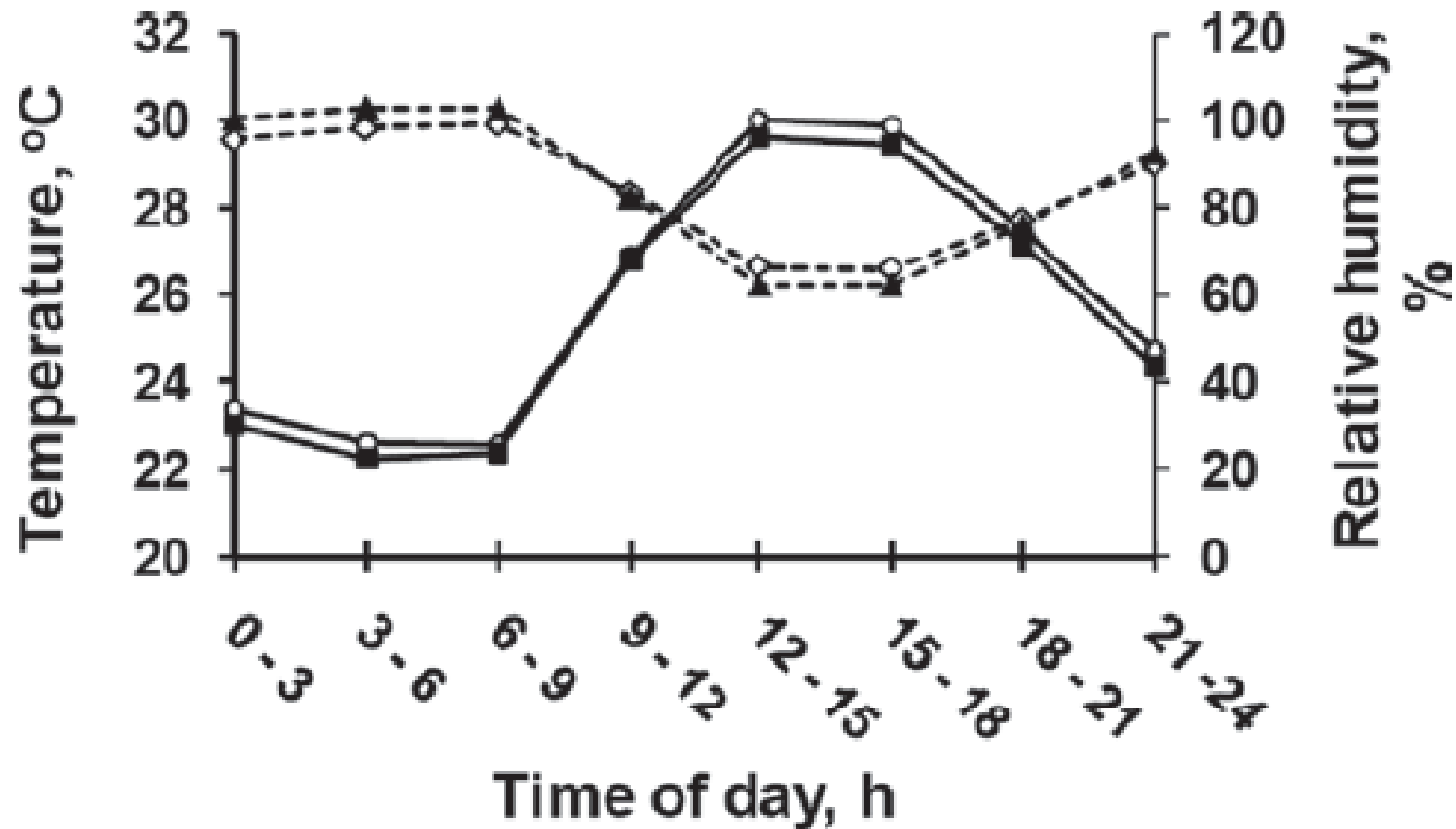


# Gainesville, Florida, USA

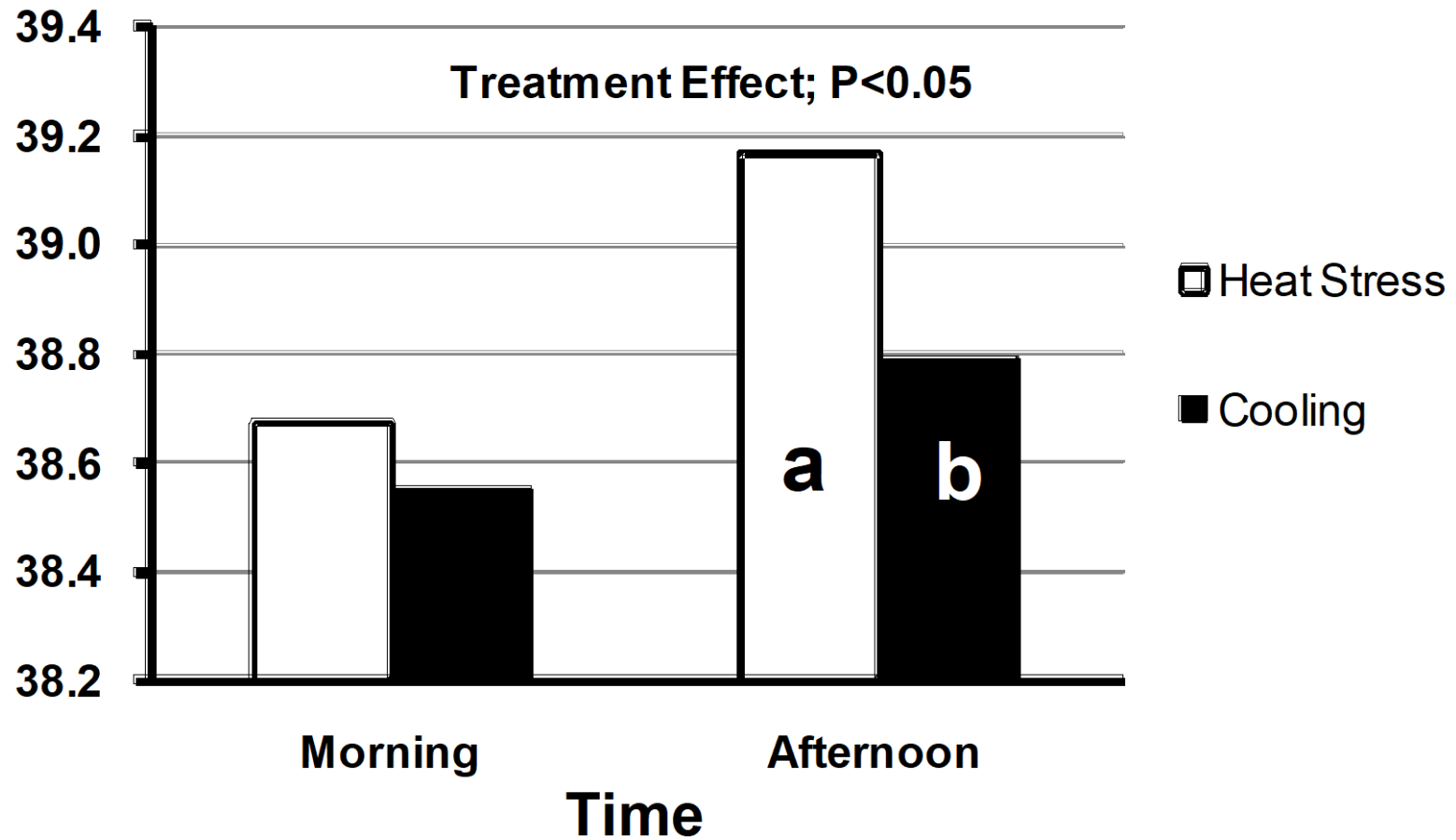
- Sand bedded free stalls
- Fans over stalls
- Soakers over feedline
- Fans on at 70° F (21.1°C)
- Soakers on 1 min every 5 min at 72° F



