

# Weaning based on individual starter intake: Effects on feed intake and weight gain compared to a step-down weaning method

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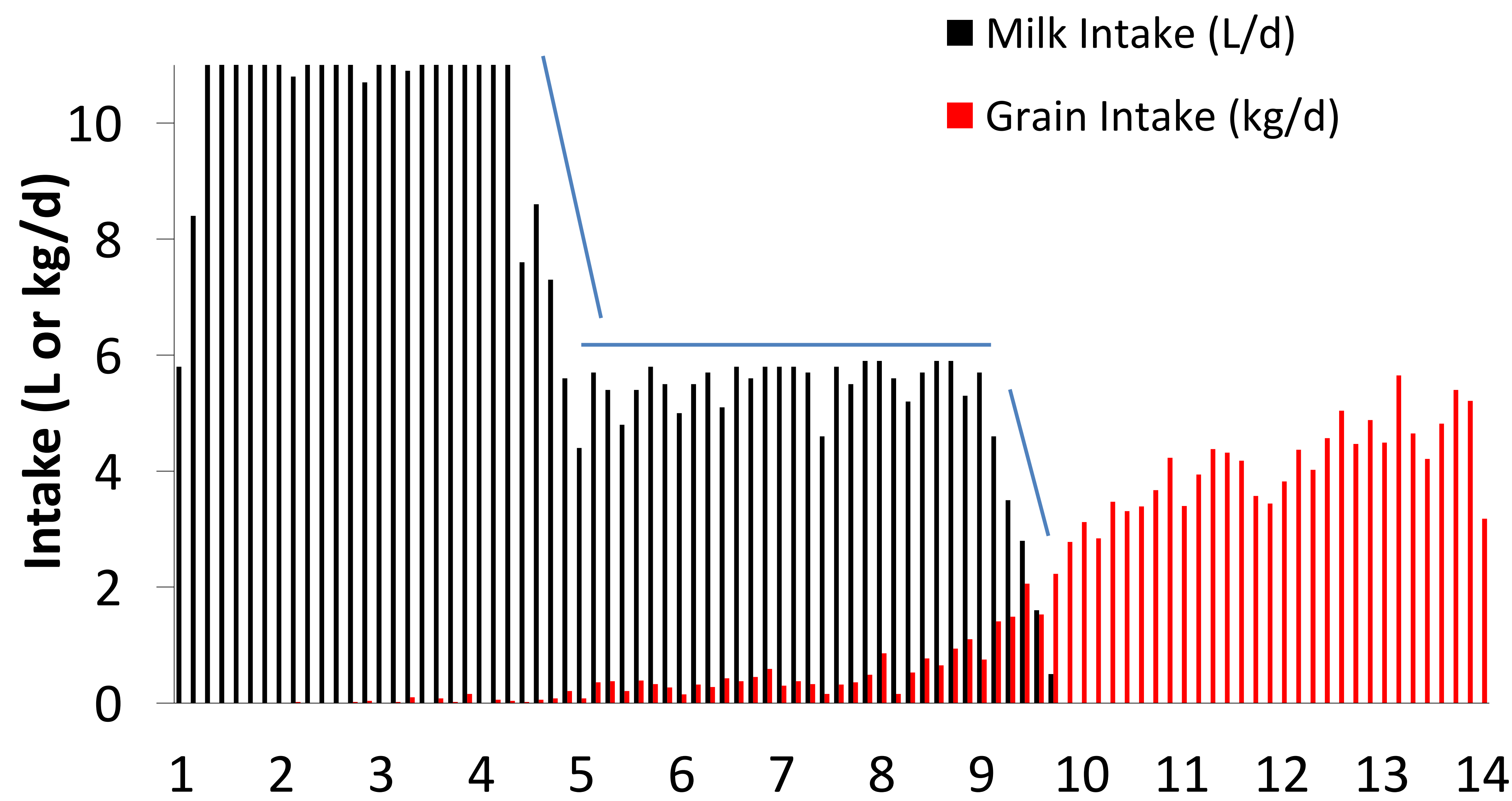


