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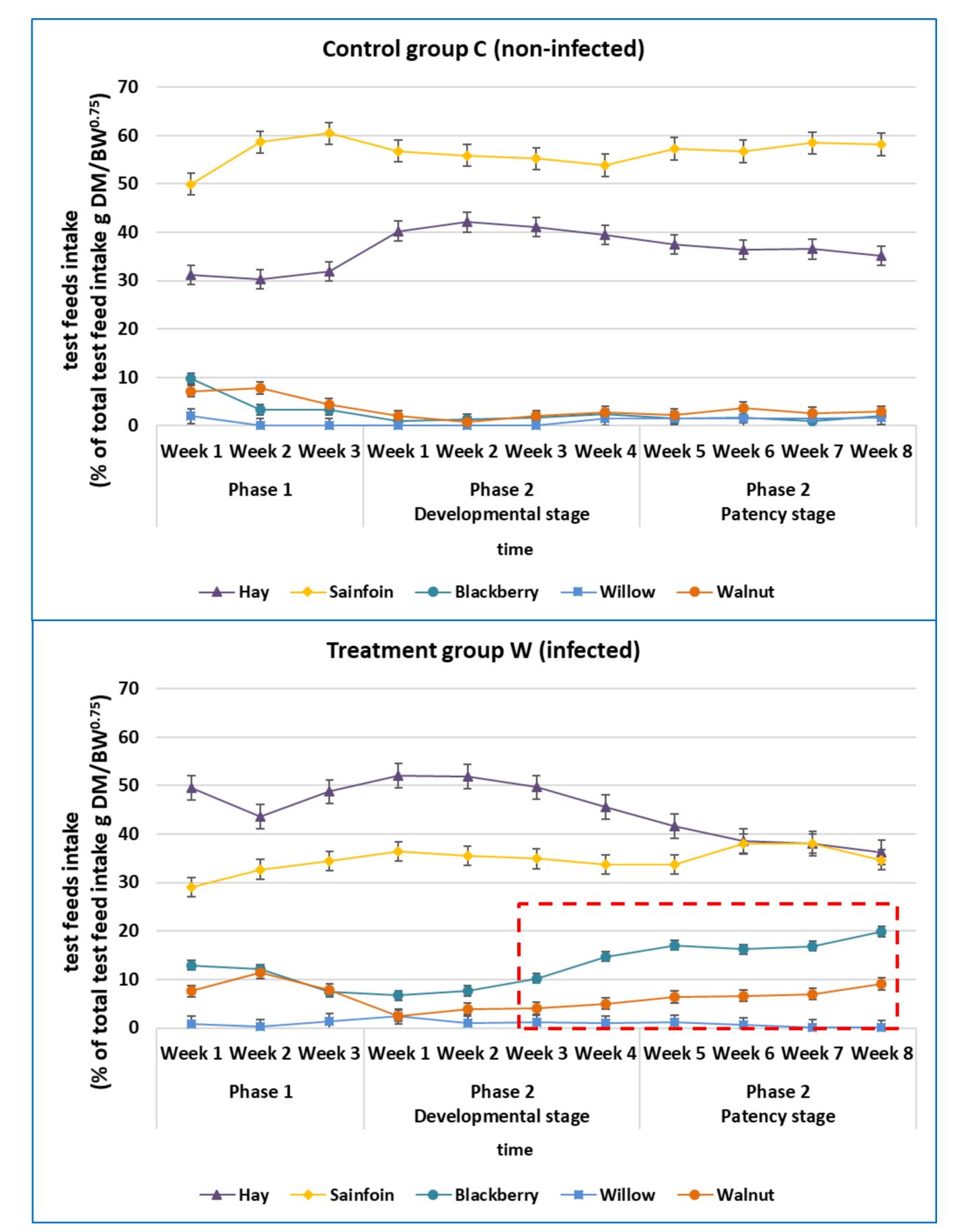
# Selfmedicative Behaviour in Gastrointestinal Parasite Infected Goats: Shift in Preferences for Tanniferous Fodder Plants

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- Gastrointestinal nematodes (GIN) are a worldwide major thread in ruminant livestock
- Resistance against conventional anthelmintics is common
- Condensed tannins (CT), plant secondary metabolites, show evidence of anthelmintic properties but also feature detrimental nutritional effects at higher dosage





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Evidence of ,self-medicative behaviour' in goats when infected with GIN<sup>1</sup>
 → Change in feed preferences when infected with GIN?