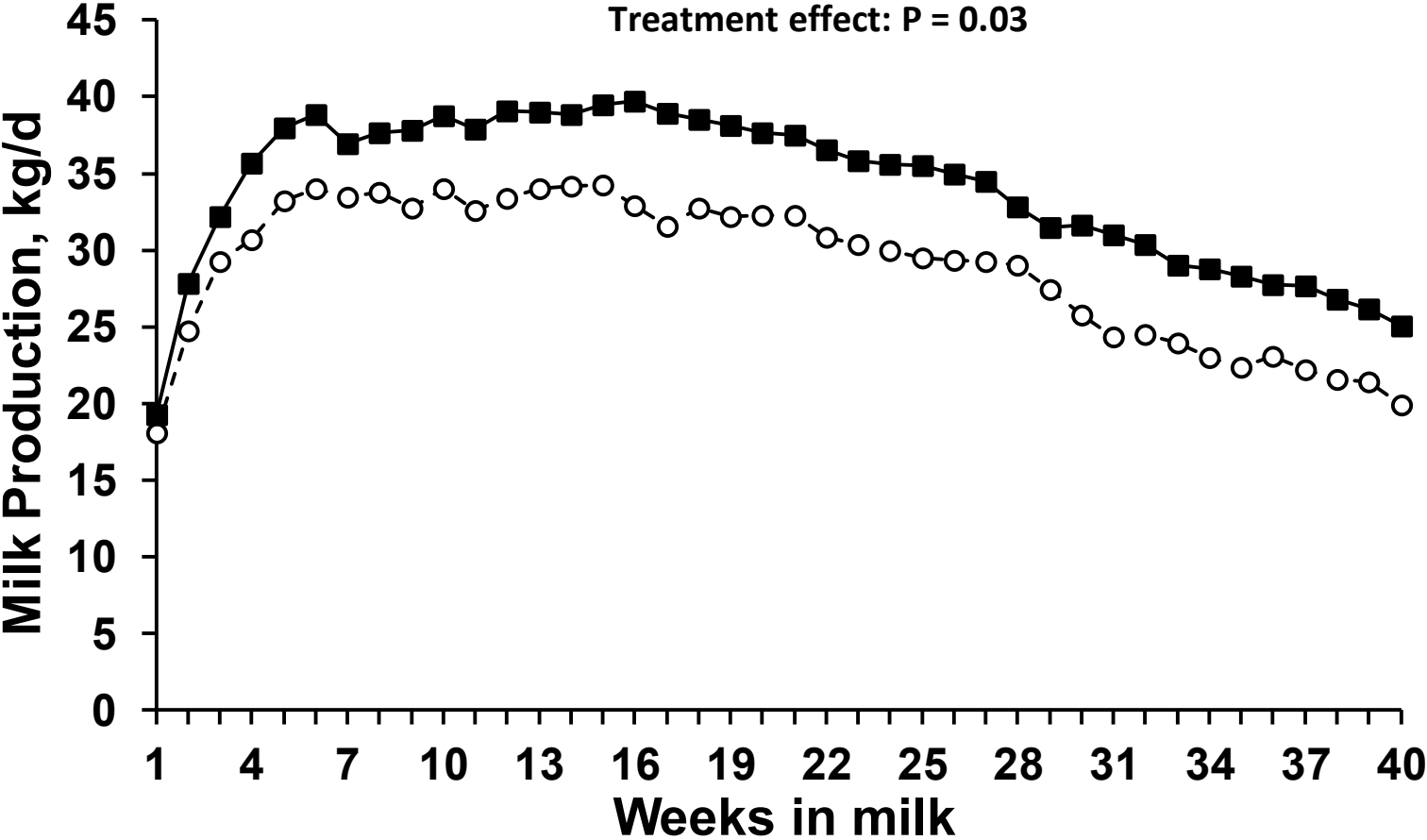
# STUDY DESIGN: HEAT LOAD ON DRY COWS



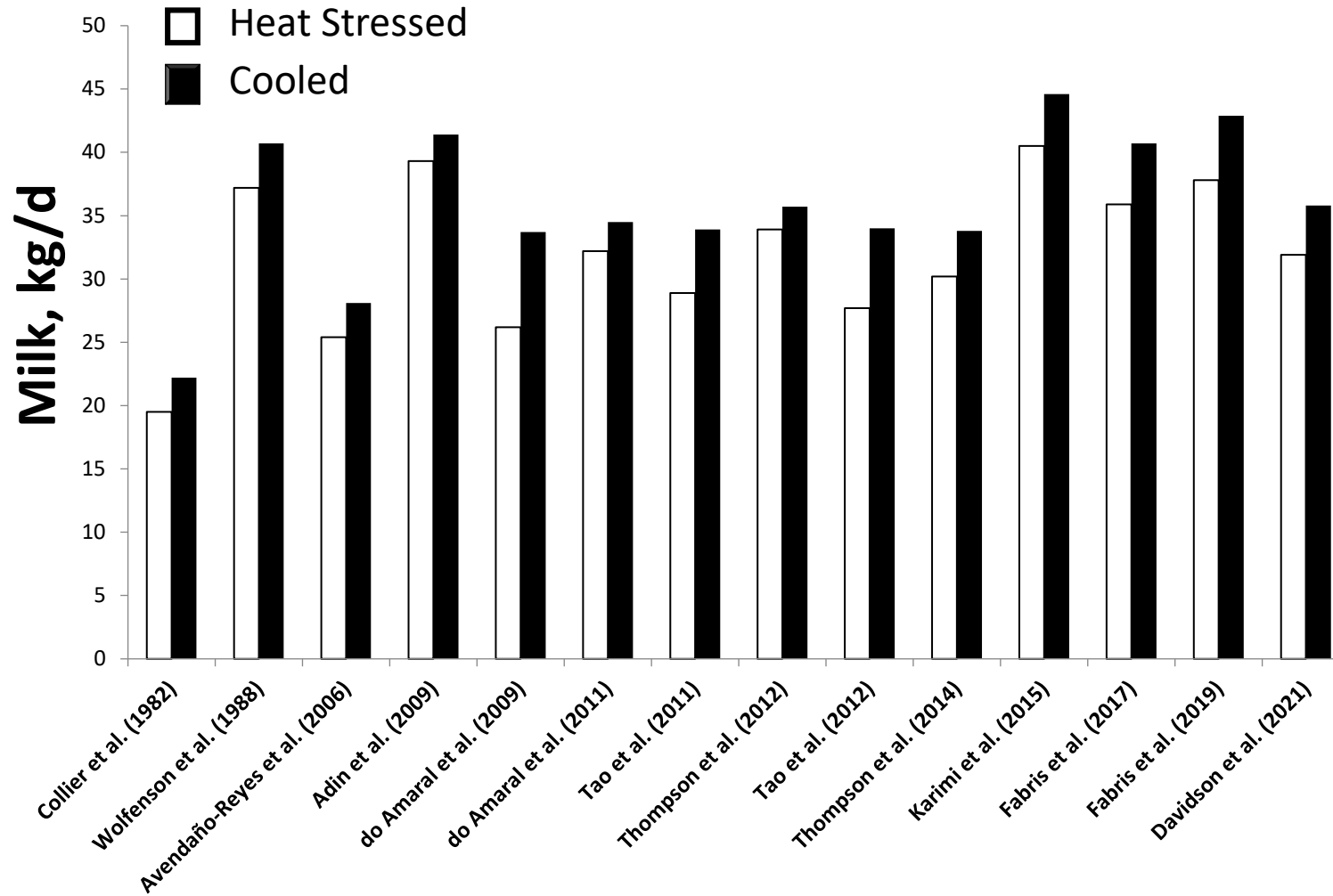
# Heat Stress Increases Mean Rectal Temperature



