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Stochastic differential equations models of animal growth  
and profit optimization in cattle raising

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**Abstract** The effect of environmental random fluctuations on the growth dynamics of individual animals is not captured by regression models and so we use stochastic differential equations (SDE). After a very brief introduction to SDE, we obtain the expected value and the standard deviation of the profit obtained by a farmer in raising and selling an animal as a function of the selling age. We apply the results to profit optimization using real weight data of cattle males of the Mertolengo breed.

**Keywords:** Stochastic differential equations, random environment, cattle growth, profit optimization, maximum likelihood estimation.

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