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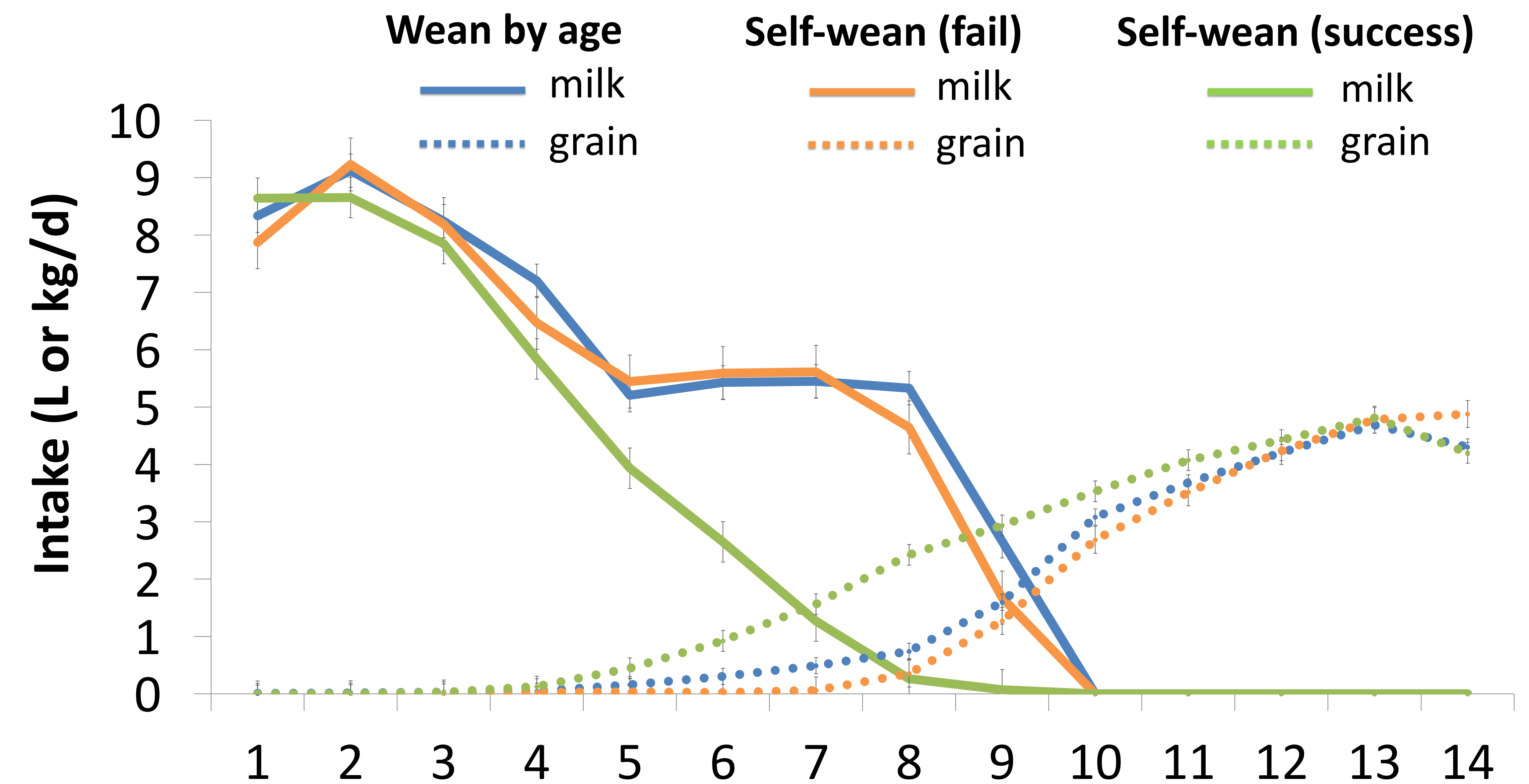
Feeding calves higher volumes of milk results in improved growth, but calves fed more milk can struggle during weaning. We show how two methods of gradual weaning using automatic feeders can improve starter intakes and weight gains at weaning.