# COOLING DRY COWS INCREASES MILK

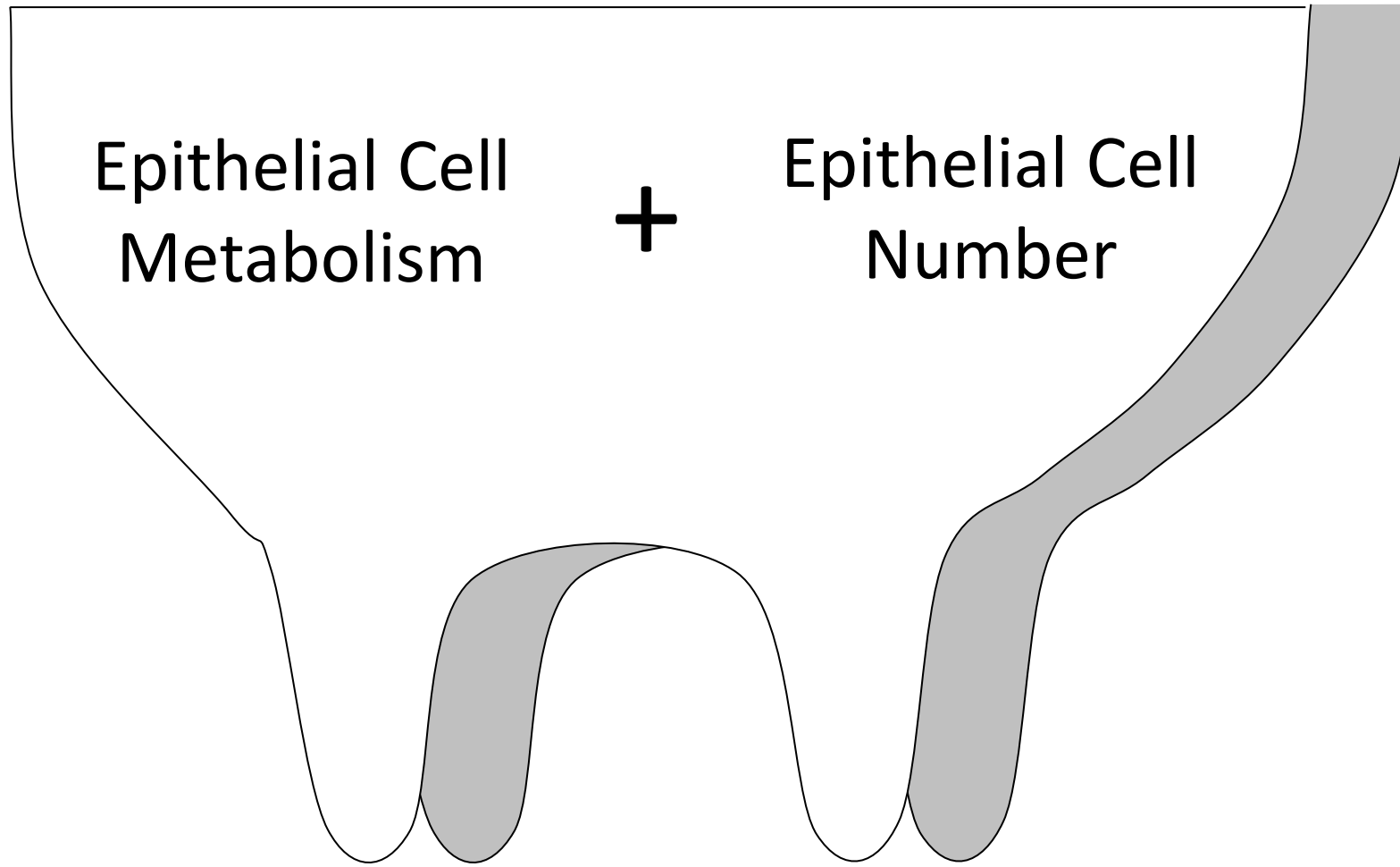


# COOLING DRY COWS INCREASES MILK

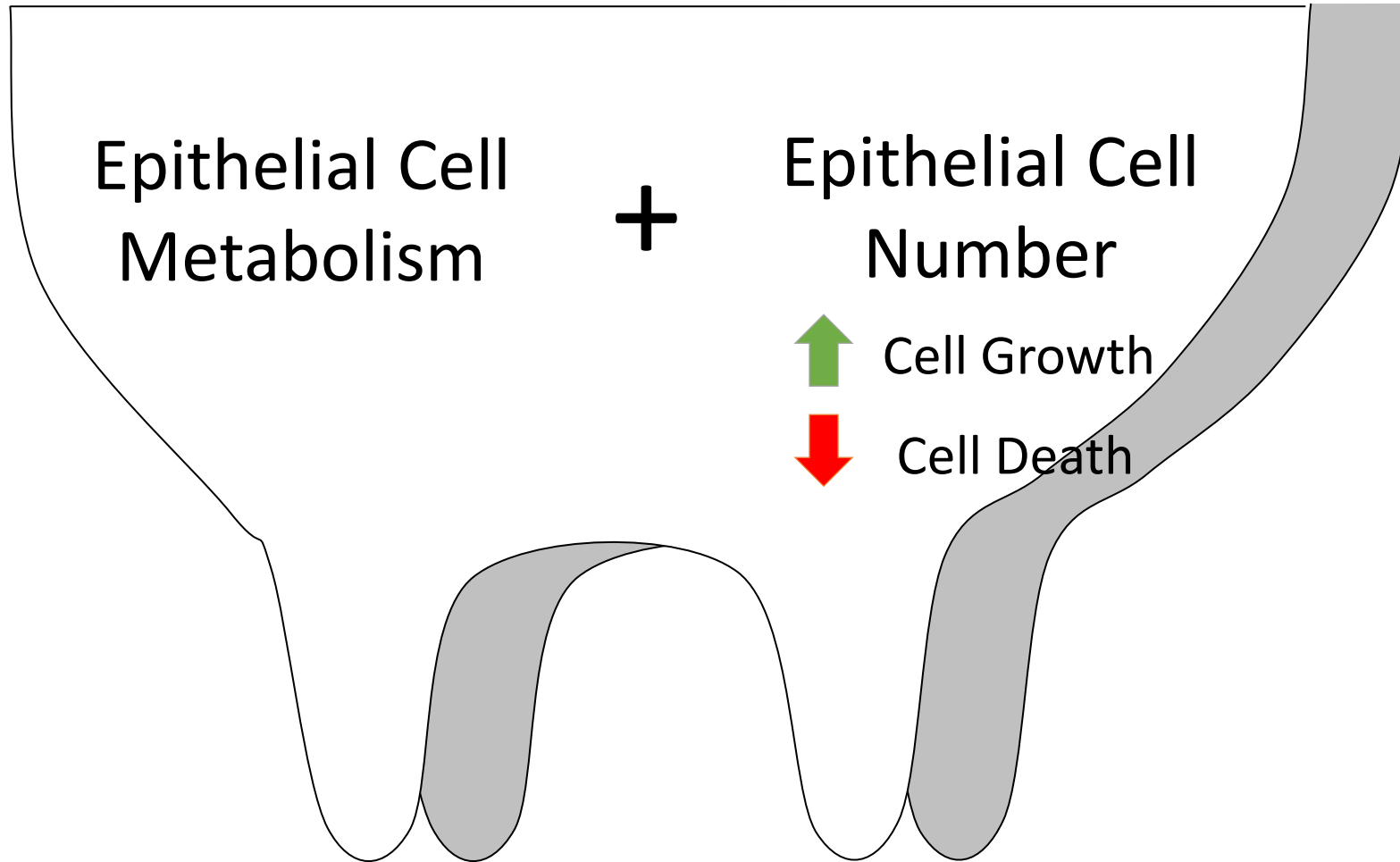




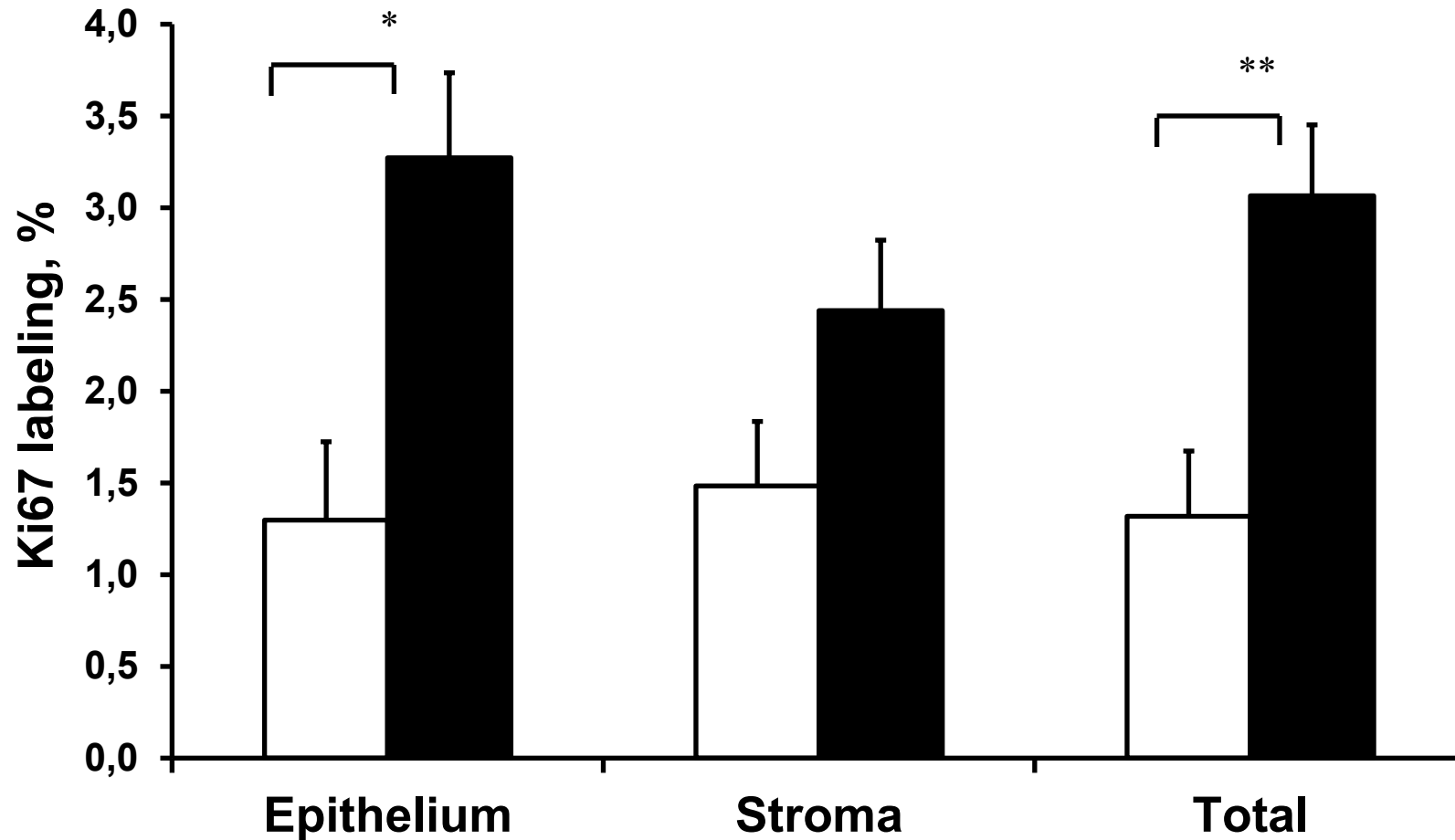
