

Novel approach to develop robust artificial neural network for FT-MIR prediction of enteric methane emissions in dairy cows

H. Soyeurt, F. Dehareng, N. Gengler, S. McParland, M. Kreuzer, P. Lund, C. Martin, B. Kuhla, A. Vanlierde

ICAR Meeting – June 2026 - Verona

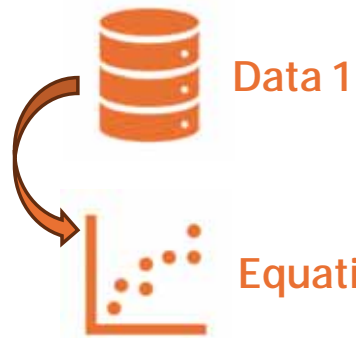


Why neural network ?

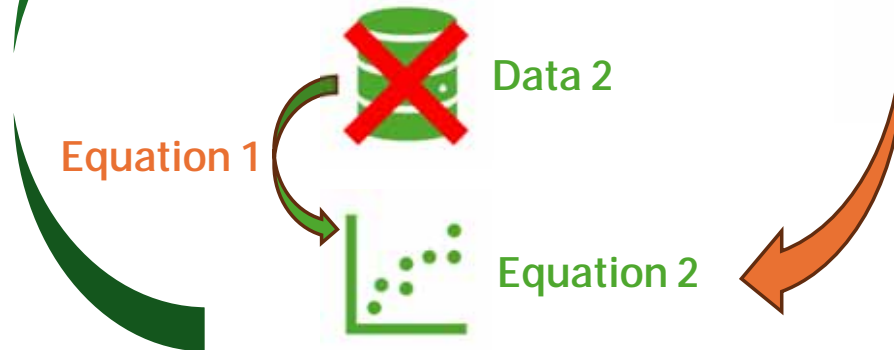
- Currently, Partial Least Squares (PLS) Regression
 - High correlation between some spectral points
→ decrease the dimensionality
 - Known to be robust with low size dataset
- Why neural network ?
 - Considering potential non-linear relationships
 - Transfer learning can facilitate the improvement of models without exchanging data

Transfer learning

Country 1:



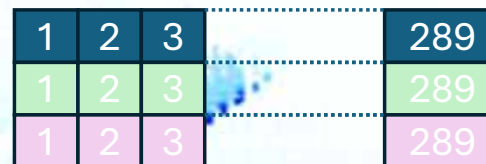
Country 2:



This is possible by using neural networks !

Model comparison

- PLS
 - **867 features** = 289 spectral points regressed until the second order Legendre polynomials
- Multi-layer neural perceptron (ANN)
 - **867 features**
- 1-D Convolutional neural network (cANN)
 - 1-D spectral image : **867 pixels**
- 2-D Convolutional neural network (cANN2)
 - 2-D spectral image : **289 * 3 pixels**, one row for each Legendre Polynomial