## Step-down method based on age (n=16):

Milk reduced to 6 L/d from 5-9 wks. All calves weaned by 10 wk

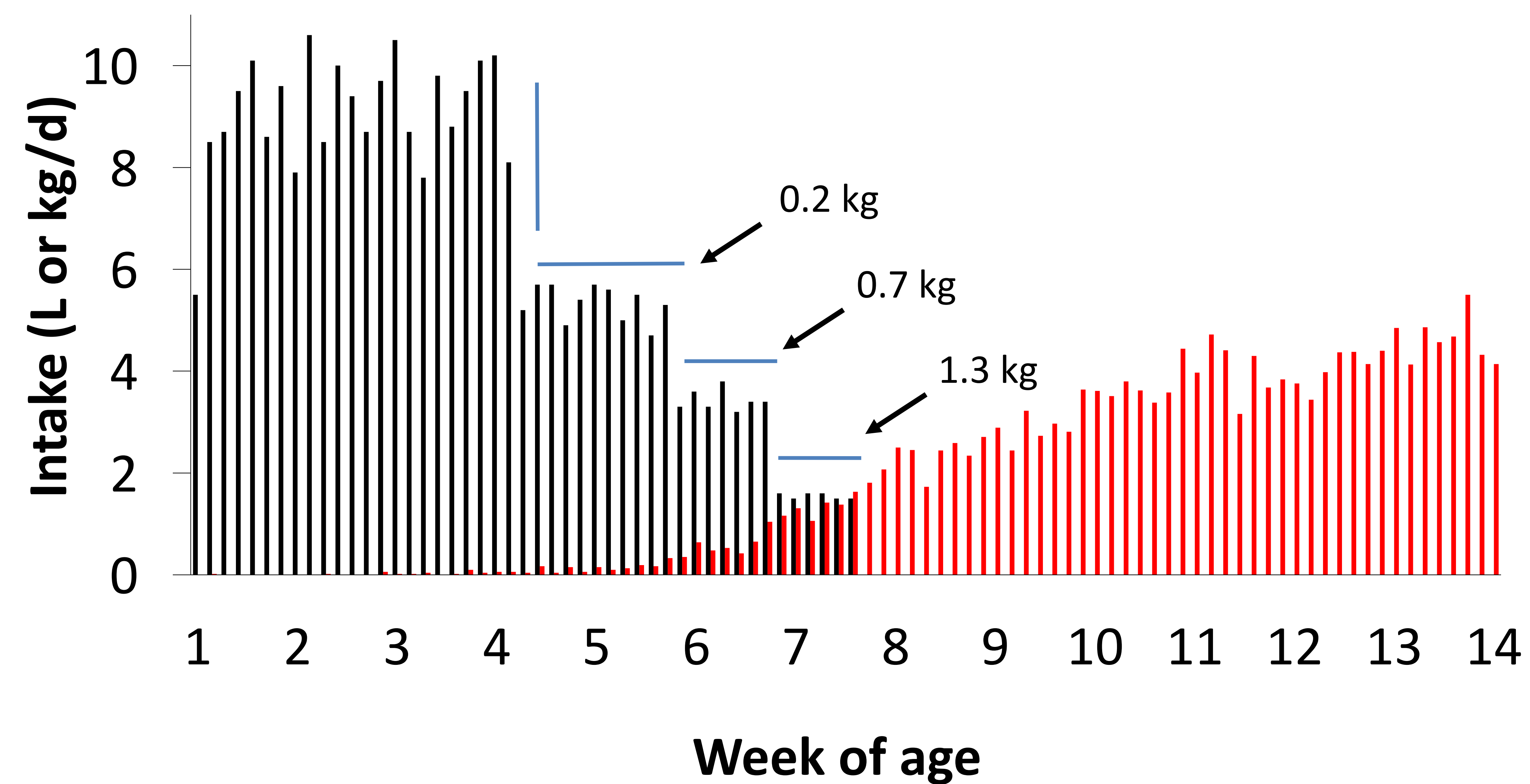


Successfully self-weaned calves (i.e. reached all 3 grain targets, n=10) consumed less milk and more grain compared to calves that failed to self-wean (n=6) and calves that were weaned by age (n=16)