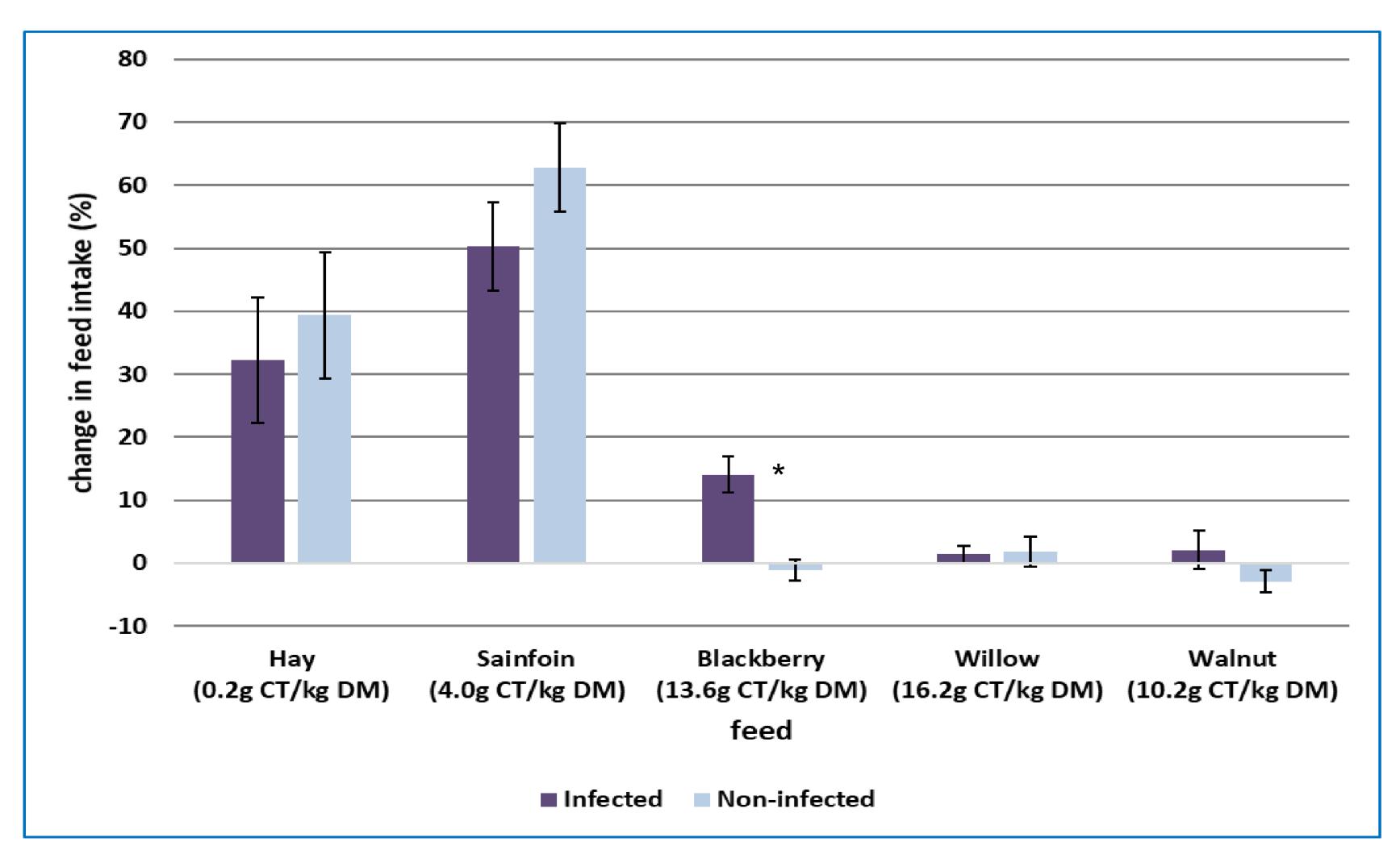
## Animals, Materials & Methods

- Free choice cafeteria feeding trial for 12 weeks with 4 test feeds of varying tannin contents (pelleted leaves of sainfoin, walnut, blackberry, willow) and tannin-free hay pellets (Fig.1)
- 12 juvenile boar goats (3-4 months) in individual boxes
- 2 trial groups à 6 goats: 1. Treatment group W (infected/feeding trial)
  - 2. Control group C (non-infected/feeding trial)
- At the beginning, goats were free of GIN. After 4 weeks, group W was experimentally infected with third-stage GIN larvae
- Both groups were offered a free choice cafeteria trial for 30min per day prior to the usual daily feeding time
- Measurements: video surveillance, amount of ingested pellets, weekly analyzes of blood parameters, saliva composition and feces

Figure 3: Average proportional choice of test feeds as percentage [%] from total test feed intake [g DM/ BW<sup>0.75</sup>] by experimental week and treatment group (means± SD)



Figure 1: Feeding trough with experimental pellets



### Results

- Animals of infected group W showed a significantly higher proportional increase of blackberry pellet intake of 14 % after infection (Fig.2)
- Treatment group W shows an constant increase of proportional test feed intake of blackberry and walnut pellets 3-4 weeks post infection (Fig.3)

# **Conclusion & Outlook**

- Infected goats showed clear evidence of a shift in preference for tannin-rich blackberry pellets in a choice trial after infection with nematodes
- Willow pellets with the highest CT-concentration might be rejected due to contained salicin content (→ salicylic acid)
- Further examination of saliva may help to explain the shift in preferences due to possible changes in saliva composition

#### Figure 2: Proportional change [%] of intake of test feed after infection

(\* correlation is significant at the 0.05 level)

References: [1] Amit et al. (2013), Self-medication with tannin-rich browse in goats infected with gastro-intestinal nematodes. VetPar 198 (2013), 305-311. Contact: marvin.heuduck@uni-goettingen.de

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