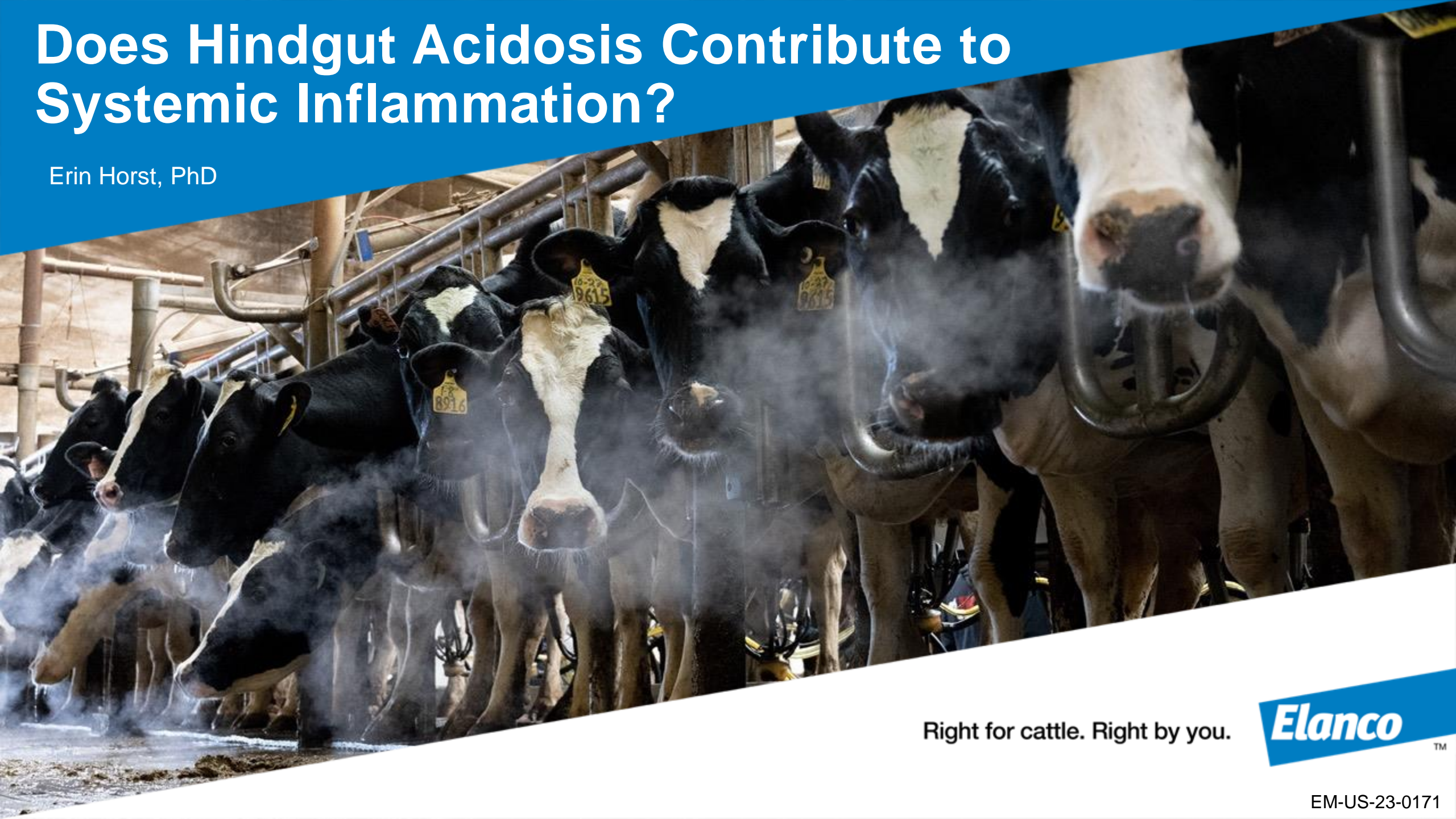


Does Hindgut Acidosis Contribute to Systemic Inflammation?

Erin Horst, PhD



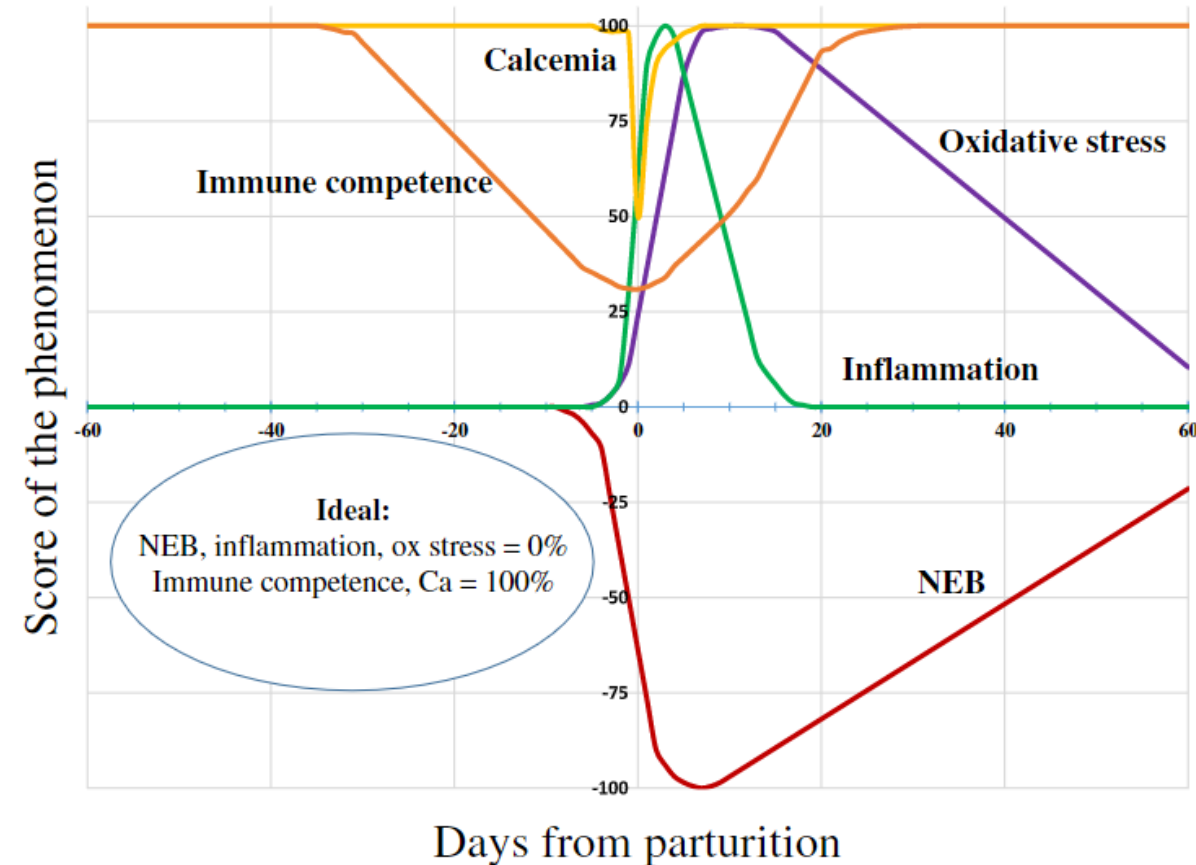
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The Transition Period- “The Final Frontier”

- Classically defined as the 3 weeks prior to and 3 weeks following calving
- Critical period characterized by drastic changes in:
 - Nutrient partitioning
 - Calcium homeostasis
 - Immune competence
 - Inflammatory state
- Disproportionate incidence of health problems and herd culling
 - 30-50% of cows experience metabolic or infectious disease (LeBlanc, 2010)



Inflammation and Transition Cow Health

LPS/Inflammation




J. Dairy Sci. 104

<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2021-20330>

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Invited review: The influence of immune activation on transition cow health and performance—A critical evaluation of traditional dogmas

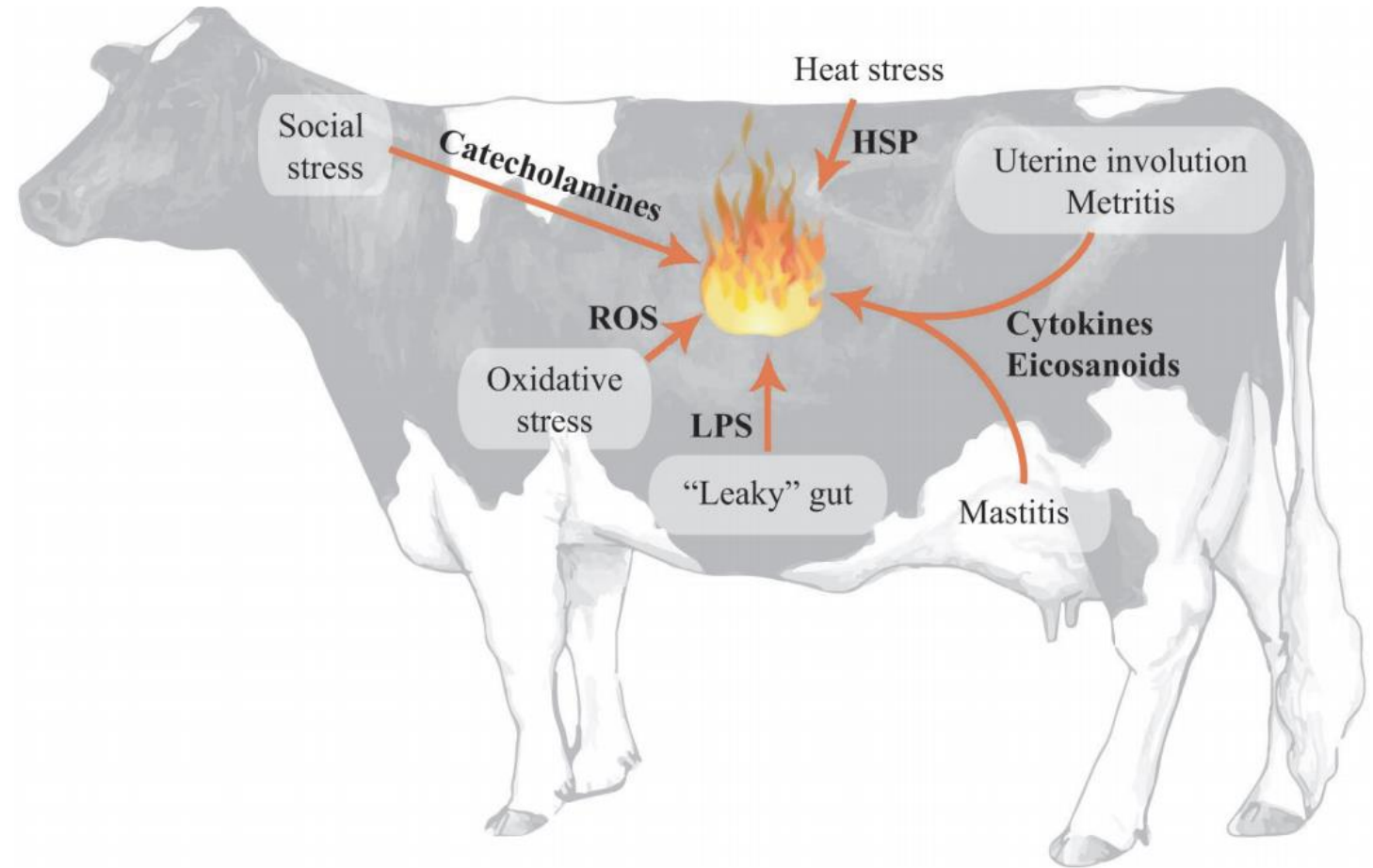
E. A. Horst, S. K. Kvidera, and L. H. Baumgard* 
Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011

Ketosis



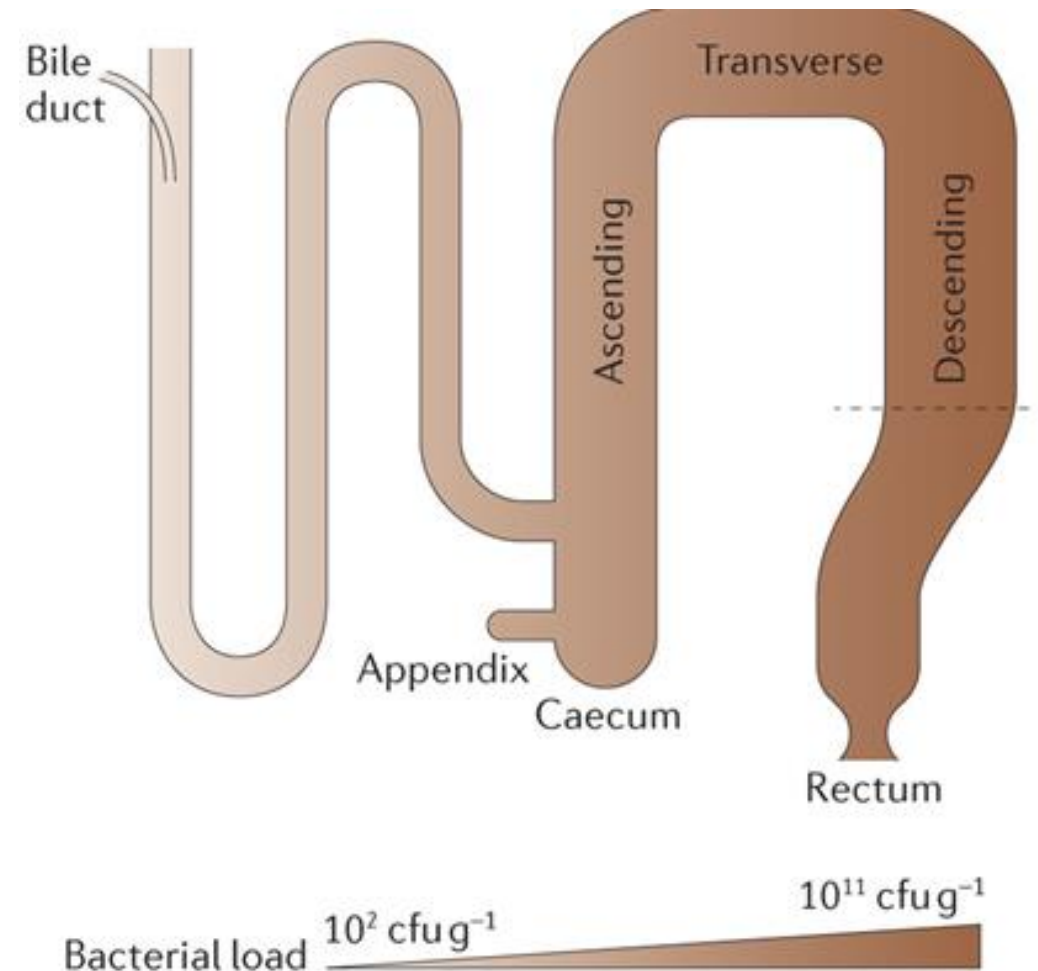
Inflammation in Transition Cows

- Observed in nearly all cows regardless of health status (Bertoni et al., 2008; Bradford et al., 2015)
- Caused by multiple pathologies:
 - Sterile inflammation?
 - Mastitis
 - Metritis
 - Pneumonia
 - **Leaky Gut**

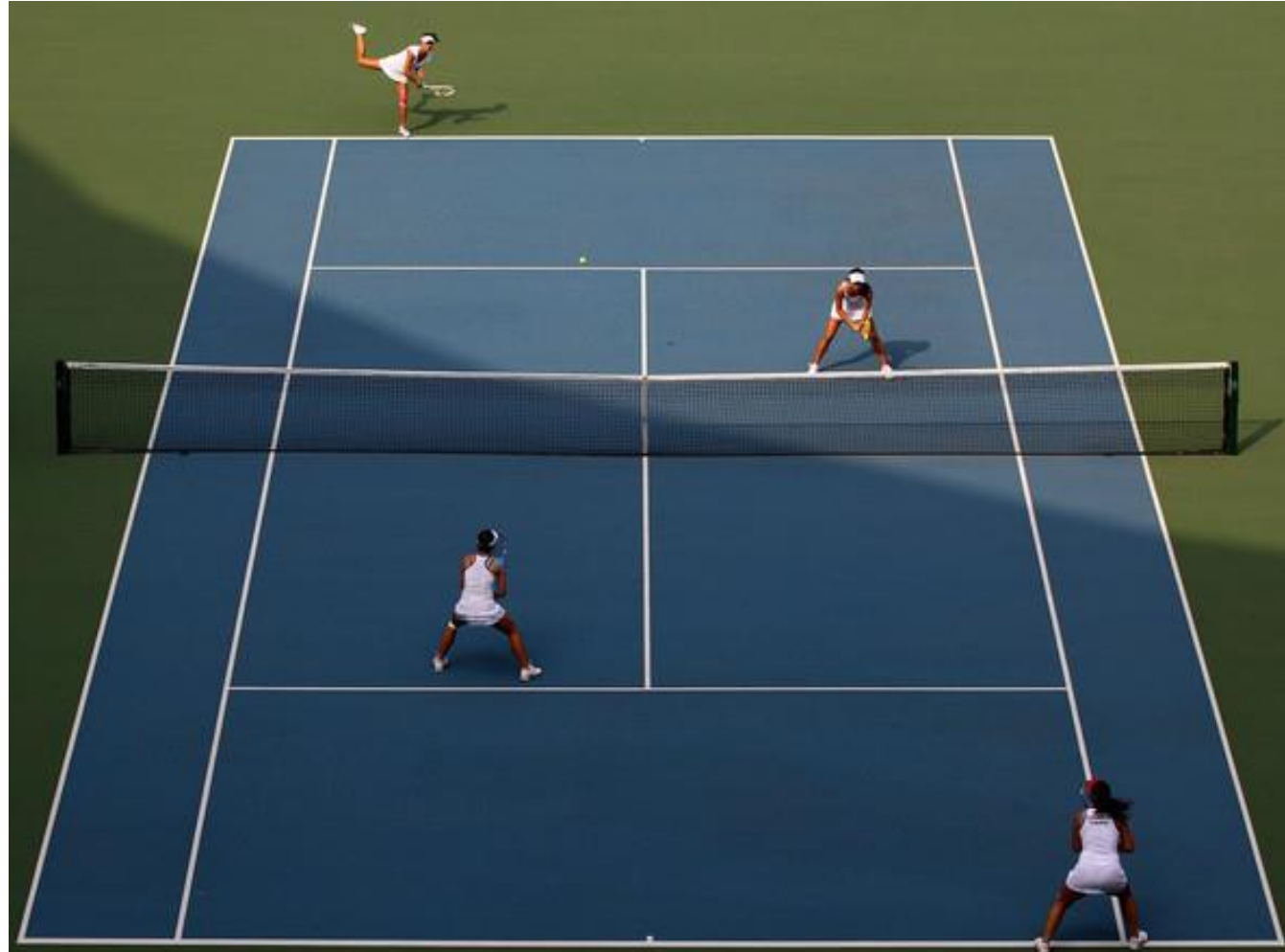


The Gastrointestinal Tract (GIT)