Raw spectrum
1st Legendre regressed spectrum
2nd Legendre regressed spectrum

Define the best structure for PLS

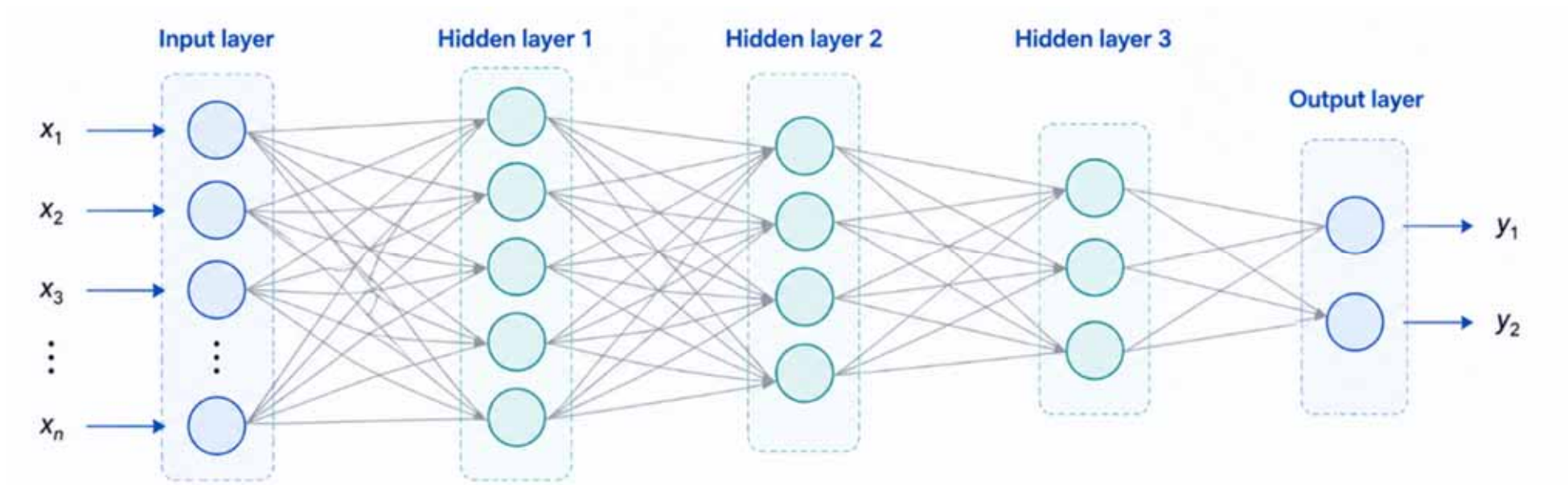


HYPERPARAMETER –
NUMBER OF PLS FACTORS



COW-INDEPENDENT 5-
FOLDS CROSS-VALIDATION

Multi-layer perceptron (ANN) - Theory



For us, only **one output** as it is a regression

Minimum hyperparameters:

- **Number of hidden layers**
- **Number of nodes** in each hidden layers

Define the best structure for ANN

- **Max. 10 hyperparameters :**

- Batch size : 32 , 64 samples
- Learning rate: 1e-4, 1e-2
- Weight decay : 1e-8, 1e-2
- Number of hidden layers : 1 to 5
- Number of nodes in each hidden layer : 16 to 128 (step = 16)
- Drop-out importance : 0 to 0.5 (step = 0.1)

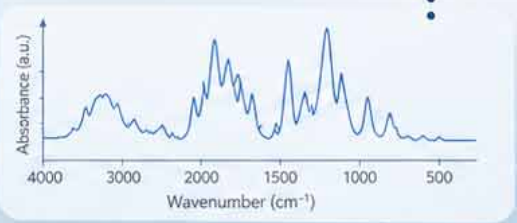
- A lot of possibilities to try :

$$N_{models} = n_1 * n_2 * \dots * n_k$$

n_1 = number of possibilities for hyperparameter 1
 n_2 = number of possibilities for hyperparameter 1
 n_k = number of possibilities for hyperparameter k

373,160 models

➔ Too many possibilities



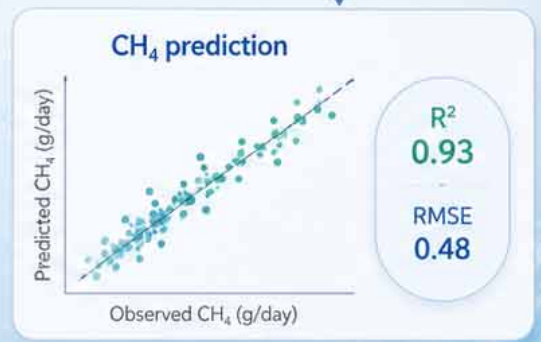
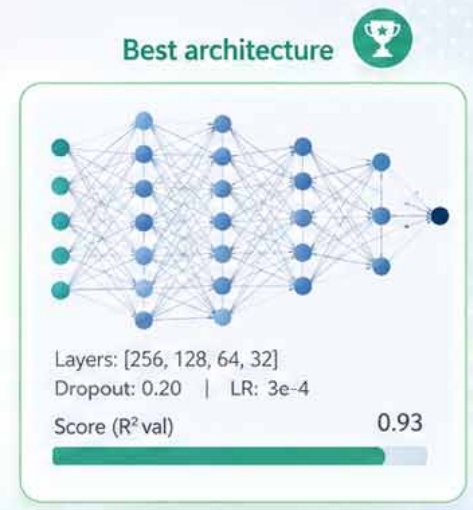
FT-MIR spectra