# Milk Production



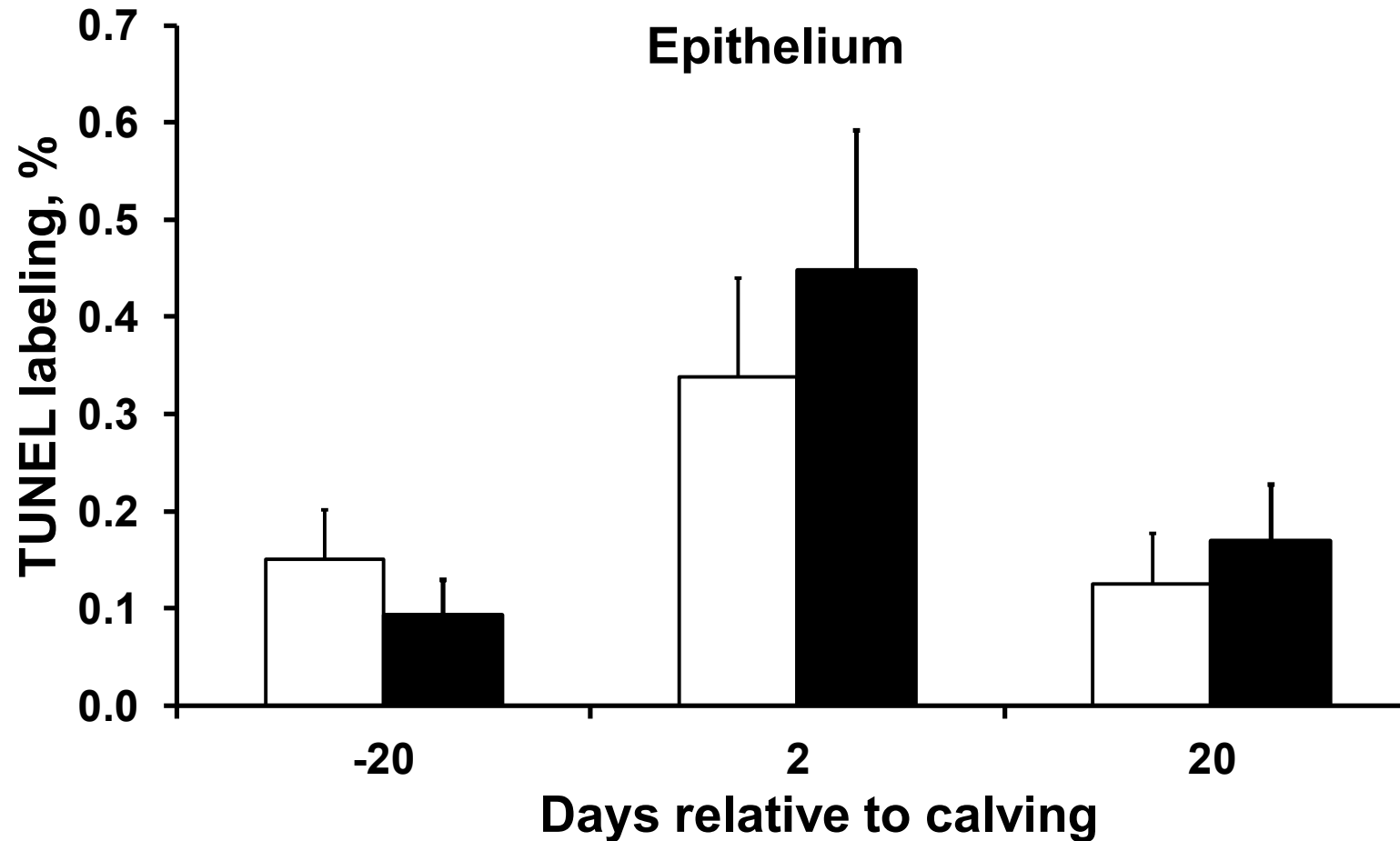
# Milk Production



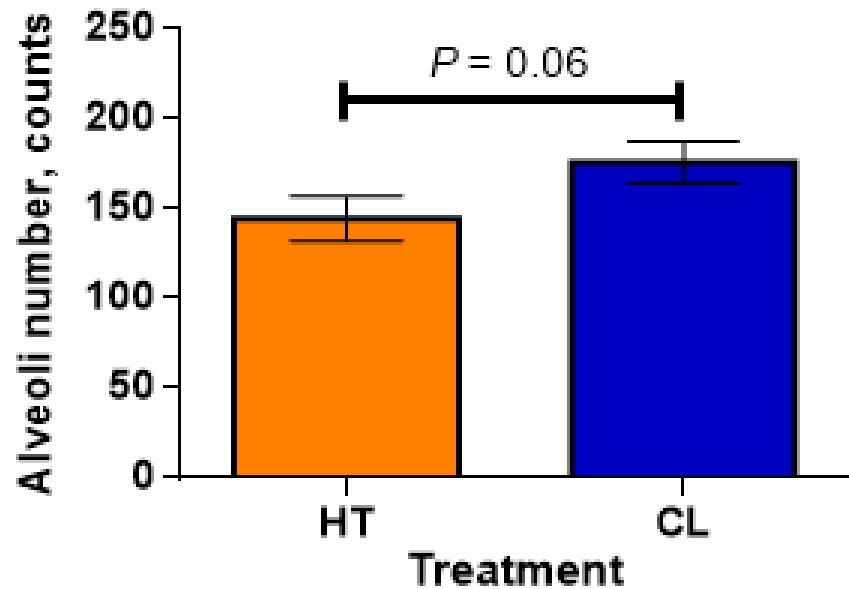
# COOLING INCREASED PROLIFERATION OF MAMMARY CELLS PREPARTUM (D-20)