- A tube running from the mouth to the anus
 - Everything inside of the tube is technically “outside” of the body
- Dual function:
 - Digest and absorb nutrients
 - Prevent parasites, pathogens, antigens, enzymes, toxins, etc. from infiltrating “self”
 - Barrier function



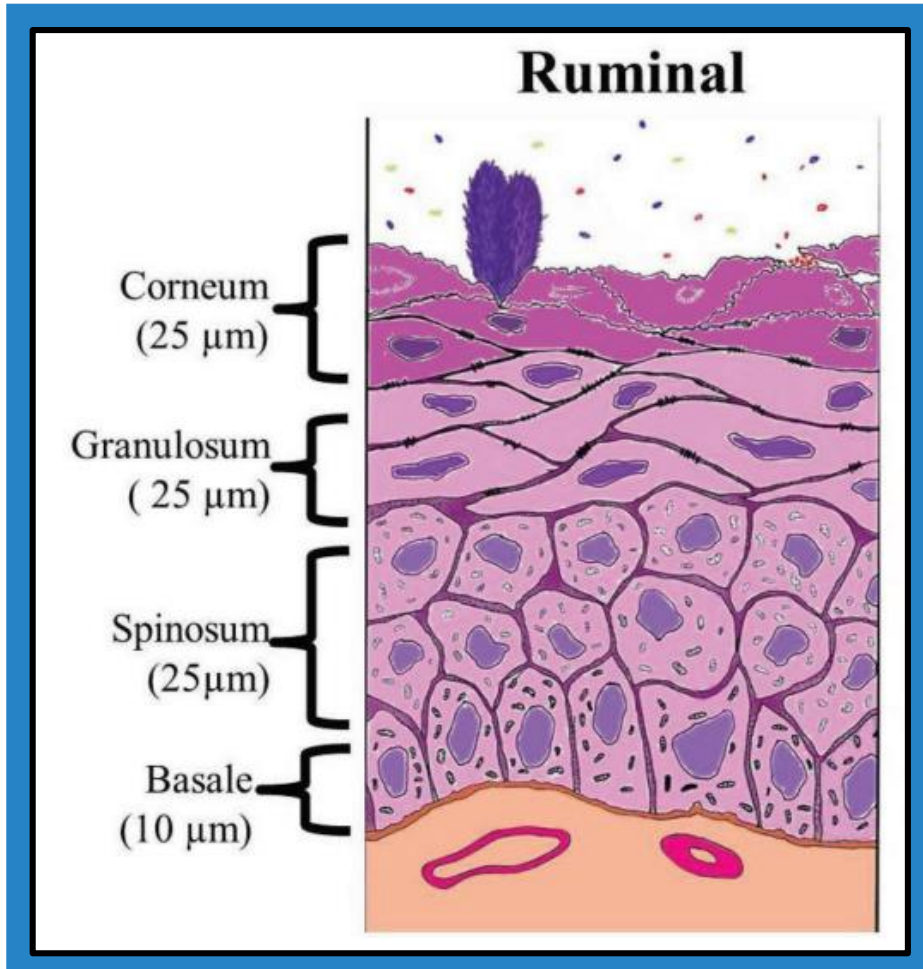
Human Gastrointestinal Tract Surface Area



Anatomical Differences

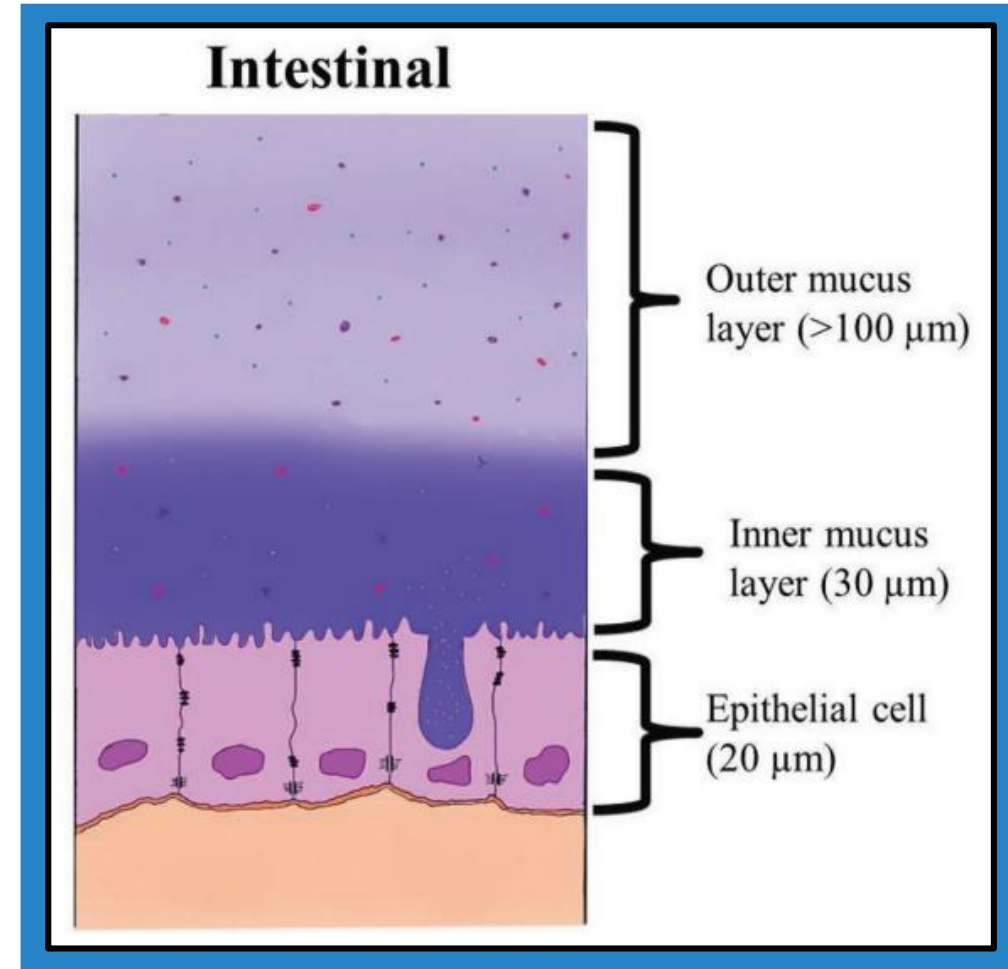
Reticulo-Rumen and Omasum

- Stratified squamous epithelium



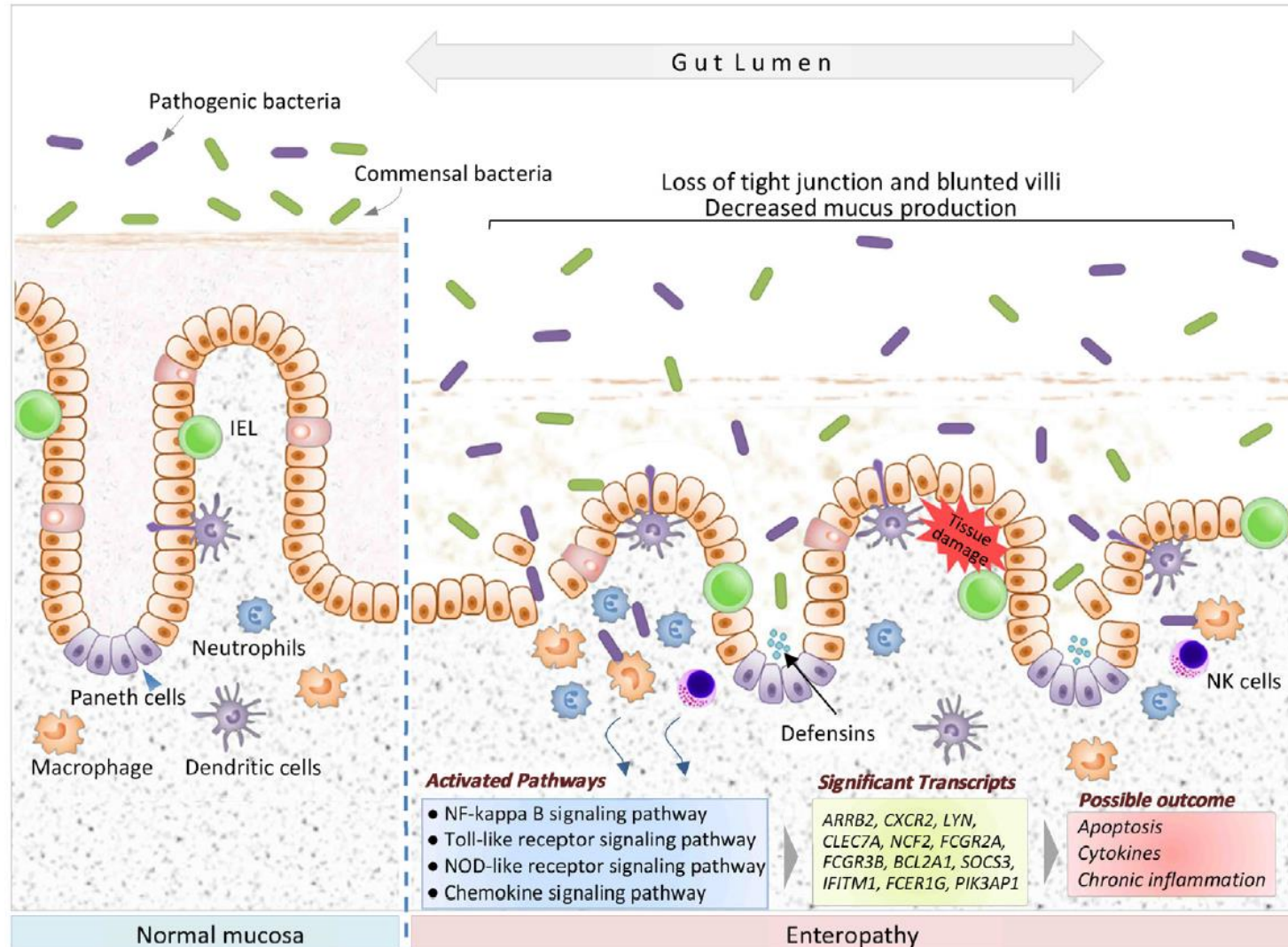
Lower Gut

- Columnar epithelium



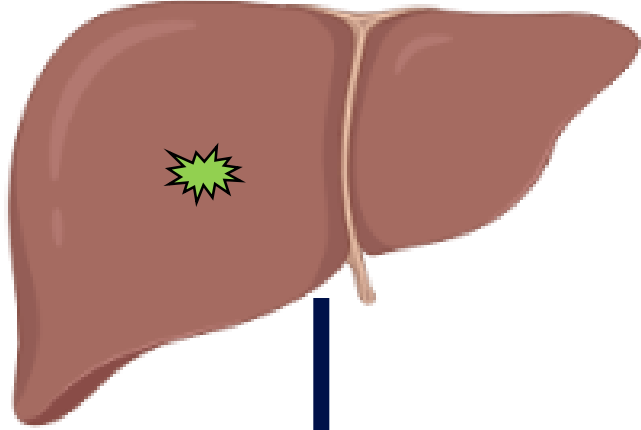
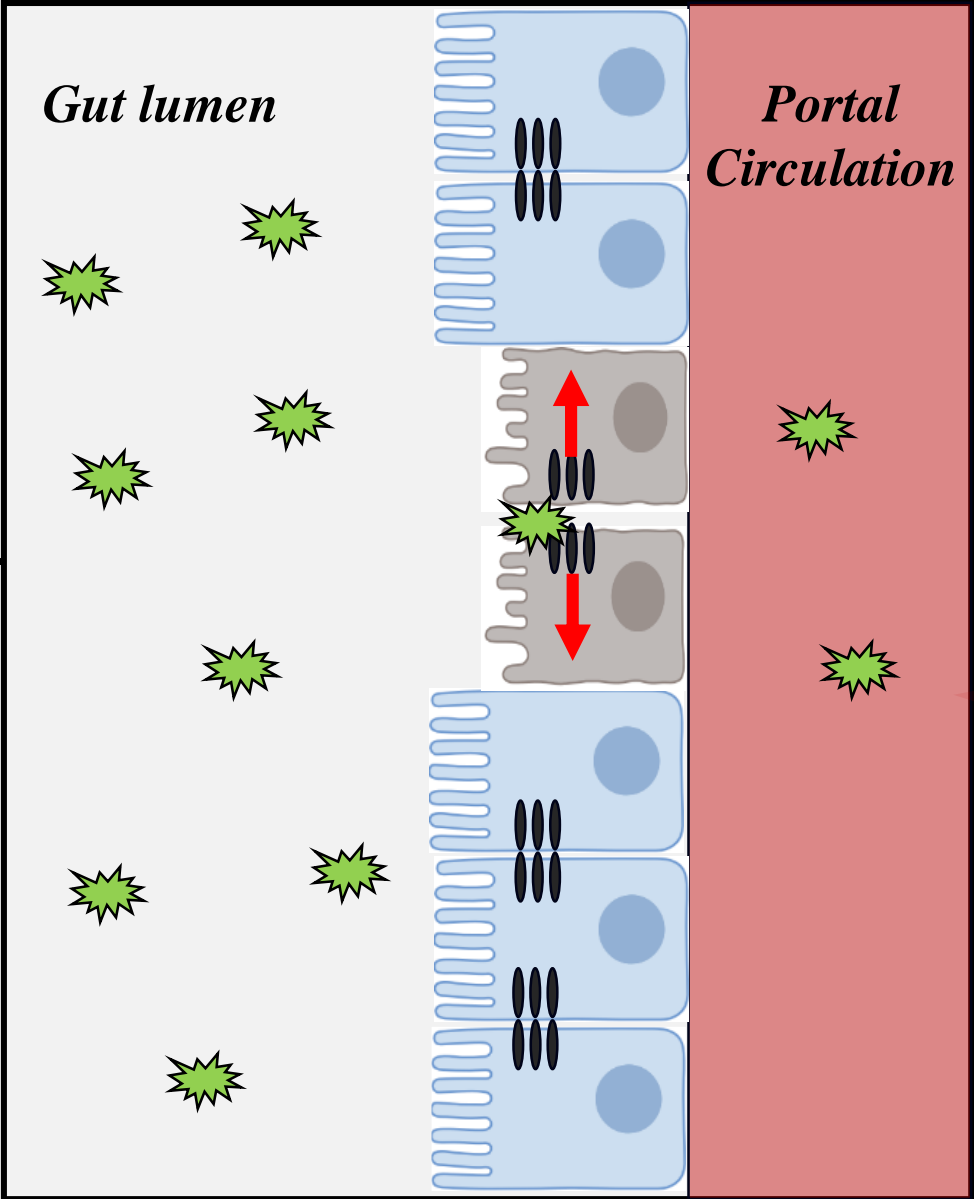
Intestinal Immune System

75% of the immune system resides in the gastrointestinal tract!



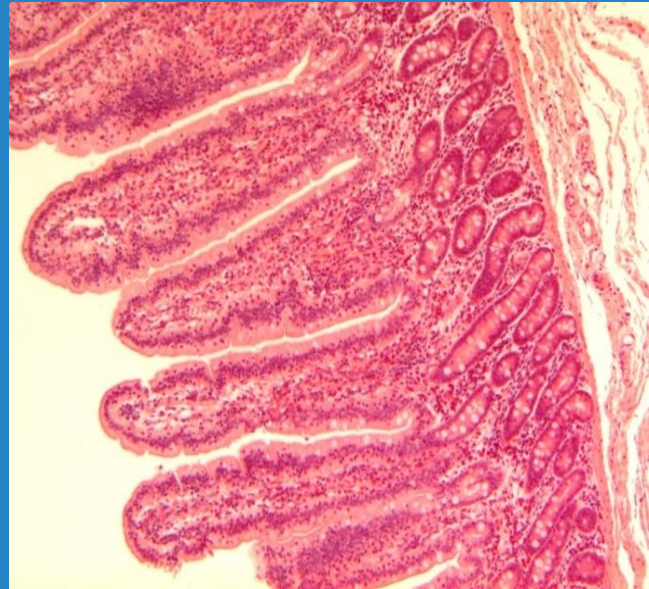
Situations and Outcome of Intestinal Barrier Dysfunction

- Heat stress
- Feed restriction
- Abrupt dietary changes
- Transportation
- Social and psychological stress
- Etc.