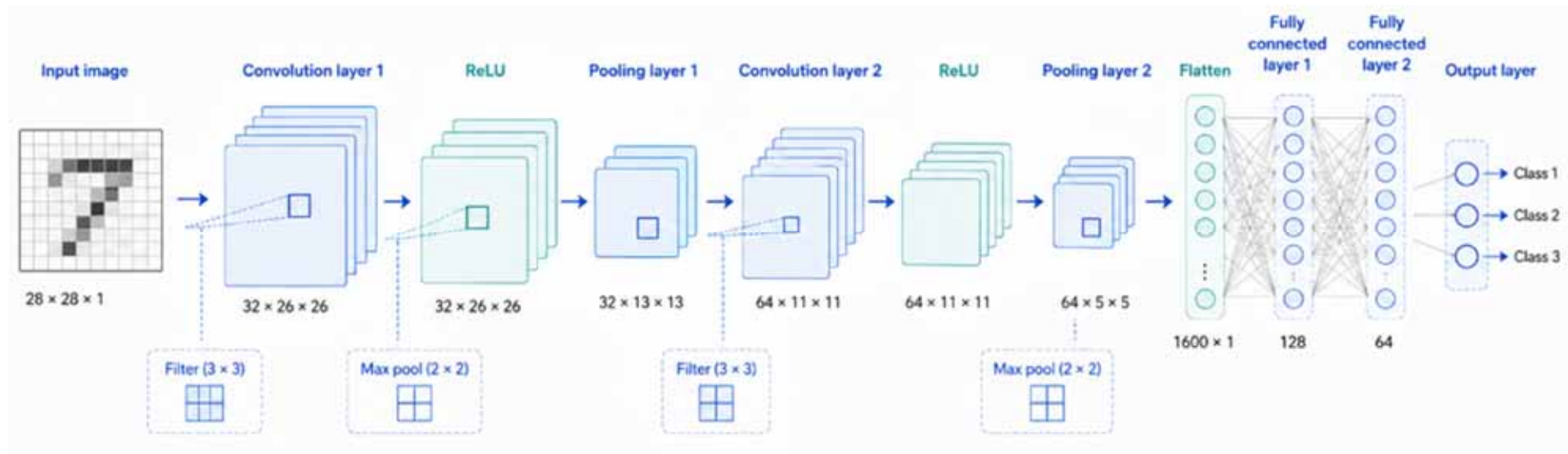
Ntrials = 2000



Select best architecture



Convolutional neural network



Minimum Hyperparameters:

- **Number of filters**
- **Number of nodes** in the hidden layer

For us, only **one output** as it is a regression. We tried only **one fully connected hidden layer**.



Hyperparameters :

- **Batch size** : 8, 16, 32, 64 samples
- **Learning rate**: 1e-4, 1e-2
- **Number of filters in the conv layer**: 16, 32, 64
- **Drop-out rate (ndrop)**: 0.3, 0.5, 0.75
- **Number of neurons in the hidden later (nout)** : 10, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, 450, 500, 550

Define the structure for cANN

- **Number of possibilities** : 864 models
- **Optuna selection – Ntrials** : 200 models



Hyperparameters :

