



Official Journal of
the Animal Science
and Production
Association (ASPA)

Italian Journal of
Animal Science



italian
journal
of
animal
science

ASPA 24th CONGRESS

Padova, September 21-24, 2021

Book of Abstracts

Volume 20
Supplement 1
2021

ISSN: 1128-051X

<https://www.tandfonline.com/tjas>

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tjas20>

ASPA 24th Congress Book of Abstract

Roberto Mantovani & Alessio Cecchinato

To cite this article: Roberto Mantovani & Alessio Cecchinato (2021) ASPA 24th Congress Book of Abstract, Italian Journal of Animal Science, 20:sup1, 1-236, DOI: [10.1080/1828051X.2021.1968170](https://doi.org/10.1080/1828051X.2021.1968170)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1828051X.2021.1968170>



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Published online: 21 Sep 2021.



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Italian Journal of Animal Science

Official Journal of the Animal Science
and Production Association

Online ISSN: 1828-051X

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Massimo Bionaz, Oregon State University (USA)

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Alessio Bonaldo, University of Bologna (Italy)

Email: alessio.bonaldo@unibo.it

Adriana Bonanno, University of Palermo (Italy)

Email: adriana.bonanno@unipa.it

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Email: bovera@unina.it

Salvator Calvet Sanz, Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain)

Email: salcalsa@upvnet.upv.es

Alessio Cecchinato, University of Padova (Italy)

Email: alessio.cecchinato@unipd.it

Beniamino T. Cenci Goga, University of Perugia (Italy)

Email: beniamino.cencigoga@unipg.it

Alberto Cesarani, University of Sassari (Italy)

Email: acesarani@uniss.it

Stefania Chessa, University of Torino (Italy)

Email: stefania.chessa@unito.it

Alessandro Dal Bosco, University of Perugia (Italy)

Email: alessandro.dalbosco@unipg.it

Juan Vicente Delgado Bermejo, University of Córdoba (Spain)

Email: juanviagr218@gmail.com

Marion Girard, Agroscope (Switzerland)

Email: marion.girard@agroscope.admin.ch

Flaviana Gottardo, University of Padova (Italy)

Email: flaviana.gottardo@unipd.it

Andrea Minuti, "Sacro Cuore" Catholic University, Piacenza (Italy)

Email: andrea.minuti@unicatt.it

Gianluca Neglia, University of Napoli (Italy)

Email: neglia@unina.it

Anna Nudda, University of Sassari (Italy)

Email: anudda@uniss.it

Johan Osorio, South Dakota State University (USA)

Email: johan.osorio@sdstate.edu

Manuela Renna, University of Torino (Italy)

Email: manuela.renna@unito.it

Evangelia Sossidou, Veterinary Research Institute, NAGREF Campus, Thessaloniki (Greece)

Email: sossidou.arig@nagref.gr

Giuseppe Stradaoli, University of Udine (Italy)

Email: giuseppe.stradaoli@uniud.it

Hai-Jun Zhang Feed Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences Beijing (China)

Email: fowlfeed@163.com

Italian Journal of Animal Science

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- Animal genetics and breeding
- Aquaculture, poultry, companion and wild game animals
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- Non-ruminant or ruminant nutrition and feeding
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Manuscripts must address topics based on research at molecular, cellular, organ, whole animal and production system levels. Manuscripts discussing milk or meat analysis and compositions must show a direct link to either livestock production system, product quality, animal feeding/nutrition, animal genetics or breeding. Manuscripts describing laboratory animal models will be considered where the study highlights a potential benefit to farmed livestock.

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Italian Journal of Animal Science

volume 20, supplement 1, 2021

ASPA 24th Congress

Padova, September 21-24, 2021

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feeds, crops activities, energy consumption, transports and water utilization for crop production and animal management. Methane from enteric fermentation and manure management, nitrous oxide from manure and soil management, CO₂ from energy consumption and soil organic carbon sequestration (C-sink) were considered and expressed as kg CO₂eq. The bWF embedded the water used for crops irrigation, sprinklers, cleaning parlour equipment and drinking of animals and was expressed as litres. The effect of SCOs on CF and blue WF intensity was evaluated considering the summer-winter (SW) production rate that measures the efficiency of SCOs on milk yield. Specifically, the CF and bWF were modelled using the value of SW referring to no cooling conditions which was then compared to the CF and bWF of the farms under study.