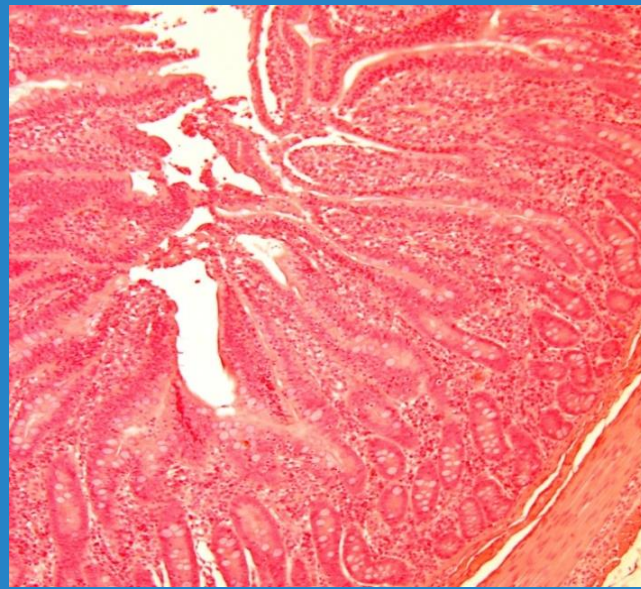


Systemic Inflammation

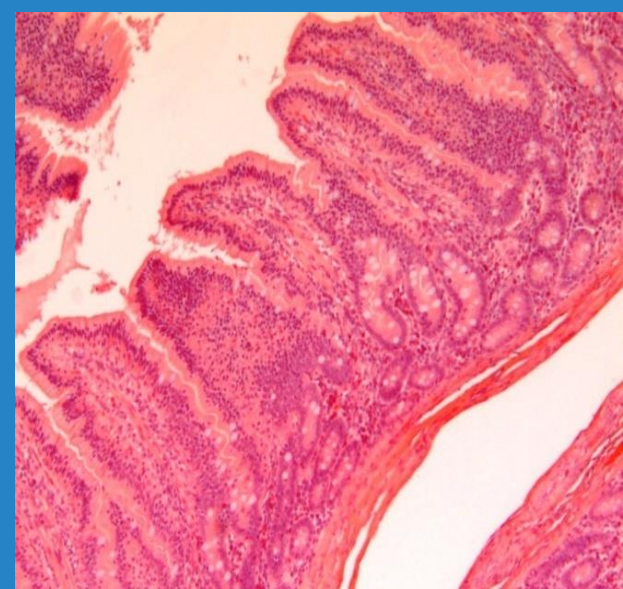
Heat Stress and Leaky Gut



Thermal Neutral

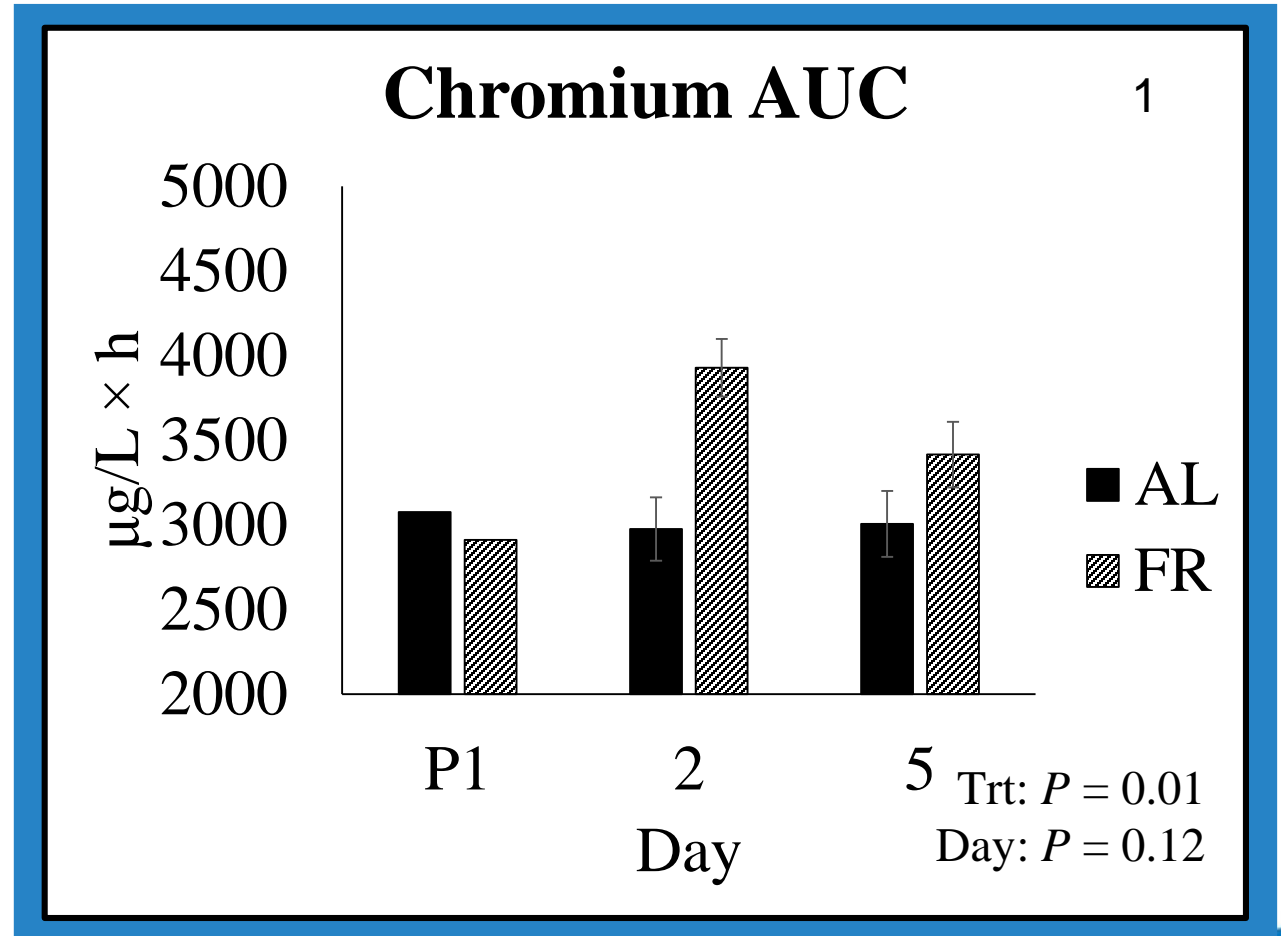
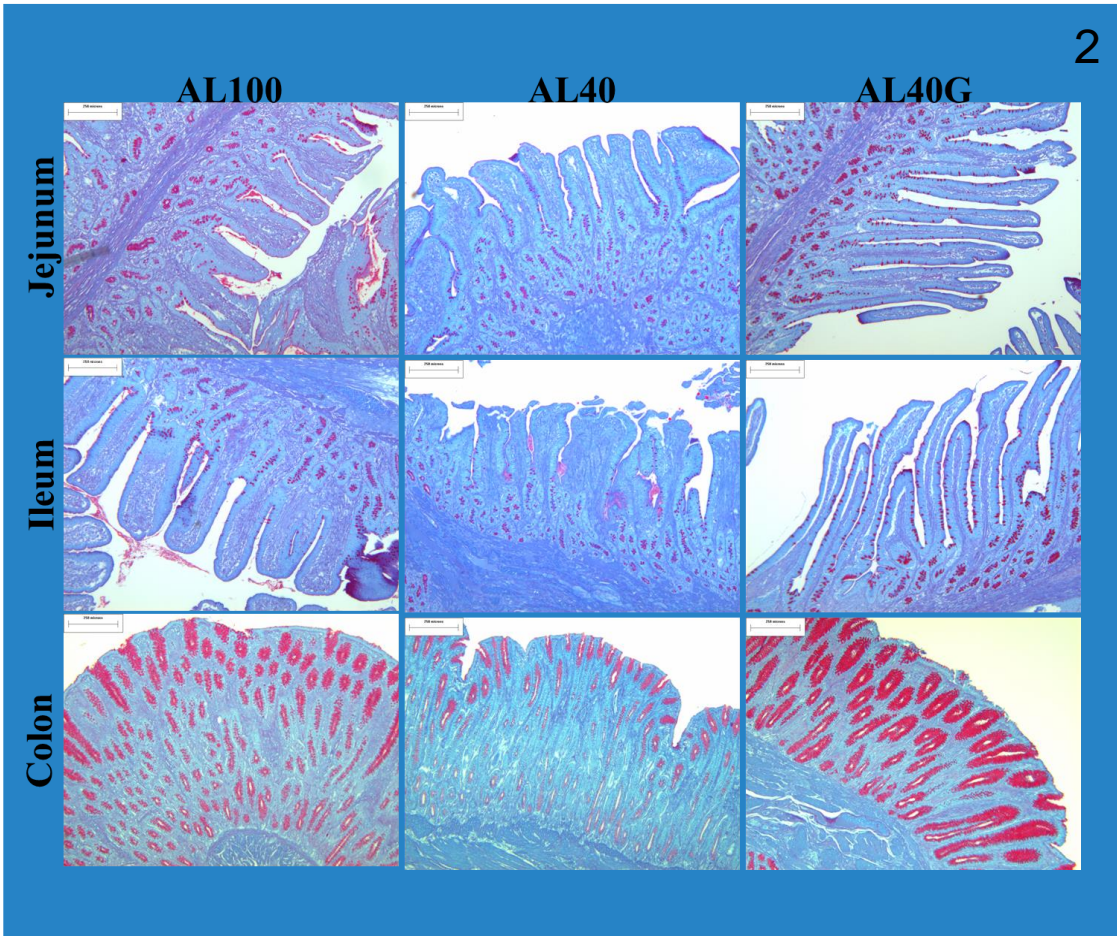


Heat Stress



Pair-fed

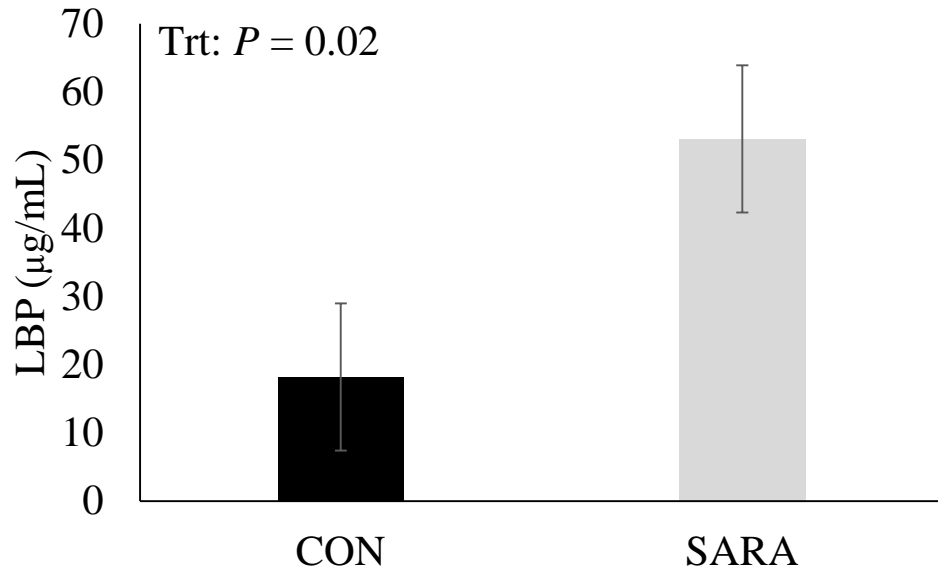
Feed Restriction and Leaky Gut



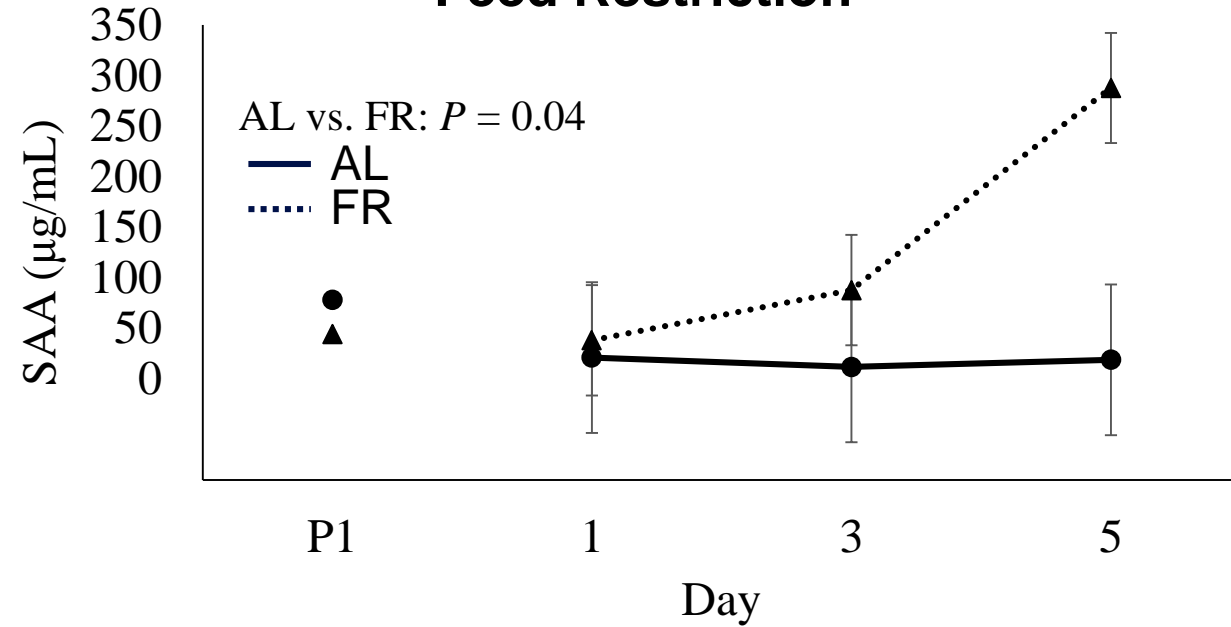
¹Horst, E. A. et al. 2020. "Evaluating effects of zinc hydroxychloride on biomarkers of inflammation and intestinal integrity during feed restriction" J. Dairy Sci. 103:11911-11929

²Kvidera, S.K. et al. 2017. "Characterizing effects of feed restriction and glucagon-like peptide 2 administration on biomarkers of inflammation and intestinal morphology." J. Dairy Sci. 100: 9402-9417.

Subacute Rumen Acidosis



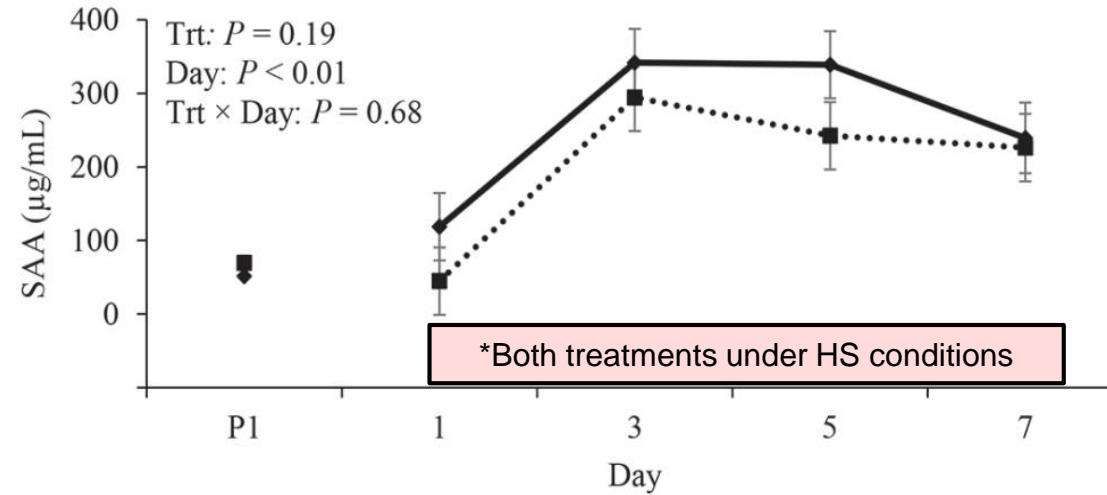
Feed Restriction



Khafipour, E. et al. 2009. "A grain-based subacute ruminal acidosis challenge causes translocation of lipopolysaccharide and triggers inflammation" J. Dairy Sci. 92:1060-1070.

Horst, E. A. et al. 2020. "Evaluating effects of zinc hydroxychloride on biomarkers of inflammation and intestinal integrity during feed restriction" J. Dairy Sci. 103:11911-11929

Heat Stress



Al-Qaisi, M. et al. 2020. "Effects of a Saccharomyces cerevisiae fermentation product on heat-stressed dairy cows." J. Dairy Sci. 103:9634-9645





What are the consequences of leaky gut-induced inflammation?