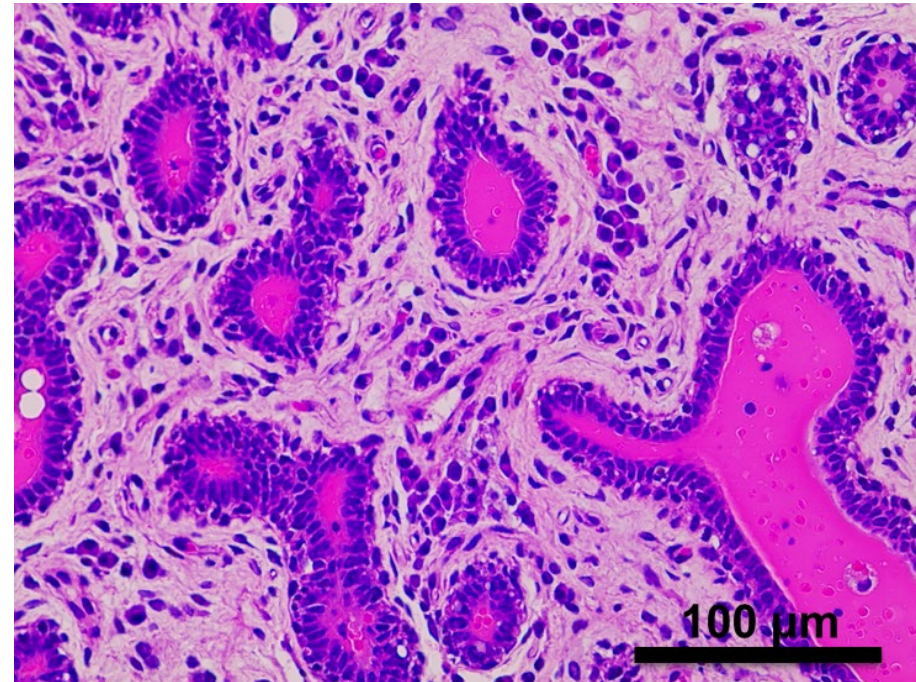
# HEAT STRESS DURING DRY PERIOD – NO EFFECT ON MEC APOPTOSIS



# HEAT STRESS DECREASES ALVEOLI NUMBER



H&E Stain



# Dry in COOL Months Improves Performance

**Table 1. Milk production and occurrence of mastitis, digestive and respiratory problems, retained fetal membranes, and metritis in cows dried during HOT months (Jun, Jul, Aug) or COOL months (Dec, Jan, Feb) in the first 80 DIM of the subsequent lactation**

Item	Dry during HOT months (Jun, Jul, Aug), n = 1,569				Dry during COOL months (Dec, Jan, Feb), n = 1,044				P-value
	Value	Disease <sup>1</sup>	n	%	Value	Disease <sup>1</sup>	n	%	
Milk production (kg)	10,351 ± 59.8				10,902 ± 73.3				0.01
Mastitis		0	1,286	82.0		0	950	91.0	0.01
		1	283	18.0		1	94	9.0	
Digestive		0	1,516	96.6		0	973	93.2	0.01
		1	53	3.4		1	71	6.8	
Respiratory		0	1,346	85.8		0	942	90.2	0.01
		1	223	14.2		1	102	9.8	
Retained fetal membranes		0	1,500	95.6		0	1,013	97.0	0.06
		1	69	4.4		1	31	3.0	
Metritis		0	1,500	95.6		0	1,007	96.4	0.35
		1	67	4.2		1	38	3.5	

<sup>1</sup>Disease: 0 = cows without the disease; 1 = cows with the disease.

# Dry in COOL Months Improves Reproductive Performance

Table 3. Milk production and reproductive performance of cows dried during HOT months (Jun, Jul, Aug) or COOL months (Dec, Jan, Feb) in the first 150 DIM of the subsequent lactation on a commercial farm in Florida

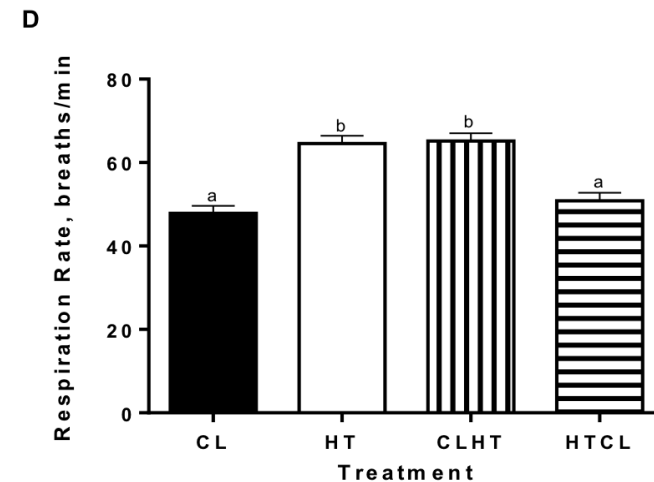
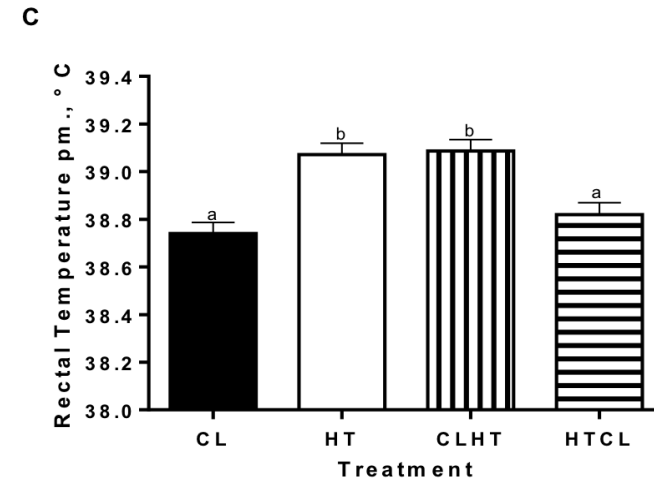
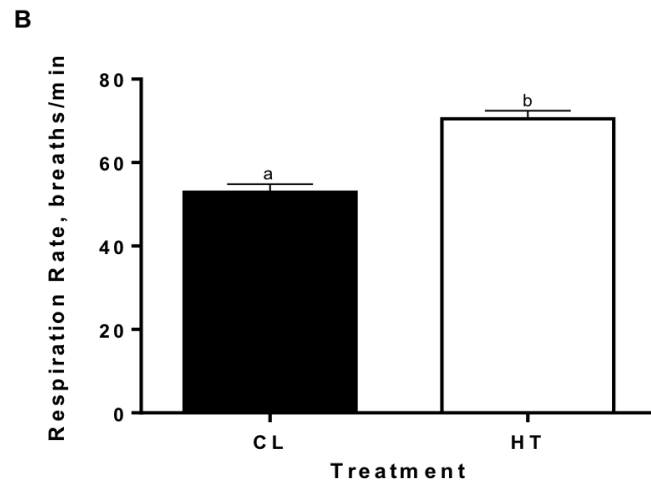
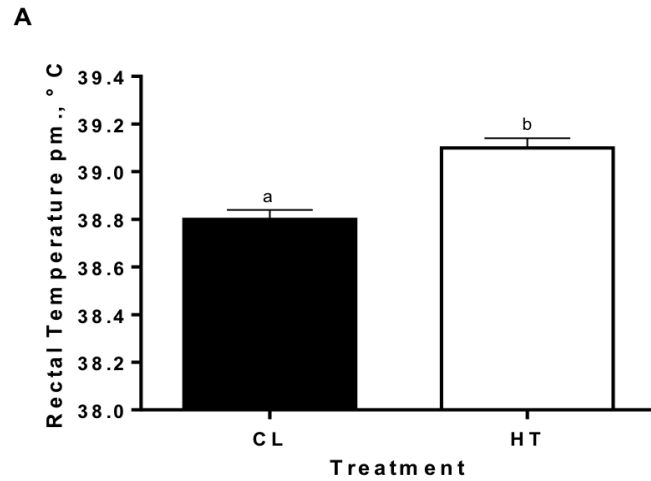
Item	Dry during HOT months (Jun, Jul, Aug)	Dry during COOL months (Dec, Jan, Feb)	<i>P</i> -value
Milk production (kg)	10,547 ± 67.0	11,005 ± 83.38	0.01
Number of breedings (n)	1,048	676	0.03
Mean (no.)	1.59 ± 0.02	1.51 ± 0.03	
DIM to breeding (n)	1,047	676	0.01
Mean (d)	97.0 ± 0.74	91.8 ± 0.92	
DIM to pregnancy (n)	1,051	679	0.01
Mean (d)	131.1 ± 0.85	125.9 ± 1.06	