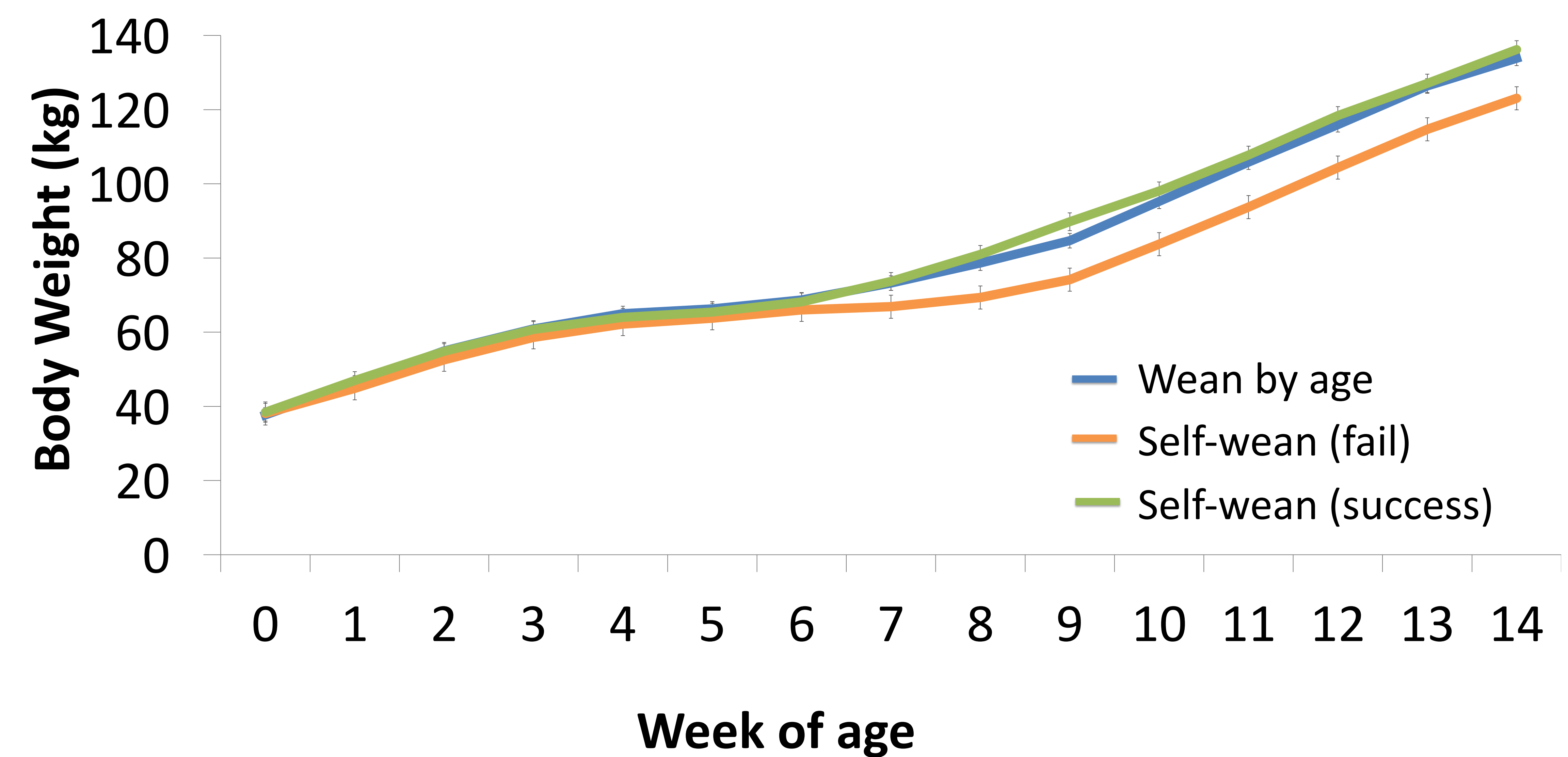


## Self-wean method based on grain intake (n=16):

Milk reduced by 25% at 4 wk and then again at each grain target



Calves weaned based on grain intake had similar body weight compared to calves weaned based on age



Calves weaned based on grain intake began to eat more grain at an earlier age, and achieved similar weaning weights to calves weaned based on age. Calves that were successfully weaned drank 125 L less milk and ate 41 kg more grain compared to calves weaned by age.