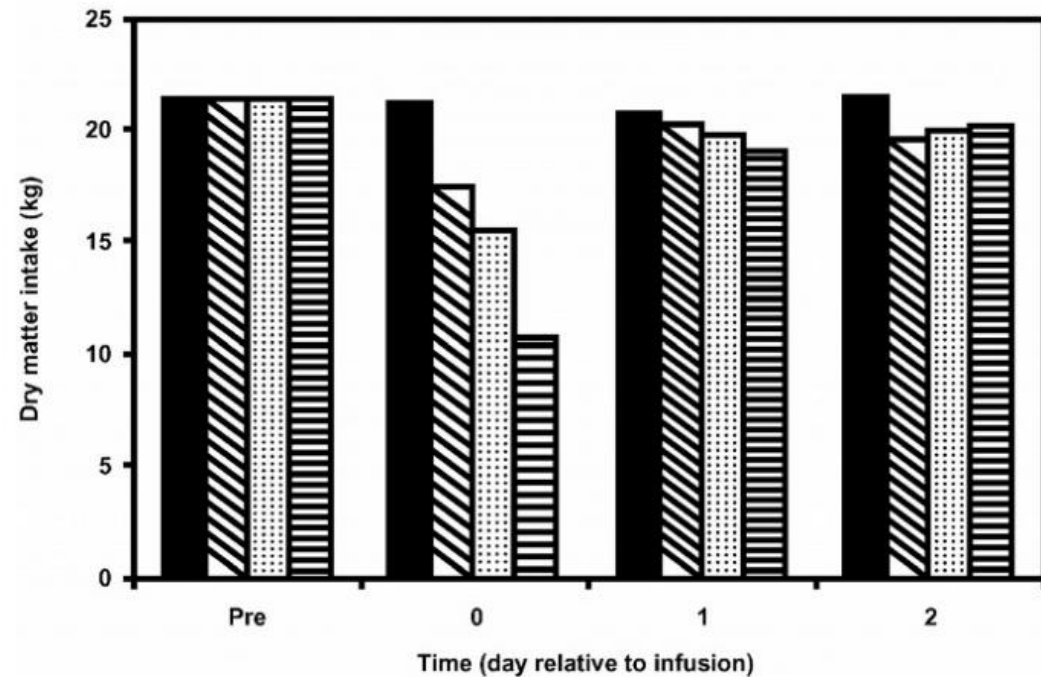
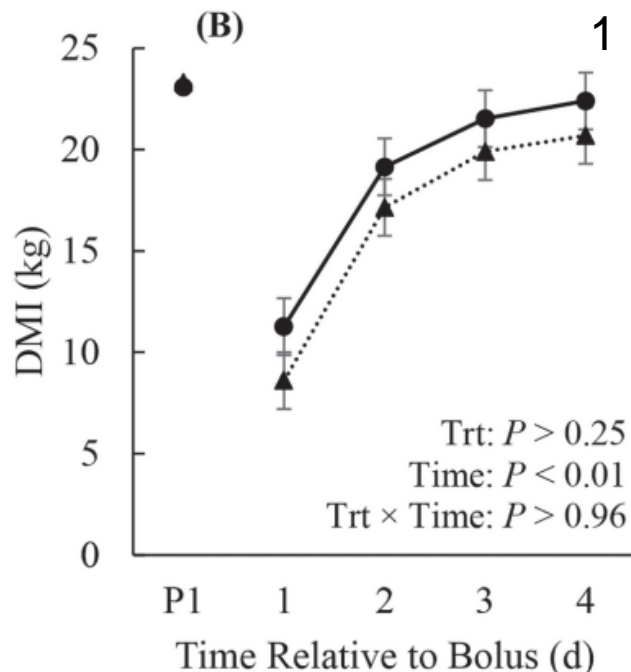
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Inflammation—Feed intake

- Inflammatory mediators are potent anorexic compounds (Kushibiki et al., 2003)
- Reduced feed intake is a highly conserved species response to infection (Aubert et al., 1997; Wang et al., 2016)
- Infection decreases feed consumption, even in insects (Adamo, 2005)

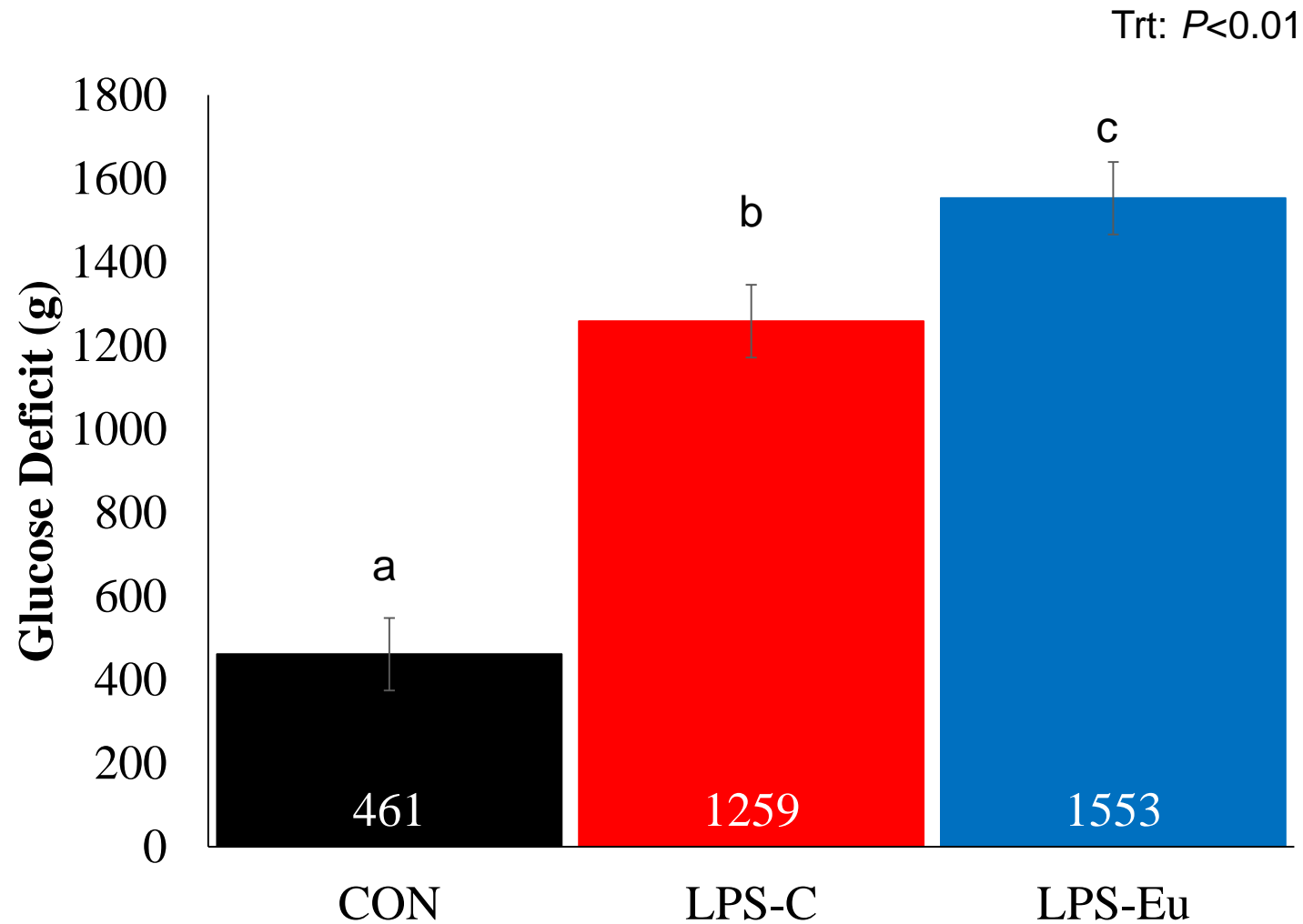


2

Immunometabolism – The Warburg Effect

- Immune cells become obligate glucose utilizers when activated
 - Called “The Warburg Effect”
- Advantages of Warburg effect:
 - Rapid production of ATP
 - Synthesis of biomolecules (nucleotides, reducing equivalents, etc.)
 - Adaptation to hypoxic environment
 - Inflammatory signaling
- Seen in both innate and adaptive immune cells

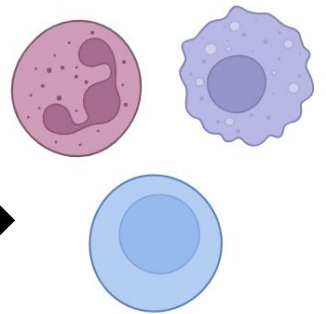
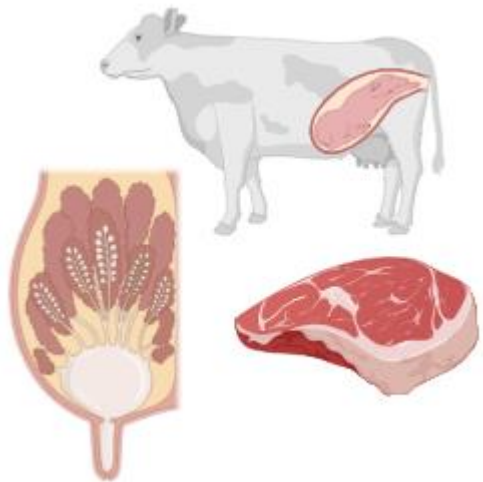




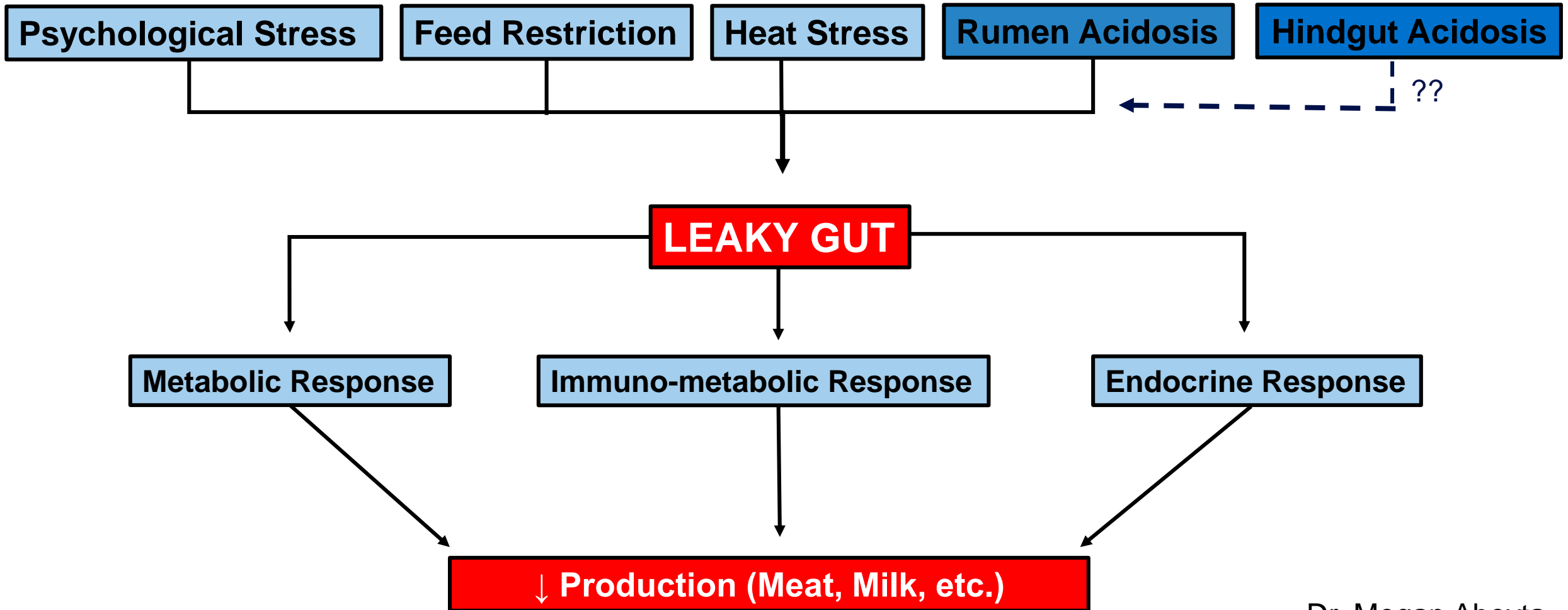
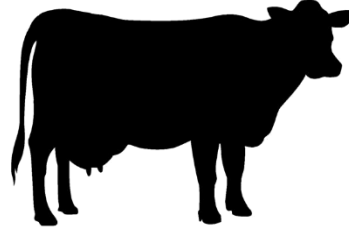
1553 g – 461 g = 1092 g in a 12 h period



INFLAMMATION

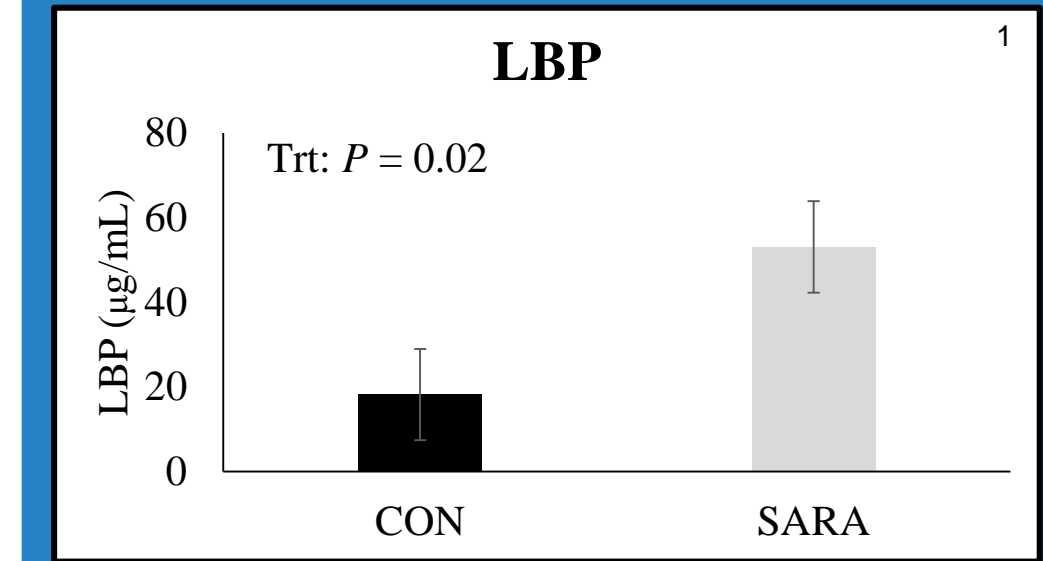
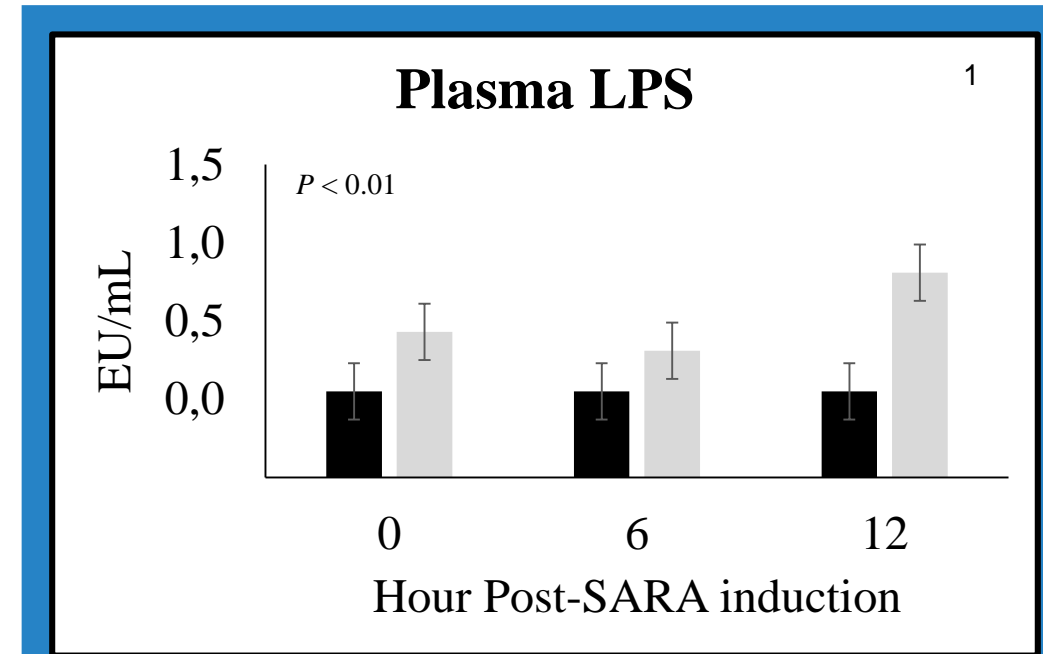


What Causes Leaky Gut?



Subacute Rumen Acidosis (SARA)

- Result of high concentrate feeding with insufficient physically effective fiber
 - Particularly common with an abrupt dietary change (i.e., transition from a pre- to postpartum diet)²
 - Accumulation of short chain fatty acids resulting in reduced pH below an arbitrary threshold of 5.6-5.8³
- Characterized by reduced feed intake, fiber digestion, and performance and different degrees of diarrhea with frothy feces and mucin casts
- Causes GIT hyperpermeability and systemic inflammation^{1,3,4}
 - **However, the site of barrier dysfunction along the GIT remains unclear**



¹Khafipour, E. et al. 2009. "A grain-based subacute ruminal acidosis challenge causes translocation of lipopolysaccharide and triggers inflammation" J. Dairy Sci. 92:1060-1070.

²Plaizier, J. C. et al. 2022. "Invited Review: Effect of subacute ruminal acidosis on gut health of dairy cows." J. Dairy Sci. 105:7141-7160.

³Gozho, G. N. et al. 2005. "Subacute ruminal acidosis induces ruminal lipopolysaccharide endotoxin release and triggers an inflammatory response" J. Dairy Sci. 88:1399-1403.

⁴Danscher, A. M. et al. 2011. "Acute phase protein response during acute ruminal acidosis in cattle" Livest. Sci. 135:62-69.

Not all SARA Challenges are Created Equal

Alfalfa pellet-induced SARA

Grain-based SARA

↑ Hindgut Fermentation

Depressed rumen pH and increased ruminal LPS alone do not result in LPS translocation and systemic inflammation

Blood

LPS undetectable
No change in APP¹

Blood

Increased LPS
Systemic Inflammation

¹Acute phase proteins (i.e., Serum amyloid A, Haptoglobin, LPS-binding protein)

Khafipour, E. et al. 2009. "A grain-based subacute ruminal acidosis challenge causes translocation of lipopolysaccharide and triggers inflammation" J. Dairy Sci. 92:1060-1070.

