

## **Feeding Behavior**

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The feed intake is the single most costly parameter in intensive livestock operation. Over 64% of the total expenses in a livestock farm can be associated with feed cost. Therefore – knowing the cow individual feed intake has a potential economic value. An accurate cow individual feed intake can support (a) decision regarding breeding and culling strategy towards feed efficiency and (b) concentrate allocation in milking robots and computerized feed dispensers. In research institutions cow individual feed intake can be measured directly by using weighting scales locating below the feed troughs. Such a system is rather expensive therefore in commercial farms, models are needed. In order to predict cow individual feed intake, the ARO is working on the development of an equation based on feeding behavior, MY (milk yield changes), BW (body weight changes), age, feed diet, season, days in milking, and time in the feed lane. Correlation between feeding behavior in terms of time spent in the feeding trough, number of visits and other variables and food intake, as measured in the ARO research farm will be presented in the conference.

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