# LATE GESTATION COOLING

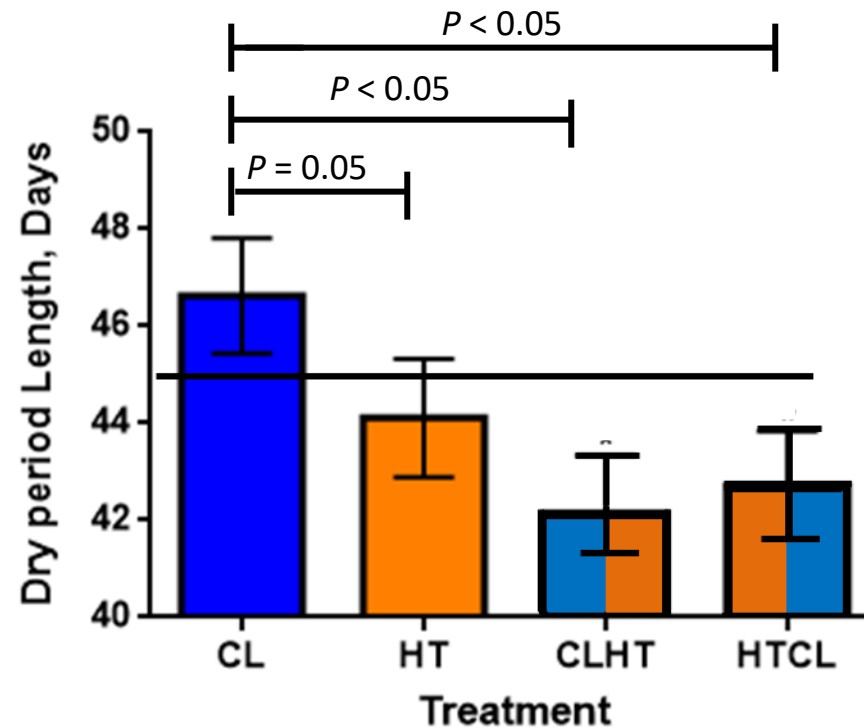
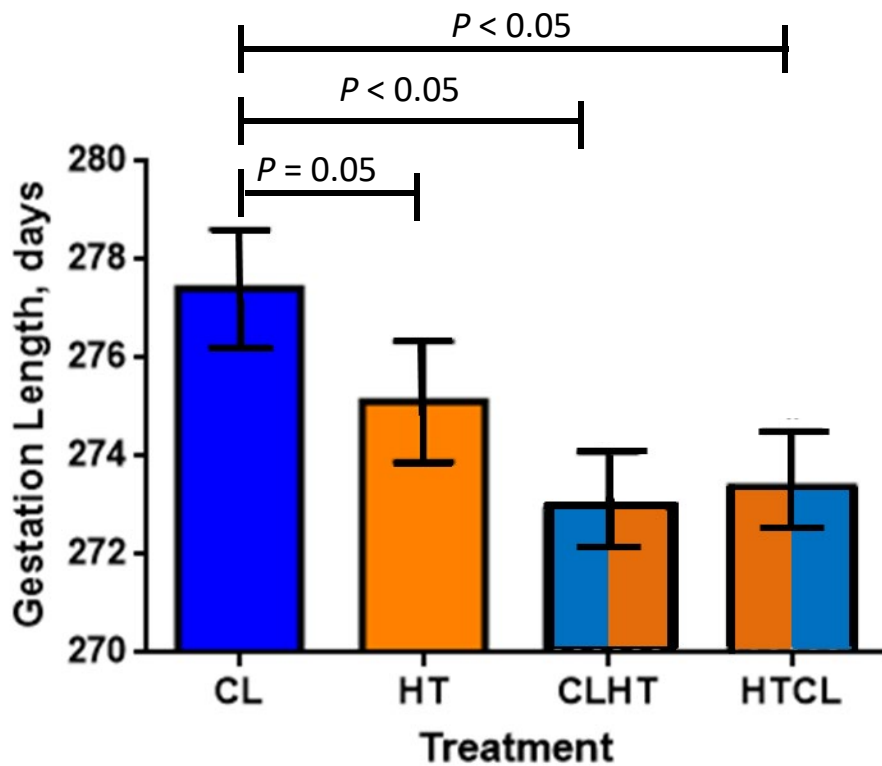
- **Do I have to cool cows the entire dry period?**
- **Do heifers need to be cooled pre-partum?**
- **Nutritional interventions to limit HT effects?**