Khafipour, E. et al. 2009. "Alfalfa pellet-induced subacute ruminal acidosis in dairy cows increases bacterial endotoxin in the rumen without causing inflammation" J. Dairy Sci. 92:1712-1724

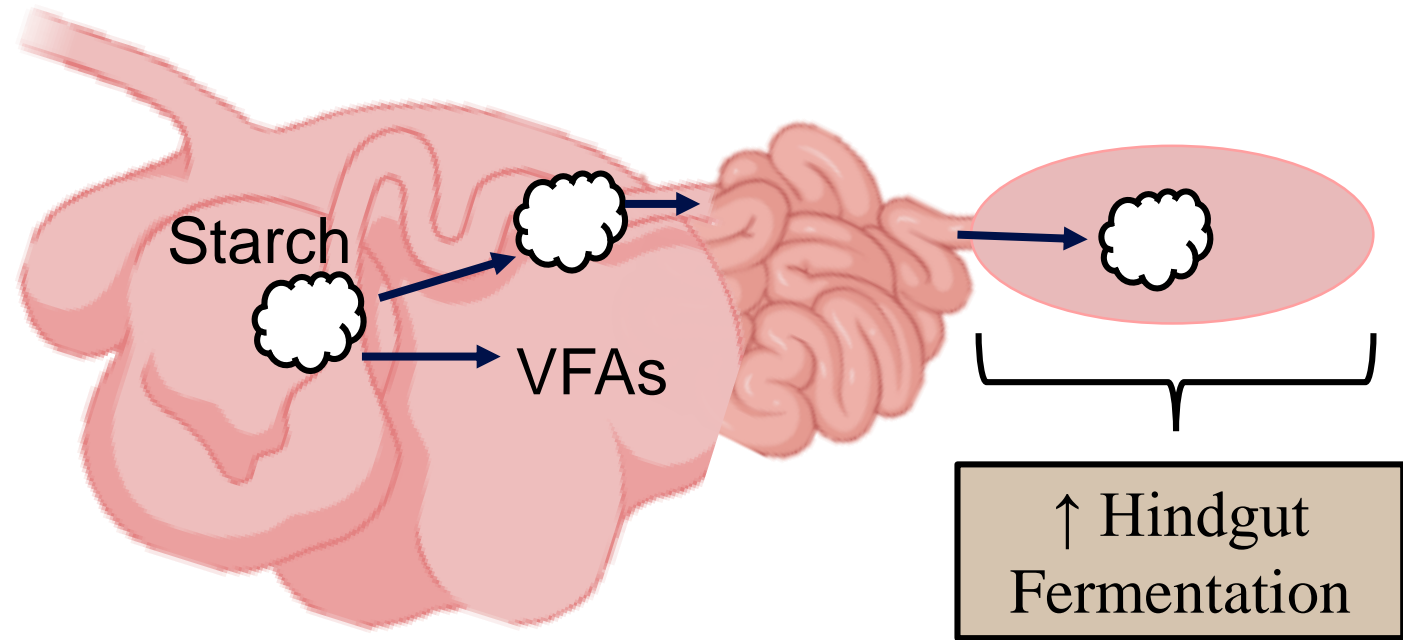
Li, S. et al. 2012. "Effects of subacute ruminal acidosis challenges on fermentation and endotoxins in the rumen and hindgut of dairy cows" J. Dairy Sci. 95:294-303.

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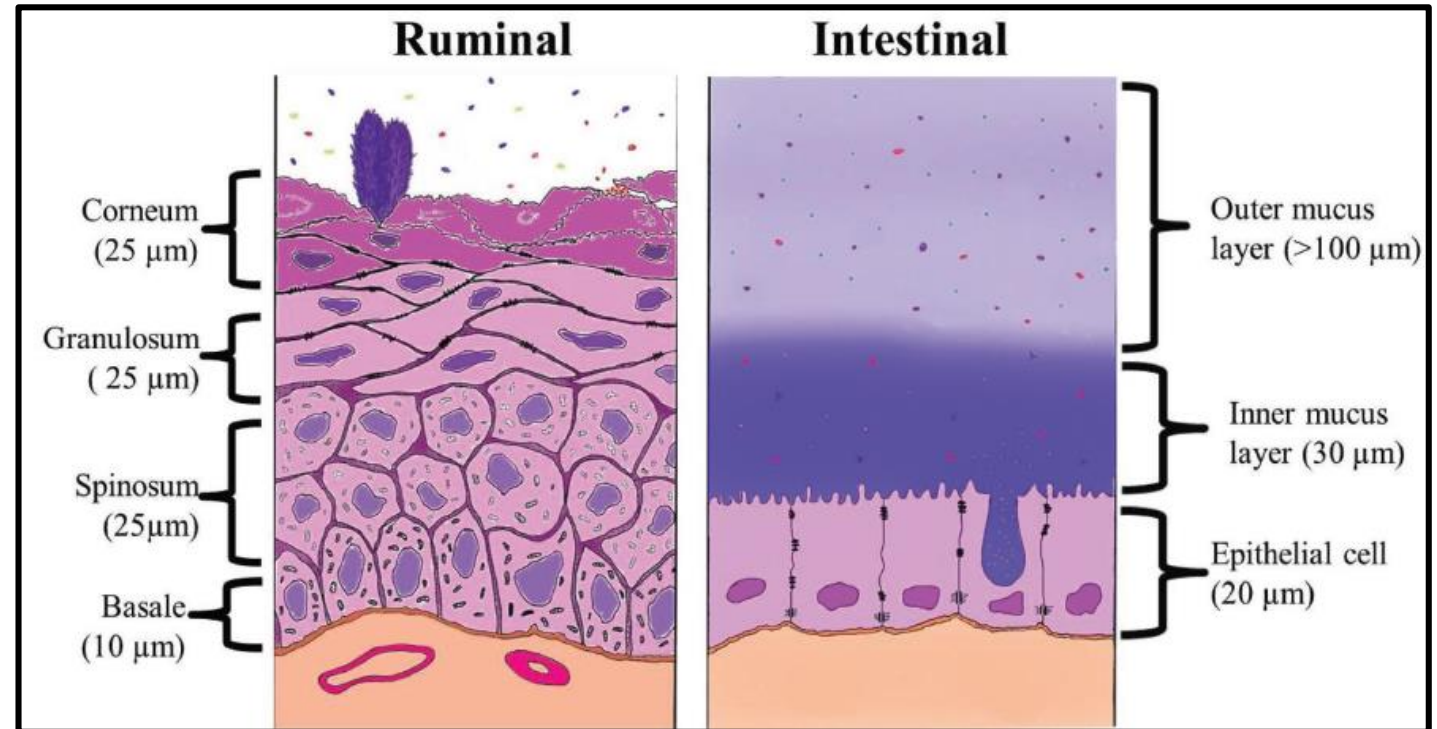
Hindgut Acidosis

- Hindgut: cecum and colon
- Increased post ruminal starch load
 - High grain feeding
 - Slug feeding
 - Rumen acidosis
- Increased fermentation
 - ↑ VFAs, ↑ free endotoxin, etc.
- Diarrhea, bubbly feces, mucin casts

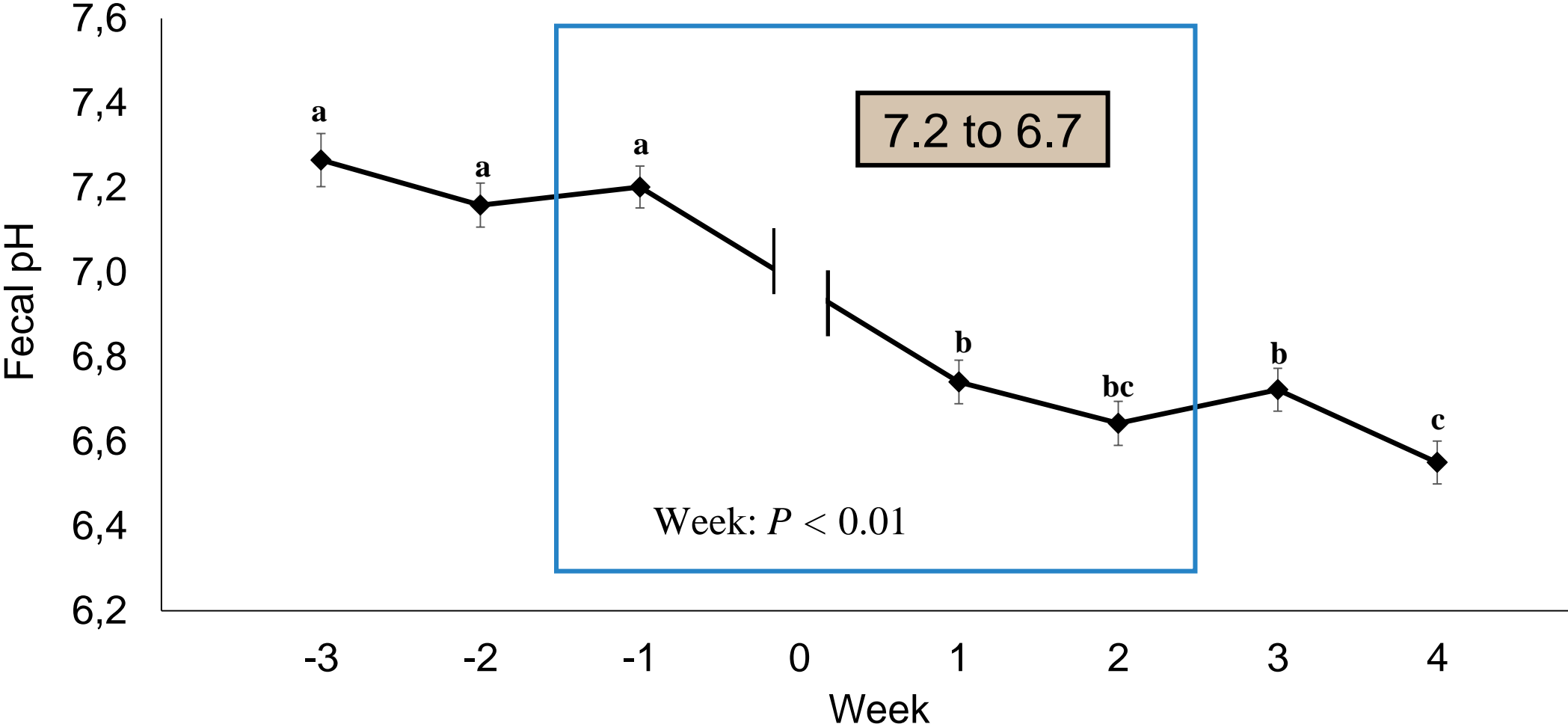


Hindgut Acidosis

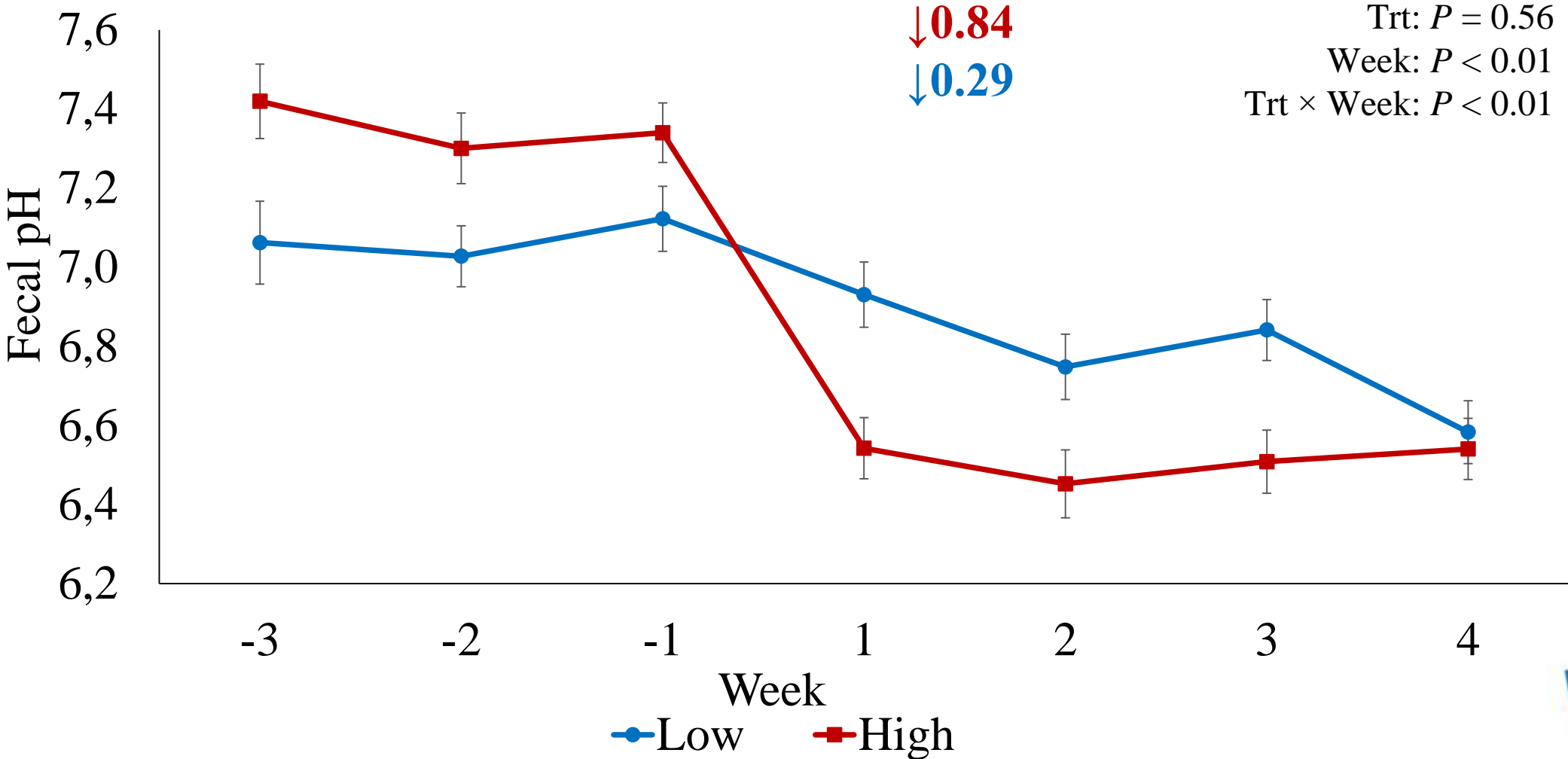
- Post-ruminal GIT is less fortified against insults than rumen
 - Apparent anatomical disadvantage
 - Absence of protozoa
 - No salivary buffering
- Does the hindgut contribute?



Fecal pH during the Transition Period



pH Classification from Pre- to Post-partum

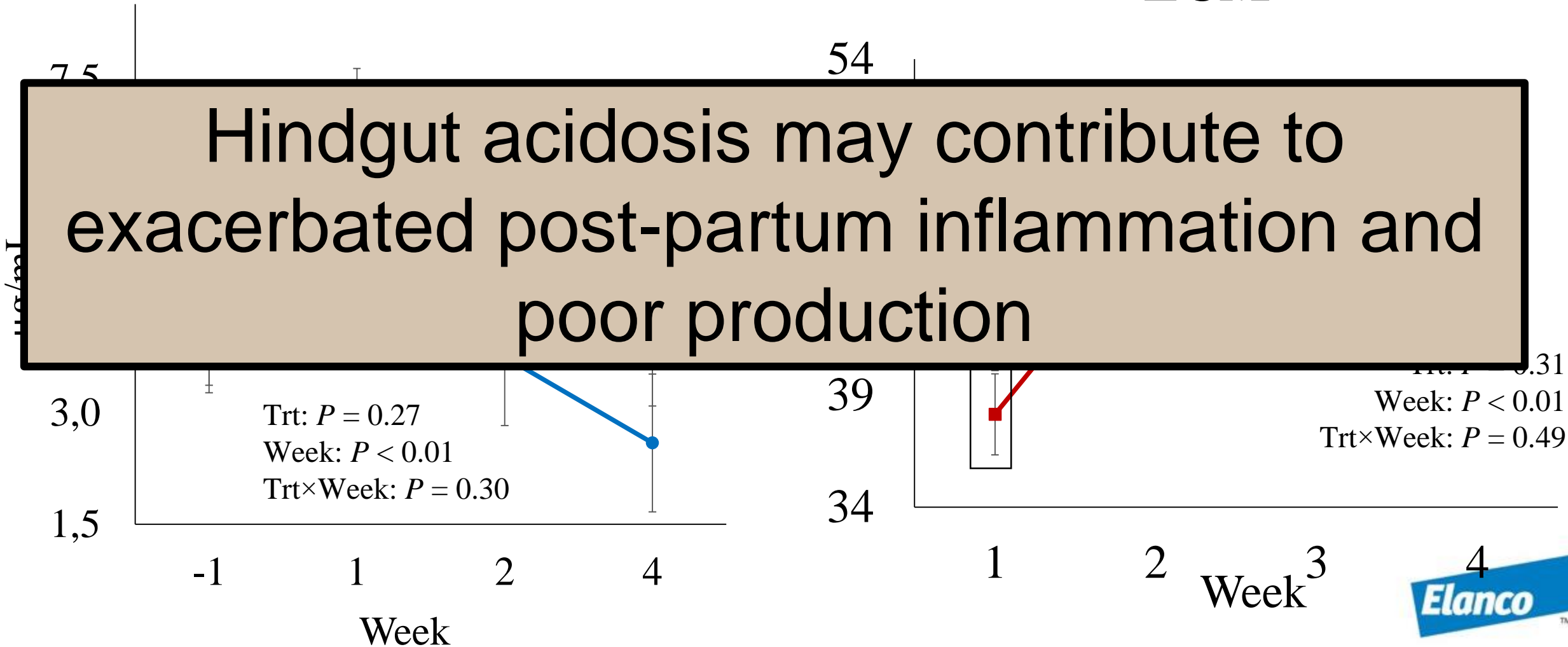


Rodriguez-Jimenez, S. et al. 2019. "Relationships between fecal pH and milk production, metabolism, and acute phase protein response in periparturient dairy cows" J. Dairy Sci. 102 (Suppl. 1):402.