The CF intensity was 1.247 kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM and it ranged from 1.014 to 1.619 kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM. When the C-sink was included, the range of CF lowered from 0.972 to 1.576 kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM with an average impact of C-sink of about -1.3%. The higher sources of emissions were enteric fermentation and feed production (about 81%). The CF modelled for the no cooling scenario resulted in higher (0.8%) than the cooled one. The energy for SCOs contributes only to the 0.4% of the total CF. The bWF intensity was 161 litres/kg FPCM and it ranged from 35 to 276 litres/kg FPCM. The irrigation (both on-farm and extra-farm feed) was the main contributor (98%), whereas the water for SCOs accounted for 0.2% of total bWF. In general, SCOs of the selected farms reduced the bWF by 1.3% compared to the modelled scenario of no cooling operations.

Summer cooling management of dairy cattle is an important adaptation strategy to warming climate scenarios and, although fans and sprinklers increase energy and water consumption, the improvement of animal welfare has a positive effect on milk production and therefore on carbon and water footprint intensity.

O066

Farm-level mitigation strategies to improve sustainability of milk production: effects on GHG emissions

Giulia Gislón^a, Ernesto Tabacco^b, Maria Teresa Pacchioli^c, Alberto Tamburini^a, Anna Sandrucci^a

^aDISAA, University of Milan, Milano, Italy

^bDISAFA, University of Turin, Torino, Italy

^cCRPA, Centro Ricerche Produzioni Animali, Reggio Emilia, Italy

Contact giulia.gislon@unimi.it

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per unit of milk have declined over the past 50 years, due to improvements in production efficiency and animal performances. However, the decline in emission intensity may be insufficient to offset the rising absolute emissions from increasing global demand for animal products. In this context, it's important to know which dairy systems

combine high productivity and low environmental impact. Recent studies pointed out that farm sustainable intensification strategies, e.g. improvement of feed efficiency and crop production, are related to more sustainable milk production. The aim of the study was to evaluate the effect on GHG emissions, related to milk production, of mitigation strategies (MS) based on the optimization of forage production, conservation and use in the cow diet. Between 2016 and 2020, in 20 dairy cattle farms, representative of the most widespread forage systems (FS) of northern Italy, different MS were applied. Life Cycle Assessment, accounting for changes in GHG associated with changes in farm management, was performed to evaluate the environmental impact of milk production, both in terms of emission intensity (CF, carbon footprint, expressed as kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM, fat and protein corrected milk) and absolute emissions (kg CO₂eq/hectare).

The results pointed out that High-Quality FS is the most favourable system in terms of GHG emission intensity (1.17 kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM), while, considering absolute emissions, less intensive systems, such as Mixed Forages and Parmesan Dry Forage FSs, seem to be more sustainable (21,104 and 16,699 kg CO₂eq/ha, respectively). The Mixed FS showed an improvement of CF within the two years (from 1.38 to 1.17 kg CO₂eq/kg FPCM), even though absolute emissions didn't change. The reduction of GHG emission intensity in Mixed FS may be probably related to the increased area cultivated with forage legumes, together with the partial replacement of soybean in the ration. Multiple correspondence analysis revealed that the reduction of CF seems to be associated with the inclusion in the diet of forages with high nutritive value, the increasing of forage conservation efficiency and the replacement of soybean meal with forage legumes in the diet.

In conclusion, MS-based on optimization of forage production, conservation and use in the diet seem to contribute to improving the environmental sustainability of milk production.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the LIFE 'FORAGE4CLIMATE' project.

O067

A tool to efficiently replace dairy heifers using genomic information

Valentina Ferrari^a, Maurizio Marusi^a, Martino Cassandro^b

^aAssociazione Nazionale Allevatori Razza Frisone e Jersey Italiana, ANAFIJ, Cremona, Italy

^bDipartimento Agronomia, Animali, Alimenti, Risorse naturali e Ambiente, University of Padova, (DAFNAE), Padova, Italy

Contact valentinaferrari@anafij.it

Genomic testing is an efficient tool for breeders, providing useful information for their management and selection decisions. An approach that is increasing worldwide is genotyping the entire