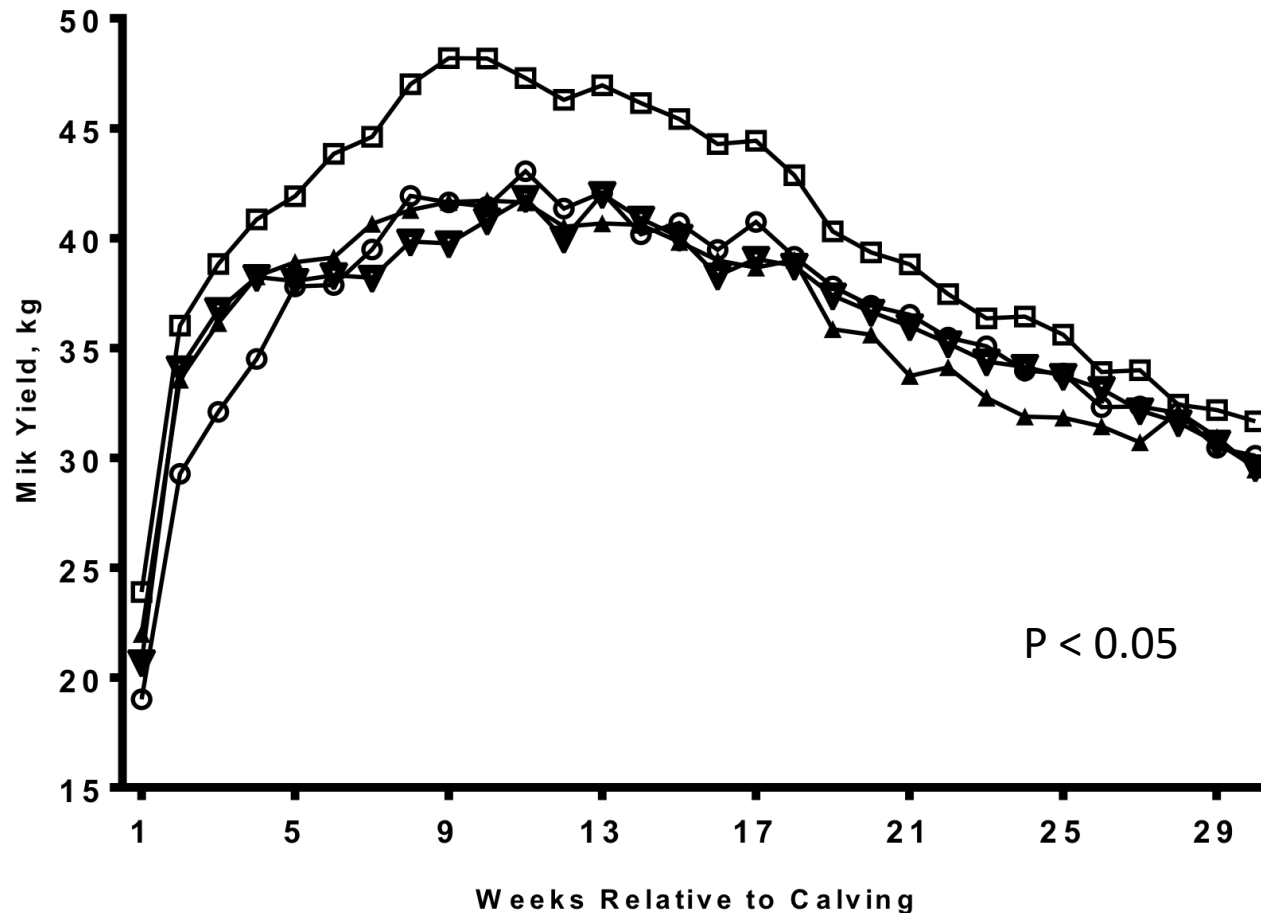
# HEAT STRESS INCREASES RECTAL TEMPERATURE AND RESPIRATION



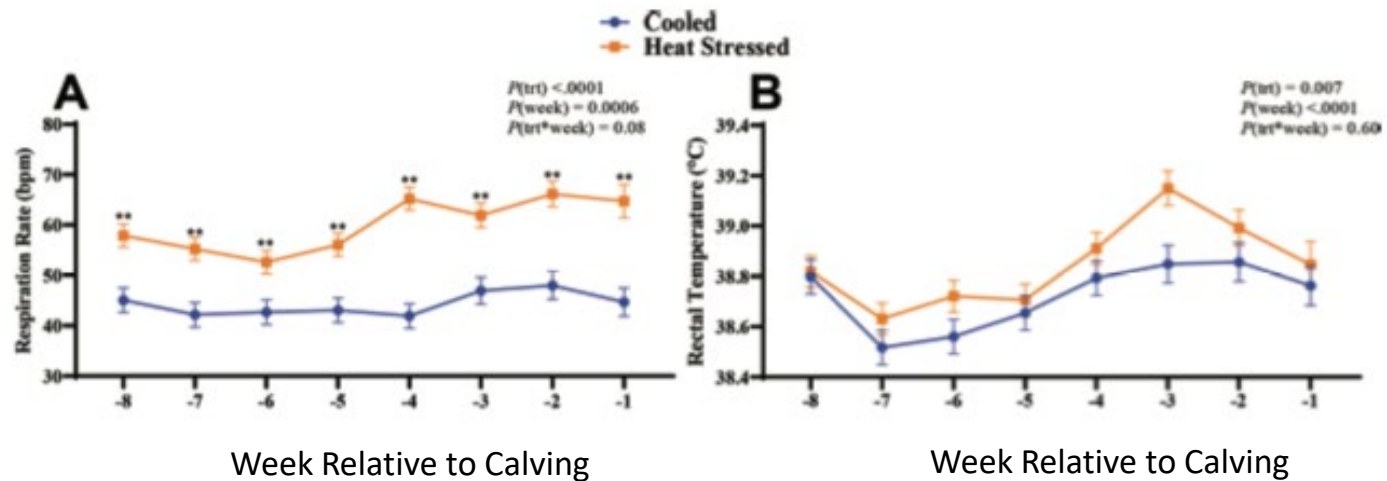
# HEAT STRESS DECREASES GESTATION LENGTH AND DRY PERIOD LENGTH AT ANY TIME



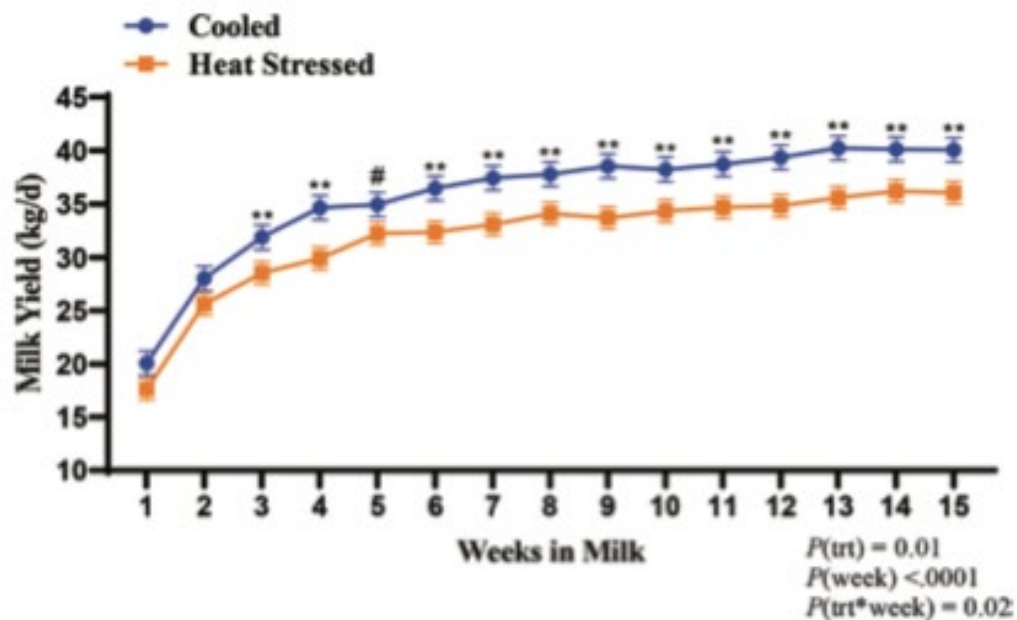
# HEAT STRESS IMPOSED AT ANY TIME IN THE DRY PERIOD REDUCES MILK



# EFFECTS ON FIRST CALF HEIFERS: COOLING DECREASES RR AND RT



# EFFECTS ON FIRST CALF HEIFERS: COOLING INCREASES YIELD



Davidson et al, *J. Dairy Sci.* 104:2357-2368

# EFFECTS OF BETAIN SUPPLEMENTATION AND HT: FAR OFF THROUGH 56 DIM

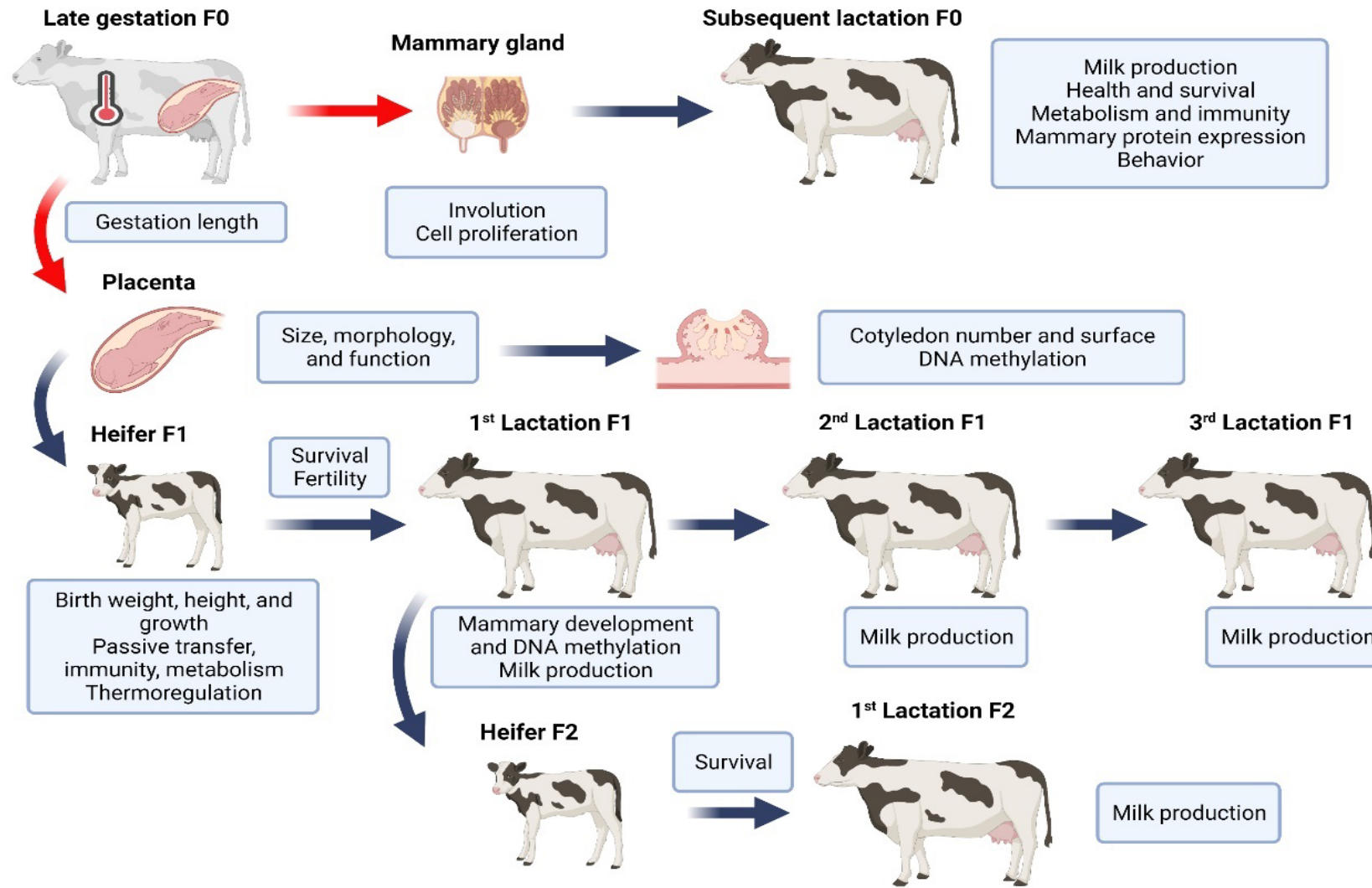
Parameter	Treatment			P-value		
	BET	CON	SEM	Treatment	Time	Treatment × time
BW, kg	729	720	26	0.80	<0.01	0.84
BCS	3.44	3.44	0.04	0.91	<0.01	0.32
DMI, prepartum, kg/d	13.6	13.3	0.53	0.64	<0.01	0.93
DMI, postpartum, kg/d	22.8	21.8	1.03	0.51	<0.01	0.14
Glucose, mg/dL	62.6	63.0	2.4	0.91	<0.01	0.19
NEFA, $\mu$ Eq/L	300	236	37	0.30	<0.01	0.03
BHB, mg/L	10.3	9.1	0.5	0.12	0.01	0.08
Milk yield, kg/d	45.1	41.9	1.04	0.04	<0.01	0.91
3.5% FCM, kg/d	53.4	47.3	1.92	0.02	0.47	0.29
ECM, kg/d	50.5	45.2	1.57	0.02	0.37	0.30
FE (FCM/DMI)	2.44	2.27	0.11	0.19	<0.01	0.60
FE (ECM/DMI)	2.31	2.15	0.10	0.19	<0.01	0.61
EB, <sup>1</sup> Mcal	-7.03	-4.22	1.11	0.09	<0.01	0.22
Milk composition						
Fat, %	4.78	4.34	0.19	0.05	<0.01	0.29
Fat, kg/d	2.10	1.77	0.10	0.01	0.88	0.38
Protein, %	2.76	2.77	0.03	0.84	<0.01	0.78
Protein, kg/d	1.21	1.14	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.87
Lactose, %	4.60	4.71	0.04	0.06	<0.01	0.58
Lactose, kg/d	2.09	1.96	0.08	0.27	<0.01	0.67
SNF, %	8.31	8.40	0.10	0.51	<0.01	0.89
SNF, kg/d	3.72	3.46	0.14	0.20	<0.01	0.47