Fecal pH Δ

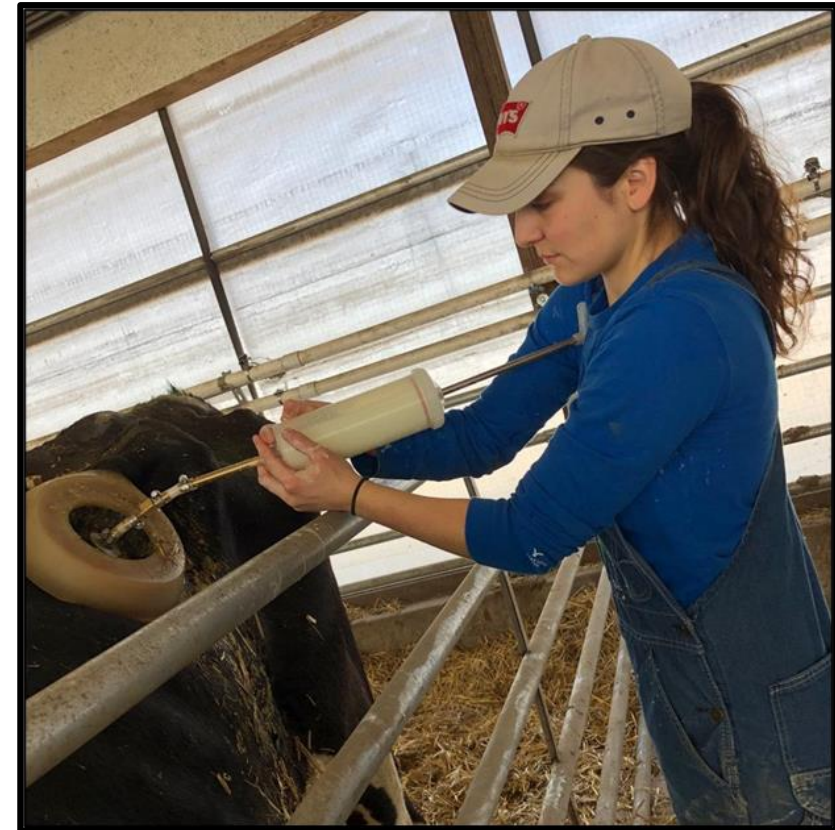
LBP

ECM



Isolating the Hindgut

- Can we isolate the hindgut acidosis challenge to elucidate its role in systemic inflammation?
 - Abomasal starch infusions have been extensively utilized to investigate the independent effect (Zust et al., 2000; Bissell and Hall, 2010; Piantoni et al., 2018; Abeyta et al., 2023)



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Piantoni, P. et al. 2022. "Evaluation of feed restriction and abomasal infusion of resistant starch as models to induce intestinal barrier dysfunction in health lactating cows." J. Dairy Sci. 106:1453-1463.

Bissell, H. A., and Hall, M. B. 2010. "Cattle differ in ability to adapt to small intestinal digestion of starch" J. Dairy Sci. 93(E Suppl. 1):845.

Zust, J. et al. 2000. "Impact of lactic acid fermentation in the large intestine on acute lactic acidosis in cattle" Dtsch. Tierarztl. Wochenschr. 107:359-363

Abeyta, M. A. et al. 2023. "Effects of hindgut acidosis on inflammation, metabolism, and productivity in lactating dairy cows fed a high-fiber diet." J. Dairy Sci. 106:2879-2889.

The Experimental Journey

- All studies infused 4 kg of pure corn starch daily
 - 1 kg corn starch + 1.25 L H₂O/infusion



J. Dairy Sci. 106
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22303>

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Effects of hindgut acidosis on metabolism, inflammation, and production in dairy cows consuming a standard lactation diet

M. A. Abeyta,¹ E. A. Horst,¹ E. J. Mayorga,¹ B. M. Goetz,¹ M. Al-Qaisi,¹ C. S. McCarthy,¹ M. R. O'Neil,¹ B. C. Dooley,¹ P. Piantoni,² G. F. Schroeder,² and L. H. Baumgard^{1*}

¹Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011

²Cargill Animal Nutrition Innovation Center, Elk River, MN 55330



J. Dairy Sci. 106
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22680>

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Effects of hindgut acidosis on inflammation, metabolism, and productivity in lactating dairy cows fed a high-fiber diet

M. A. Abeyta,¹ E. A. Horst, B. M. Goetz, S. Rodriguez-Jimenez, E. J. Mayorga,¹ M. Al-Qaisi,¹ and L. H. Baumgard^{1*}

Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011



J. Dairy Sci. 106
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22689>

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Effects of hindgut acidosis on production, metabolism, and inflammatory biomarkers in feed-restricted lactating dairy cows

M. A. Abeyta,¹ E. A. Horst, B. M. Goetz, E. J. Mayorga,¹ S. Rodriguez-Jimenez, M. Caratzu, and L. H. Baumgard^{1*}

Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011



J. Dairy Sci. 106:4324–4335
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22696>

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Effects of hindgut acidosis on production, metabolism, and inflammatory biomarkers in previously immune-activated lactating dairy cows

M. A. Abeyta,¹ E. A. Horst, B. M. Goetz, E. J. Mayorga,¹ S. Rodriguez-Jimenez, M. Caratzu, and L. H. Baumgard^{1*}

Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011



J. Dairy Sci. 106:4336–4352
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22809>

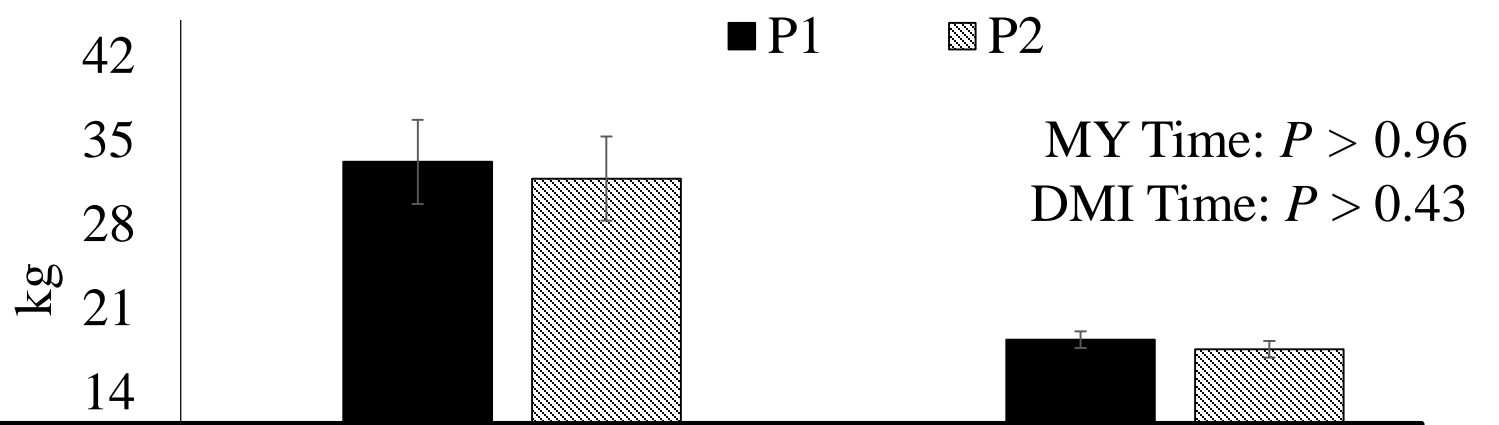
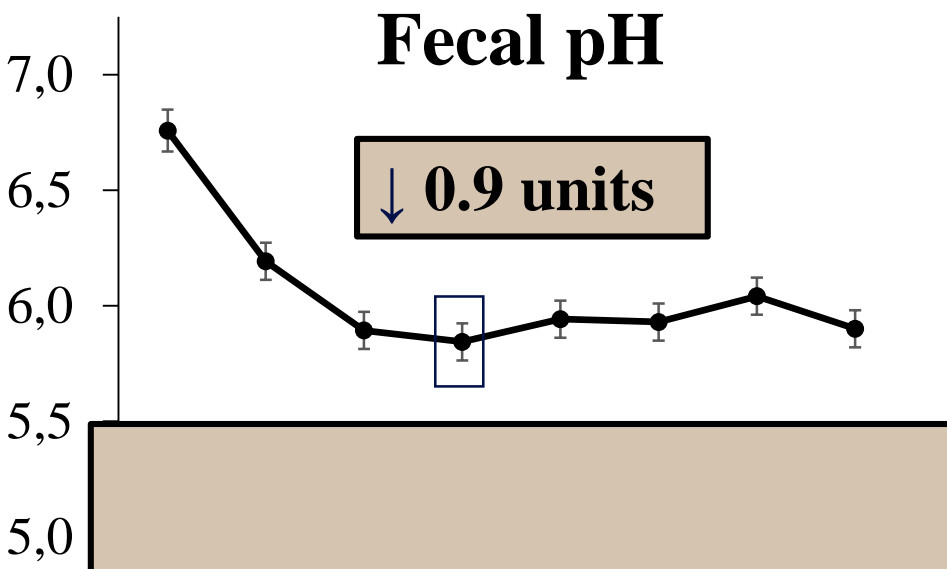
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Effects of abomasally infused rumen fluid from corn-challenged donor cows on production, metabolism, and inflammatory biomarkers in healthy recipient cows

M. A. Abeyta,¹ B. M. Goetz,¹ E. J. Mayorga,¹ S. Rodriguez-Jimenez,¹ J. Opgenorth,¹ A. D. Freestone,¹ J. M. Lourenco,² T. R. Callaway,² and L. H. Baumgard^{1*}

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²Department of Animal and Dairy Science, University of Georgia, Athens 30602



Did acclimation to a high starch diet blunt the inflammatory response to hindgut acidosis?

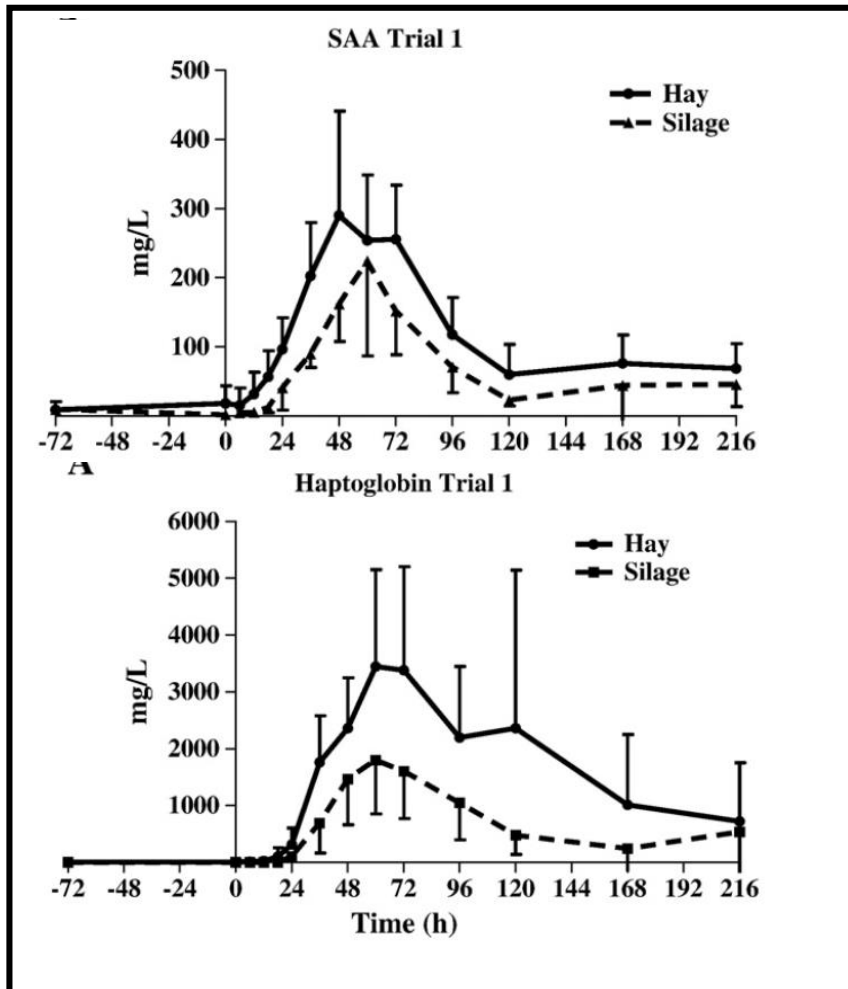
Pa
Re

Inflammatory Biomarkers

SAA, $\mu\text{g/mL}$	289.2	311.4	119.2	0.77
LBP, $\mu\text{g/mL}$	14.1	14.9	2.1	0.54

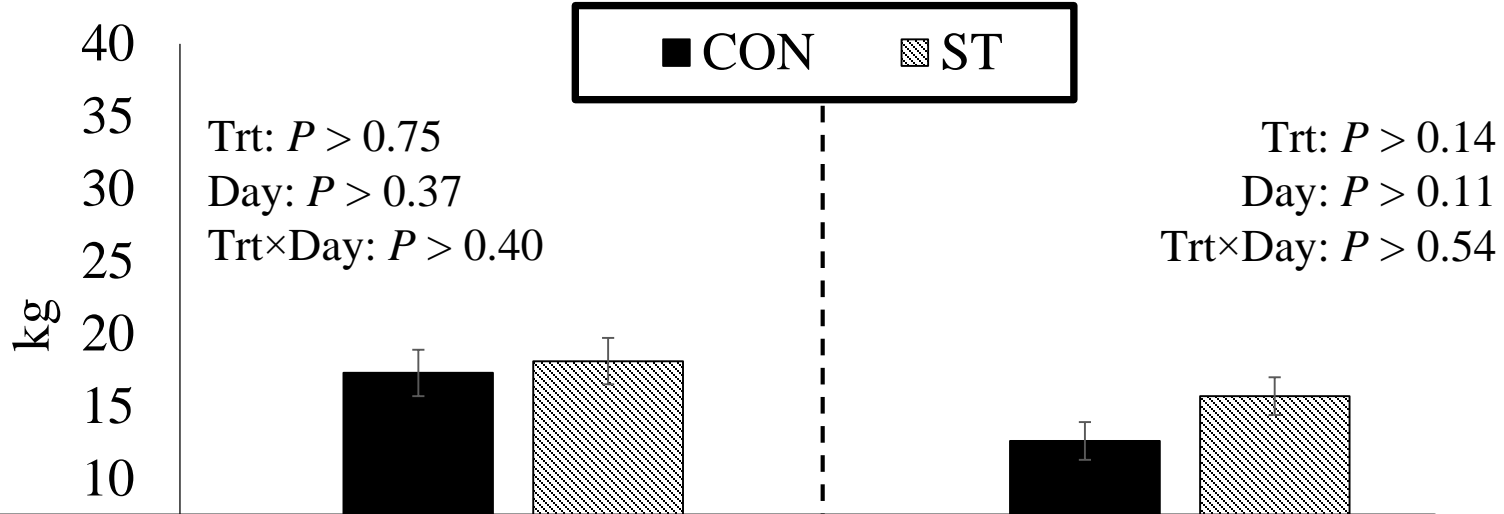
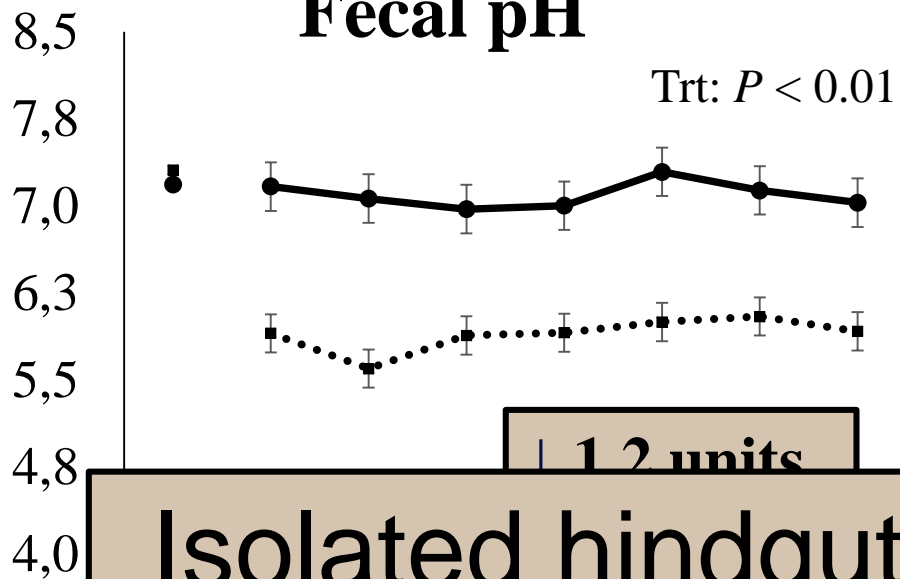
¹P1 = baseline (pre-infusion data); P2 = average for daily (rectal temp) or temporal (2, 14, 26, 48, 96, and 168 h relative to the first infusion; SAA and LBP) data

Basal Diet and Acidosis



- Prior adaptation to a barley silage diet (~15% starch dry matter) seemed to ameliorate the inflammatory response to a rumen acidosis challenge (Danscher et al., 2011)
- Abrupt dietary changes increase susceptibility to SARA, and more representative of transition period (switch from high fiber to higher starch diet)

