Impact of digital dermatitis on feedlot cattle behaviour

**WHAT IS DIGITAL DERMATITIS (DD)**
- Major cause of infectious lameness in cattle
- Significantly impacts welfare and productivity

**WHY DO WE CARE?**
- Emerging disease in feedlots
- Early detection is difficult
- Not all cattle become lame

**WHAT WE FOUND**

**WHAT THIS MEANS**
- Rumination is depressed and inactivity increased in DD animals 5-2 days before diagnosis
- There is no difference in daily activity and eating time

**CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR**
- An ear accelerometer was used to record behaviour
  
  Behaviour parameters:
  - Rumination times
  - Eating times
  - Activity times
  - Inactivity times

**DD DIAGNOSIS**
Hind feet lifted and clinically appraised for DD in the chute

**OBSERVATION PERIOD**
Five to two days before DD diagnosis in the chute

**DD LESION STAGES**
- DD absent
- Active DD lesions
- Chronic DD lesions

Sponsored by the Anderson-Chisholm Chair in Animal Care & Welfare