MUN, mg/dL	9.17	9.05	0.54	0.88	<0.01	0.60
SCS	2.7	1.8	0.51	0.16	<0.01	0.64

<sup>1</sup>Energy balance during early lactation.

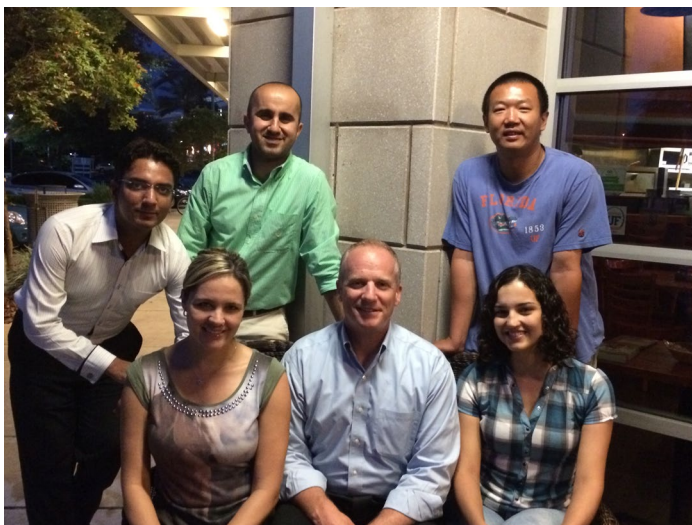
# NO EFFECT OF BETAINES SUPPLEMENTATION AND HT: CLOSE-UP

Parameter	Treatment			P-value		
	BET	CON	SEM	Treatment	Time	Treatment × time
BW, kg	656	696	19	0.14	<0.01	0.84
BCS	3.23	3.35	0.06	0.19	<0.01	0.01
DMI, prepartum, kg/d	13.7	13.8	0.94	0.93	<0.14	0.53
DMI, postpartum, kg/d	22.2	21.9	1.41	0.89	<0.01	0.94
Glucose, mg/dL	59.1	61.5	3.8	0.67	0.01	0.89
NEFA, $\mu$ Eq/L	353	298	40	0.80	<0.01	0.61
BHB, mg/L	9.6	8.5	0.65	0.26	0.01	0.29
Milk yield, kg/d	43.2	40.9	2.06	0.46	<0.01	0.81
3.5% FCM, kg/d	46.6	45.9	2.88	0.86	0.04	0.50
ECM, kg/d	44.8	44.2	2.53	0.86	0.06	0.41
FE (FCM/DMI)	2.15	2.07	0.14	0.68	<0.01	0.80
FE (ECM/DMI)	2.08	1.99	0.11	0.58	0.01	0.66
EB, <sup>1</sup> Mcal	-4.57	-4.18	1.59	0.86	<0.01	0.89
Milk composition						
Fat, %	4.21	4.20	0.23	0.92	<0.01	0.86
Fat, kg/d	1.72	1.75	0.13	0.88	0.25	0.60
Protein, %	2.80	2.86	0.04	0.25	<0.01	0.52
Protein, kg/d	1.17	1.15	0.05	0.75	0.10	0.62
Lactose, %	4.73	4.64	0.05	0.23	<0.01	<0.01
Lactose, kg/d	2.03	1.90	0.10	0.38	<0.01	0.15
SNF, %	8.53	8.39	0.11	0.36	<0.01	0.56
SNF, kg/d	3.62	3.44	0.17	0.45	<0.01	0.24
MUN, mg/dL	9.61	8.15	0.56	0.08	0.97	0.89
SCS	2.6	2.9	0.7	0.75	0.25	0.05

<sup>1</sup>Energy balance during early lactation.







# THANKS!



- Dr. Steffi Wohlgemuth
- Dr. Albert Devries
- Dr. Fernanda Ferreira
- Dr. Bruno do Amaral
- Dr. Erin Connor – University of Delaware
- Dr. Sally Johnson – Virginia Tech



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food and  
Agriculture