Fecal pH



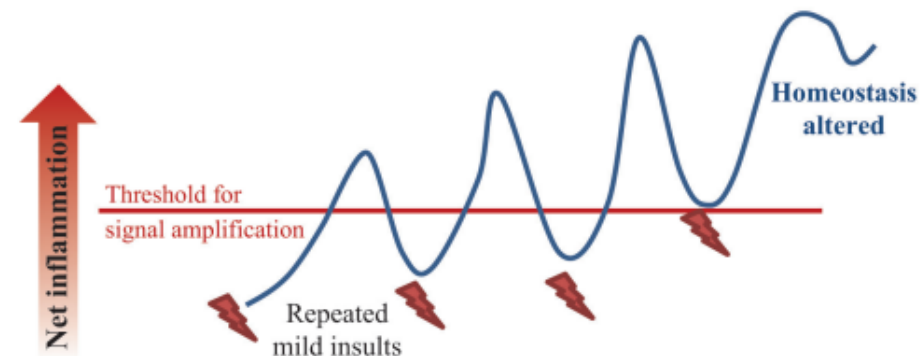
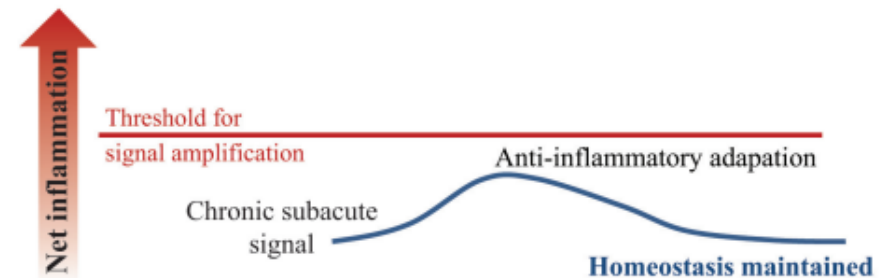
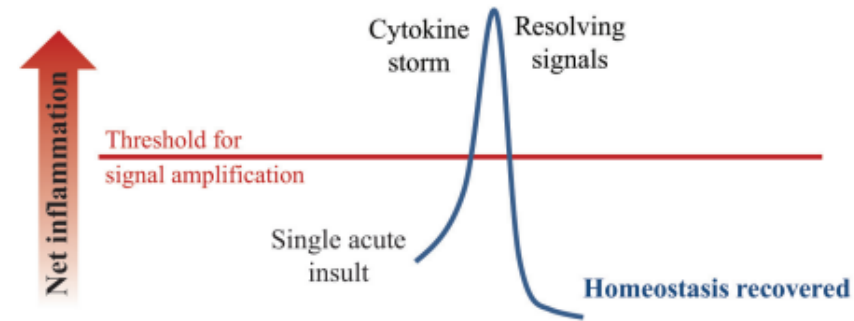
Isolated hindgut acidosis in cows adapted to a high fiber diet did not trigger systemic inflammation or compromise productivity

Parameters	CON	ST	SEM	Trt	Day	Trt×Day
Rectal Temperature, °C	38.0	38.0	0.1	0.99	0.34	0.02
Inflammatory Biomarkers						
SAA, µg/mL	166.3	168.7	43.8	0.97	0.27	0.36
LBP, µg/mL	4.8	5.4	1.1	0.72	0.78	0.96

¹CON= 6 L H₂O abomasal infusion/head/day; ST= 4 kg of corn starch + 6 L H₂O abomasal infusion/head/day

Stacking Stressors?

- Exaggerated production and inflammatory consequences with SARA observed when additional inflammatory events occur concurrently
- Could it be the absence of stacked stressors explaining the lack of response:
 - No change with previous exposure to feed restriction (Abeyta et al., 2023)
 - No change with previous exposure to repeated LPS administration (Abeyta et al., 2023)



Isolated HGA



J. Dairy Sci. 106:1453–1463
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2022-22376>

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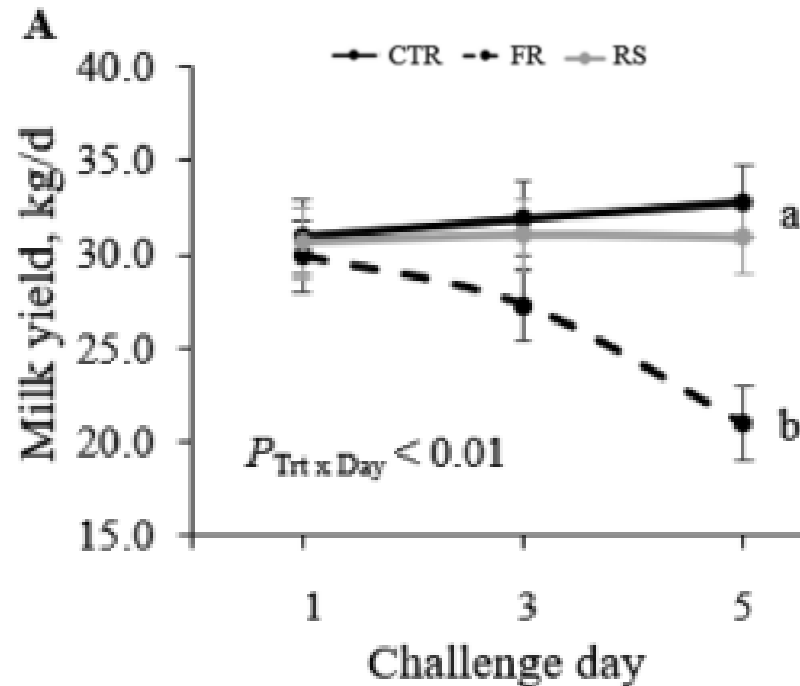
Evaluation of feed restriction and abomasal infusion of resistant starch as models to induce intestinal barrier dysfunction in healthy lactating cows

P. Piantoni,^{1*} M. A. Abeyta,² G. F. Schroeder,¹ H. A. Tucker,³ and L. H. Baumgard²

¹Cargill Animal Nutrition and Health Innovation Campus, Elk River, MN 55330

²Department of Animal Science, Iowa State University, Ames 50011

³Novus International, St. Charles, MO 63304



- No change in circulating inflammatory biomarkers (LBP, SAA, Hp)



J. Dairy Sci. 104:12520–12539
<https://doi.org/10.3168/jds.2021-20323>

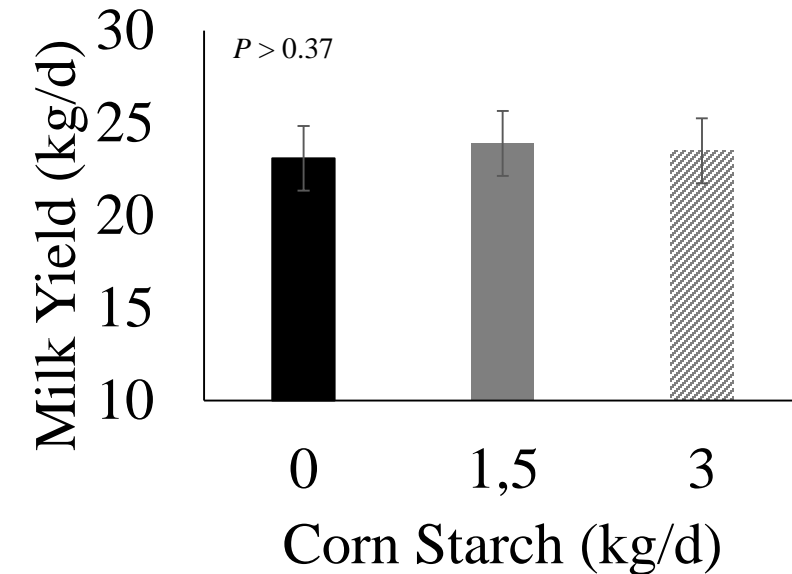
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Abomasal infusion of corn starch and β-hydroxybutyrate in early-lactation Holstein-Friesian dairy cows to induce hindgut and metabolic acidosis

Sanne van Gastelen,^{1*} Jan Dijkstra,² Sven J. J. Alferink,² Gisabeth Binnendijk,¹ Kelly Nichols,² Tamme Zandstra,² and André Bannink¹

¹Wageningen Livestock Research, Wageningen University & Research, PO Box 338, 6700 AH, Wageningen, the Netherlands

²Animal Nutrition Group, Wageningen University & Research, PO Box 338, 6700 AH, Wageningen, the Netherlands



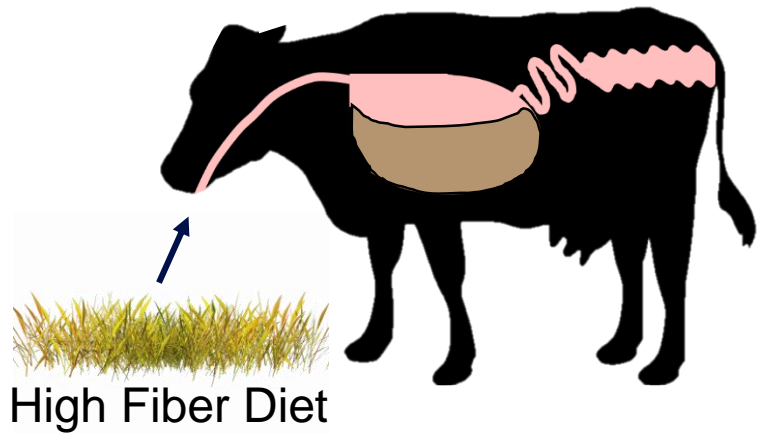
- No change in circulating inflammatory biomarkers (SAA and Hp)



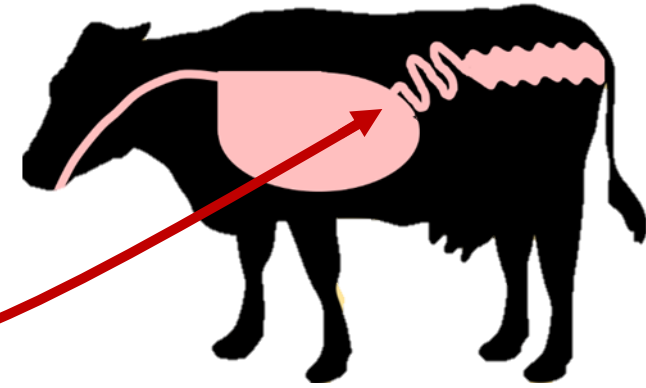
What about the rumen fluid?

- SARA challenges and high-concentrate feeding induce post-ruminal damage in cows and small ruminants:
 - Decreased tight junction proteins, goblet cell loss, increased cytokine gene expression, etc.
 - Lai et al., 2022; Tao et al., 2014; Samo et al., 2020
- Acidotic rumen fluid contains a plethora of potentially noxious compounds such as ethanol, endotoxin, and bioactive amines (e.g., histamine) which may contribute to compromised post-ruminal barrier function
 - Saleem et al., 2012



