DEVELOPMENT OF A VALID JUDGMENT BIAS TEST FOR DAIRY COWS

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BACKGROUND

The judgment bias test (JBT) is a commonly used method to assess affect, a component of animal welfare.

JBT relies on the idea that an animal shows relative positive anticipatory behaviours in response to an ambiguous cue (A), when it is in a positive affect.

Similalry, negative affect results in negative anticipatory behaviours.

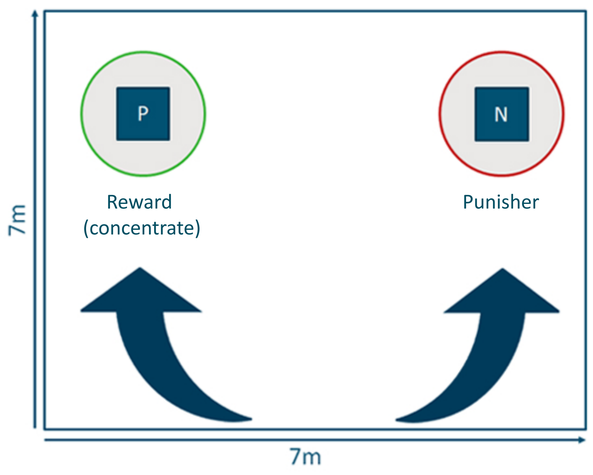
OBJECTIVE

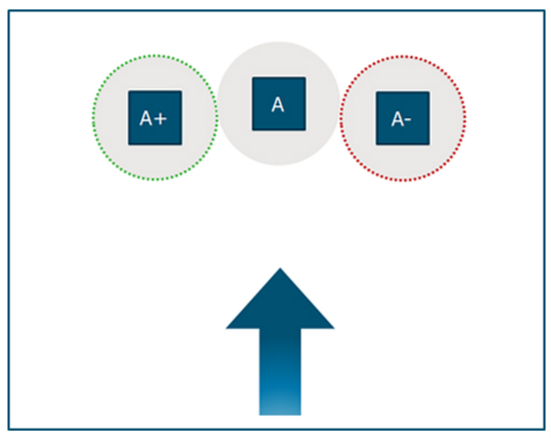
Develop a practical and sensitive JBT for dairy cows

METHODS

TRAINING SESSIONS:
Criteria positive cue (P): Go within 20s
Criteria negative cue (N): No-Go for 90s

TESTING SESSIONS:
Cows face 3 ambiguous cues, placed between (P) and (N): A+, A, A-



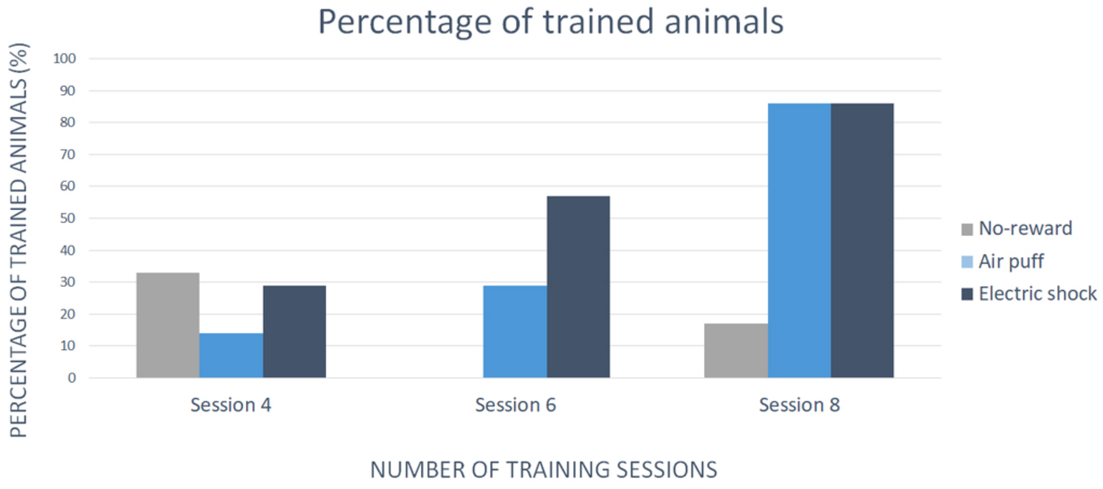


ANIMALS: 36 late-lactation Holstein x Friesian cows (parity 1-3)

JBT-1 (n=12)	JBT-2 (n=12)	JBT-3 (n=12)
No-reward	Air puff sound (5bar)	Electric shock (450V)

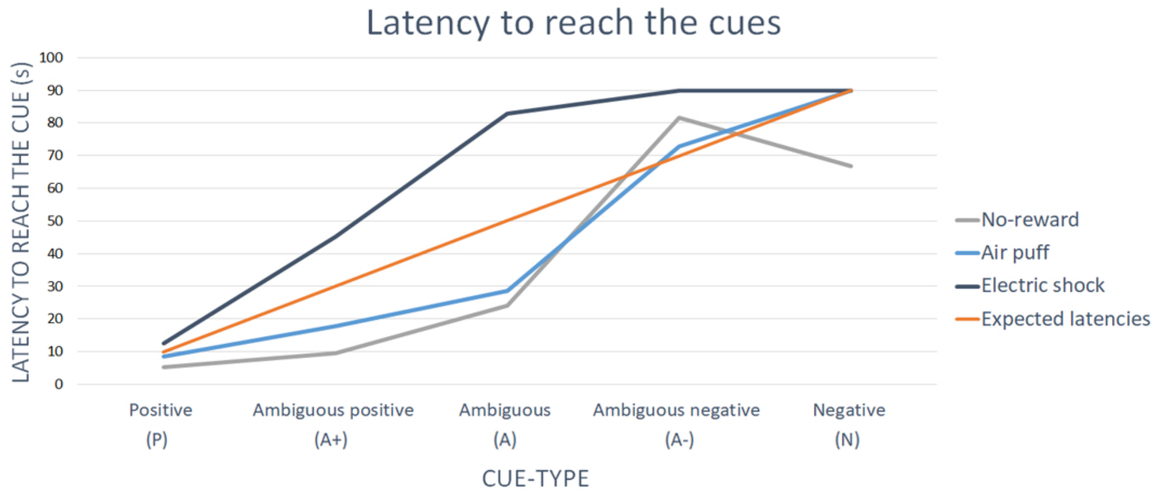
PRELIMINARY RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Percentage of trained animals



Cows did not learn to discriminate the positive cue from the negative cue, with the « no-reward » treatment.
No-reward would not be a practical punisher for dairy cows.

Latency to reach the cues



Responses to the ambiguous (A) and the ambiguous negative (A-) cue-types are higher than the expectations, for the electric shock treatment. **The electric shock would not be associated with a sensitive JBT.**

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