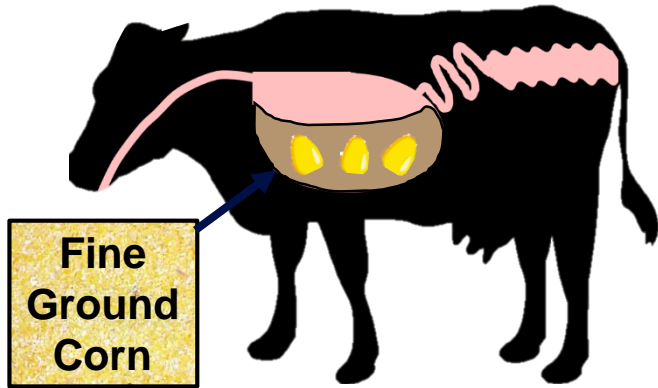


**Healthy
Rumen Fluid**

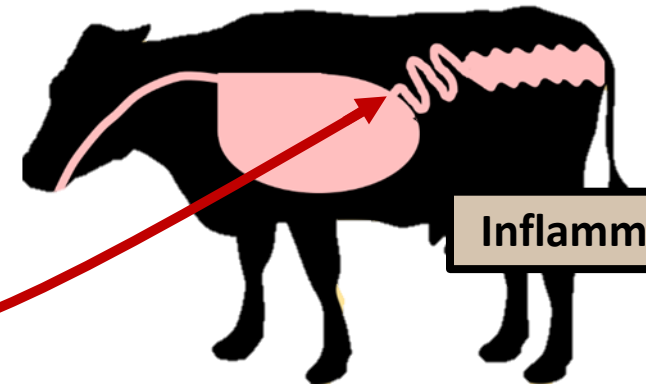


Healthy Fluid Donors

Abomasal Infusion: Healthy Fluid



**Acidotic
Rumen Fluid**



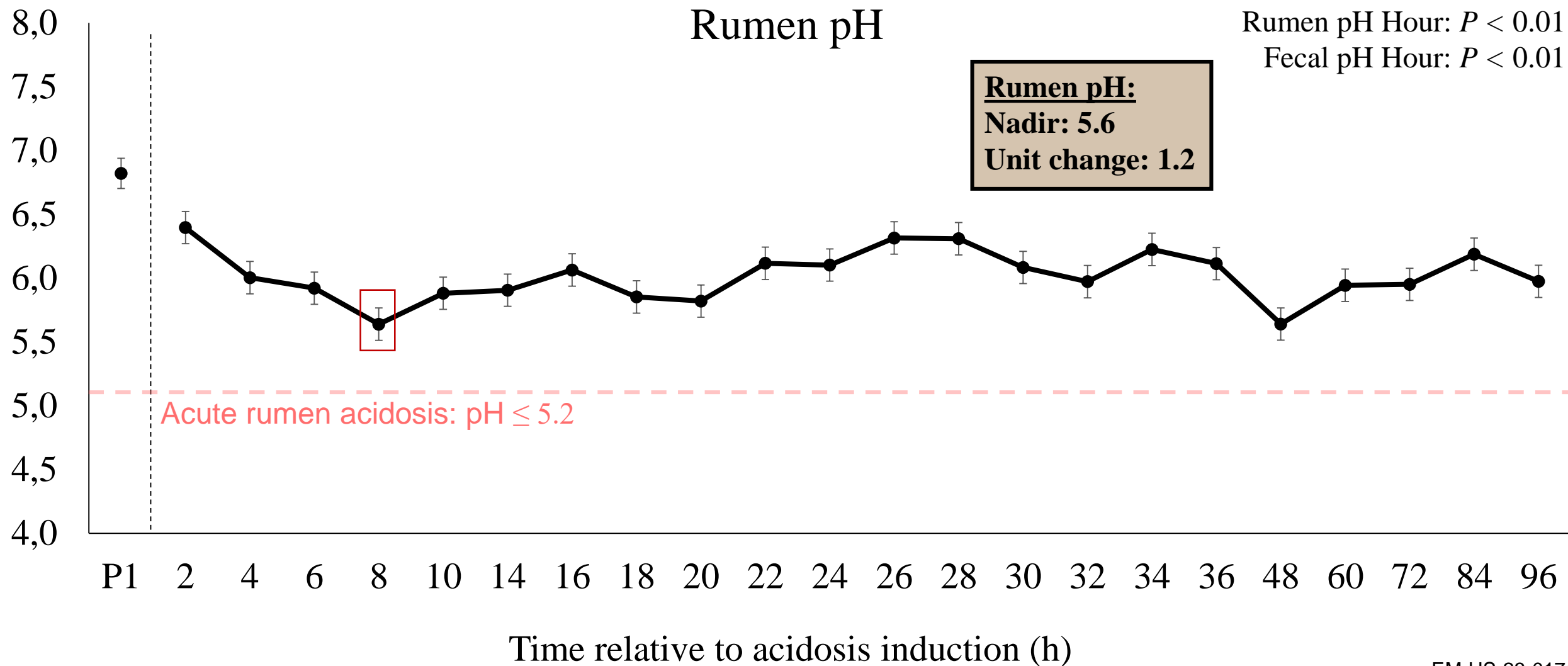
Acidotic Fluid Donors

Abomasal Infusion: Acidotic Fluid

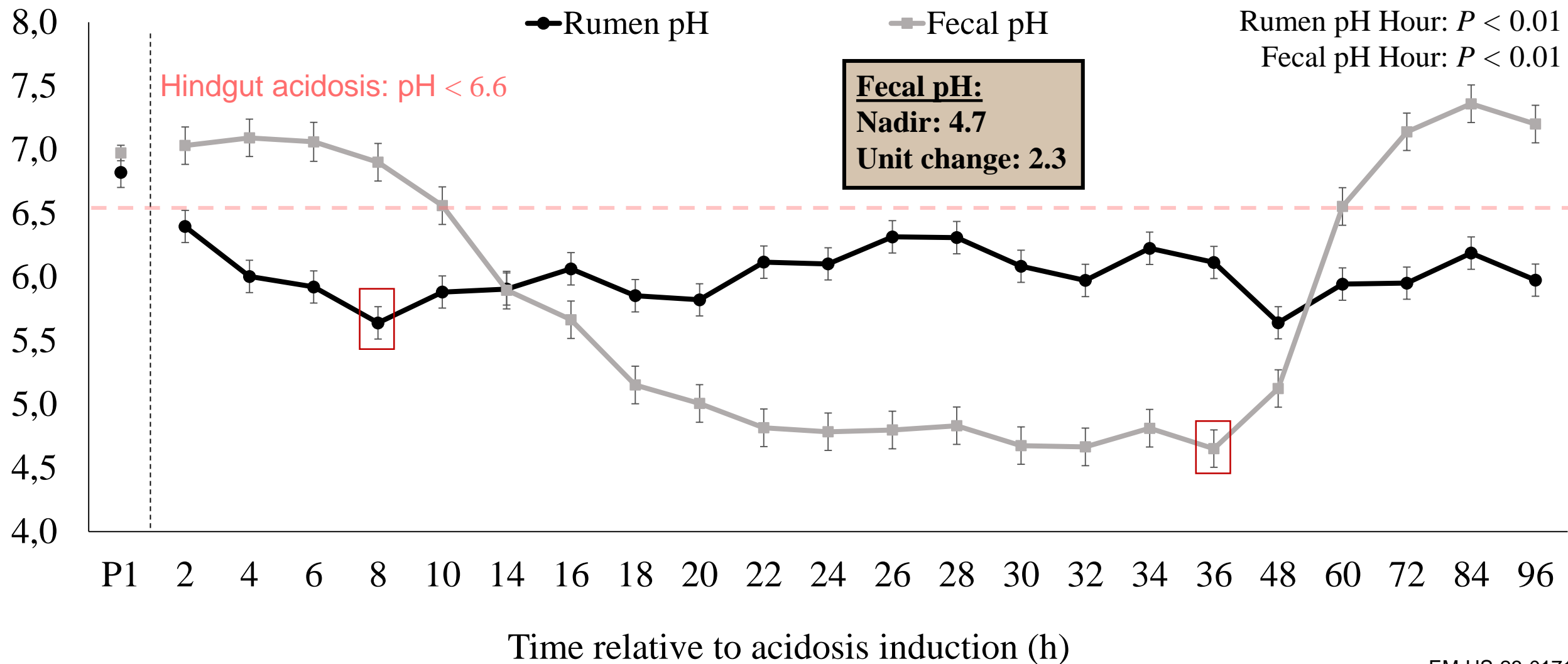
Dr. Megan Abeyta

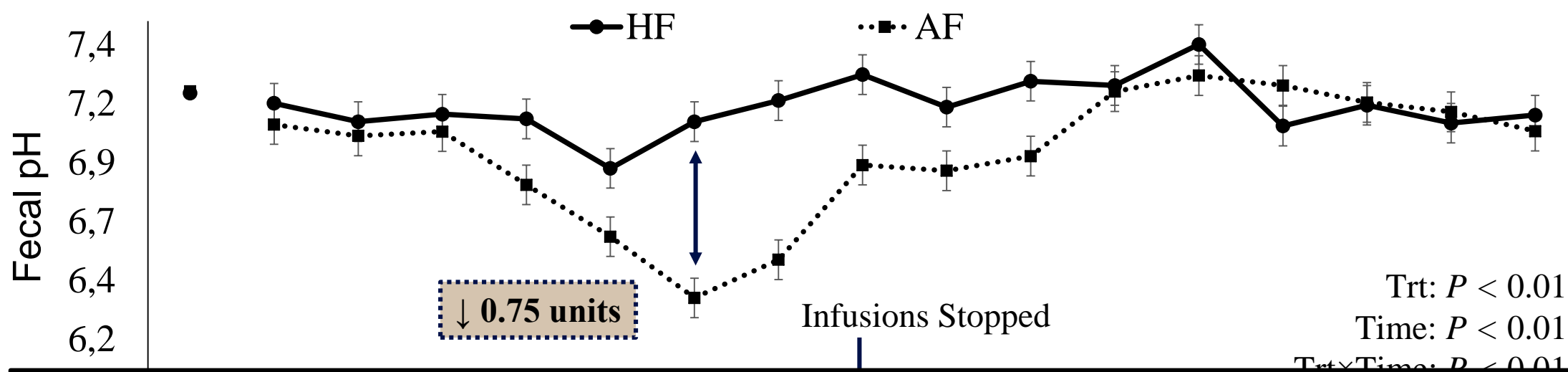
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DONORS: Rumen and Fecal pH



DONORS: Rumen and Fecal pH





Abomasal infusion of acidotic rumen fluid did not trigger systemic inflammation or compromise productivity

DMI, kg/d	17.5	17.2	0.6	0.77	<0.01	0.47
Rectal Temperature, °C	38.3	38.5	0.1	0.20	0.45	0.52
Inflammatory Biomarkers						
SAA, µg/mL	32.5	32.2	5.2	0.97	0.12	0.35
LBP, µg/mL	3.3	3.3	0.2	0.89	0.61	0.74

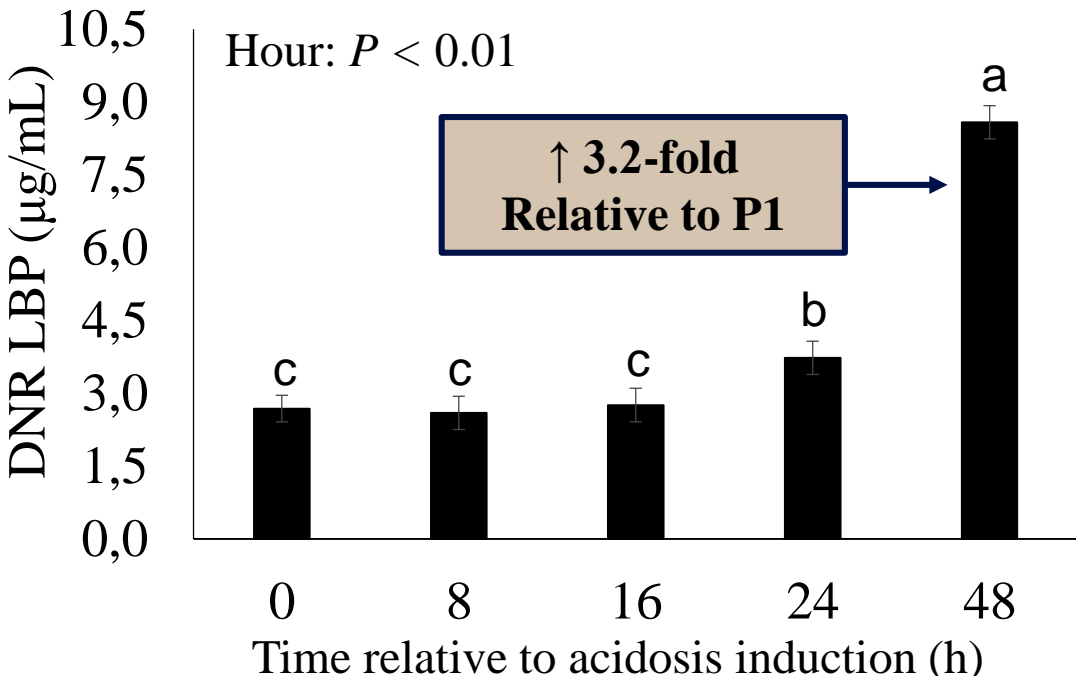
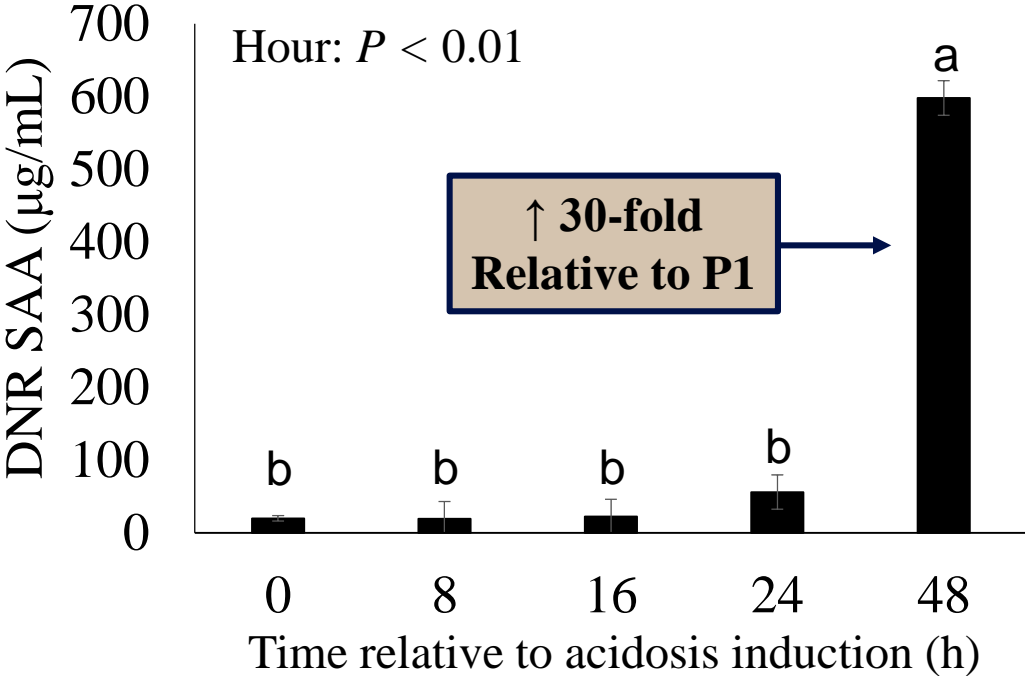
¹HF= healthy rumen fluid infused (5 L/h abomasal infusions of healthy rumen fluid collected from cows eating a high fiber diet; n=5). AF= acidotic fluid infused (5 L/h abomasal infusions of acidotic rumen fluid collected from corn-challenged donor cows; n=5).

What explains the absence of systemic inflammation in recipient cows?

- Induction of acute rumen acidosis was unsuccessful
 - Target threshold for rumen pH was not achieved
 - Would start collections after 4/8 cows reached a rumen pH of <5.2 (a previously defined threshold for acute rumen acidosis; Owens et al., 1998)
 - Insufficient quantity of rumen fluid obtained from donor cows
 - 7 L of fluid collected from each cow every other hour
 - Collections ended after 28 h due to insufficient fluid
- Further investigation is needed to understand the consequences of acidotic rumen fluid on post-ruminal gut integrity



Inflammatory response in Donor cows

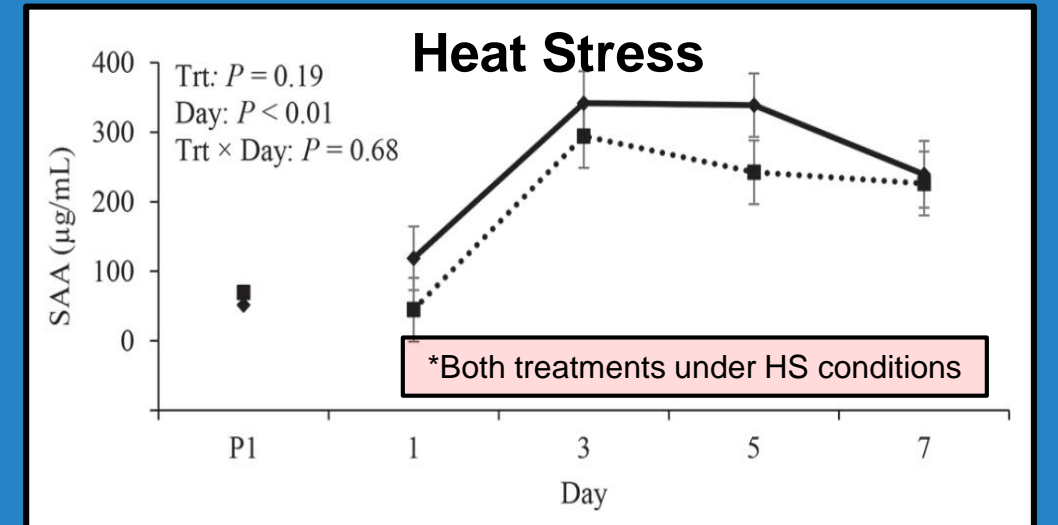
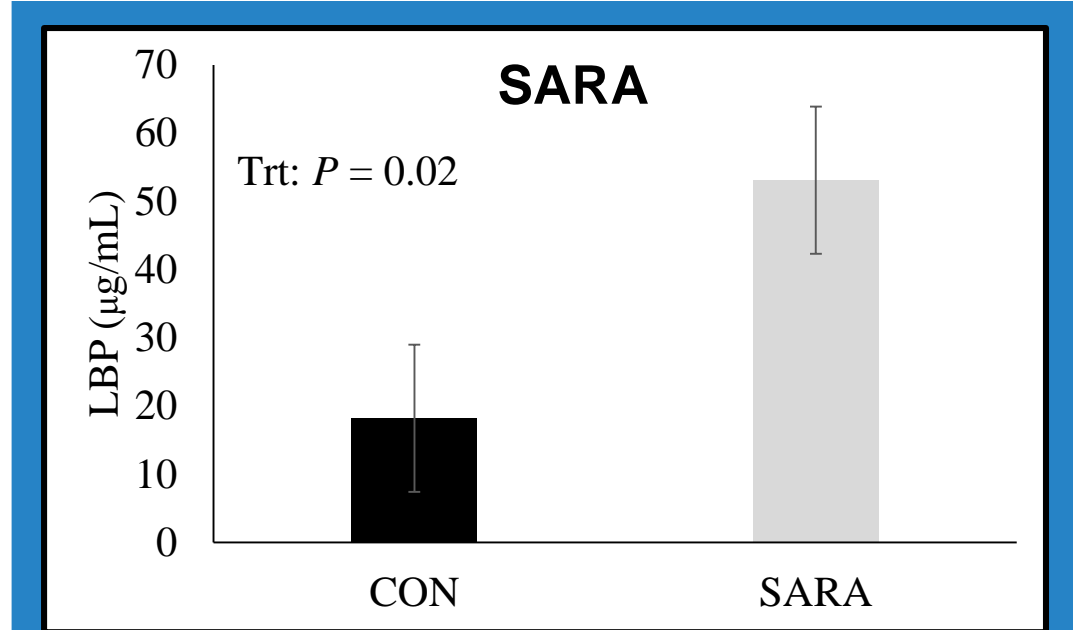


Temporal pattern of inflammation aligns with nadir in fecal pH suggesting hindgut pathology
 HOWEVER, the severity of HGA observed is highly unlikely to occur in on-farm settings

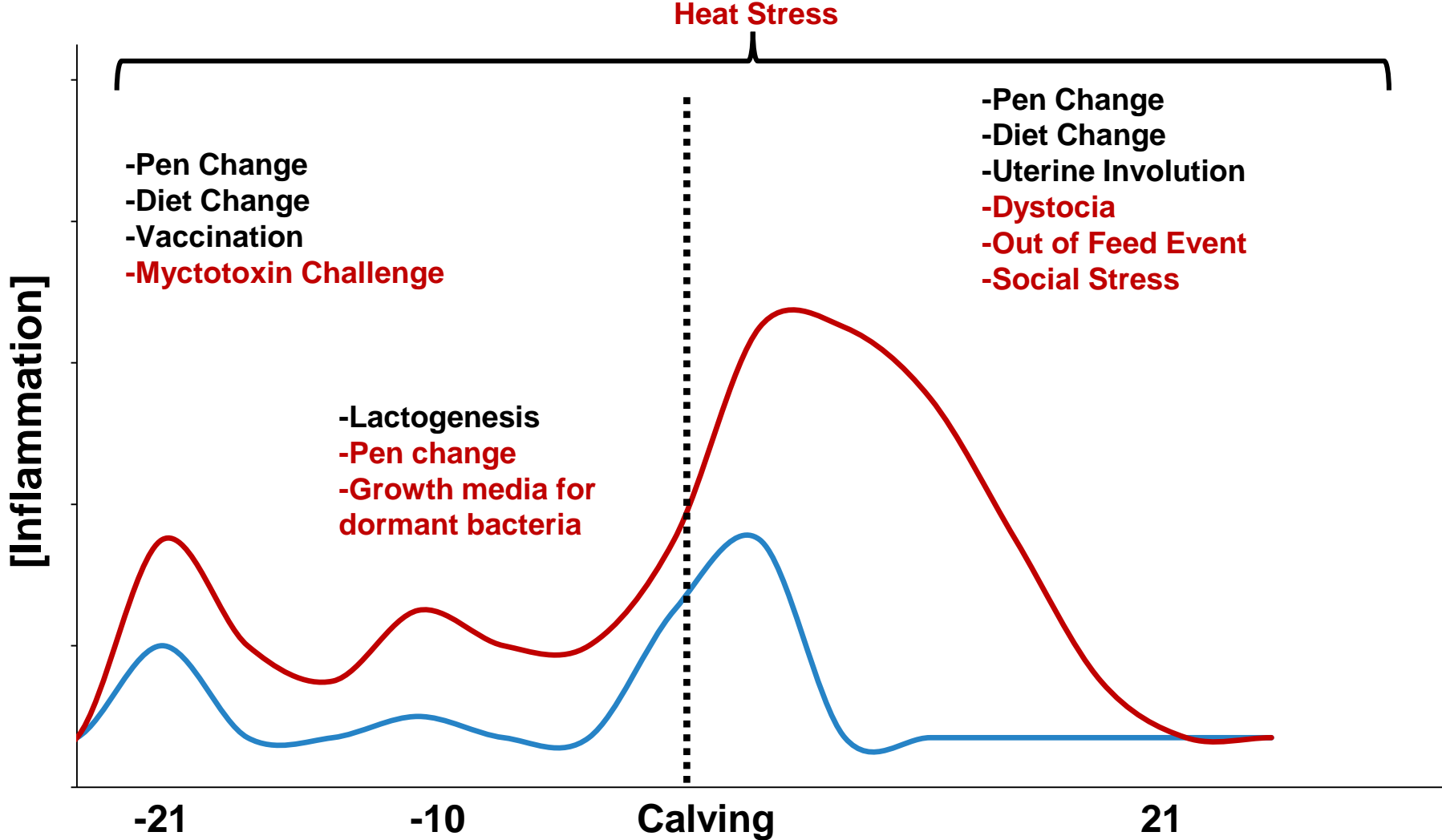


Summary

- Isolated hindgut acidosis does not appear to induce systemic inflammation or compromise productivity
- Rumen acidosis causes leaky gut/inflammation
 - Site of inflammation still unknown
 - Appears to be situation dependent (i.e., stacked stressors, diet, etc.)
 - Noxious substances within acidotic rumen fluid may negatively impact post-ruminal barrier function
 - Study limitations prevented full evaluation of this hypothesis
- Regardless of where along the GIT hyperpermeability occurs, there is merit in implementing strategies that support gut health
- **Reminder:** Leaky gut is only one of the many pathologies contributing to systemic inflammation



Inflammatory Triggers Around Calving





Questions??

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