- Batch size : 8, 16, 32, 64 samples
- Learning rate: $1e-4$, $1e-2$
- Number of filters in the conv layer: 16, 32, 64
- Drop-out rate (ndrop): 0.3, 0.5, 0.75
- Number of neurons in the hidden later (nout) : 10, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, 450, 500, 550
- Weight decay : $1e-8$, $1e-2$


Define the structure for cANN2

- Number of possibilities : 1,728 models
- Optuna selection – Ntrials : 200 models

Dataset used in a previous study

- N=1,089 records
- Respiration chambers and SF6
- 7 countries
- Different breeds
- Different diets

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Research Article

Improving robustness and accuracy of predicted daily methane emissions of dairy cows using milk mid-infrared spectra

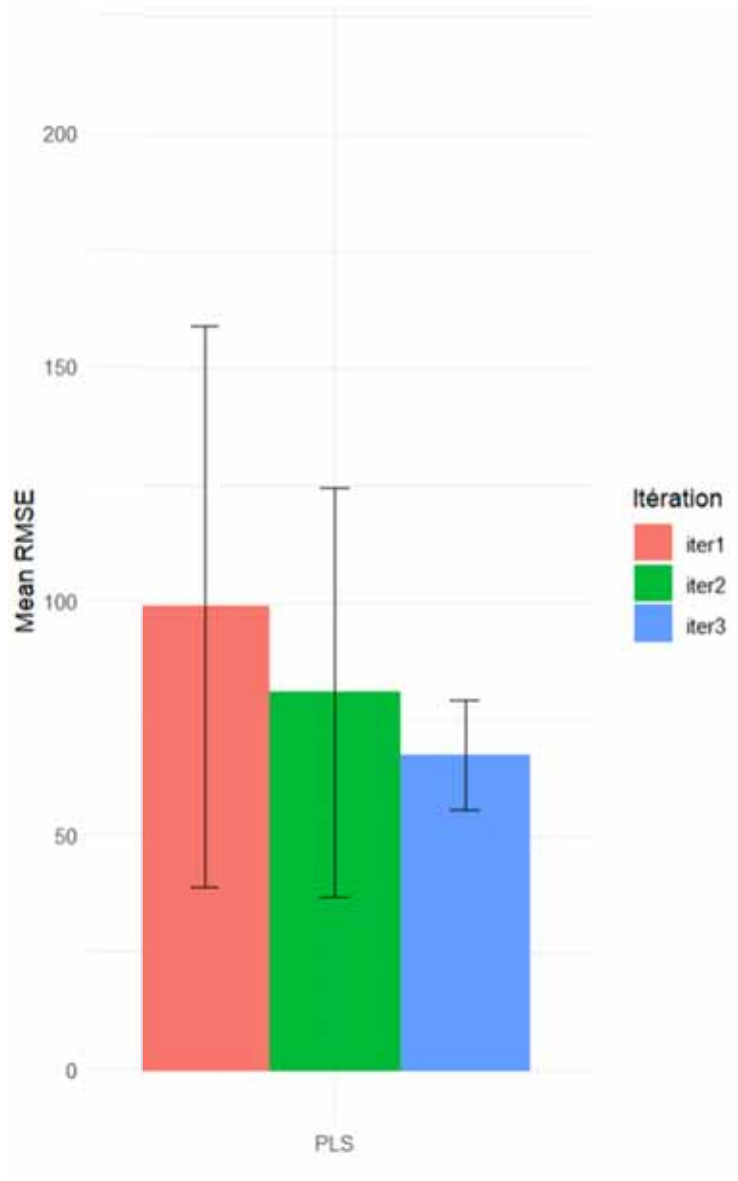
[Amélie Vanlierde](#), [Frédéric Dehareng](#) ✉, [Nicolas Gengler](#), [Eric Froidmont](#), [Sinead McParland](#), [Michael Kreuzer](#), [Matthew Bell](#), [Peter Lund](#), [Cécile Martin](#), [Björn Kuhla](#), [Hélène Soyeurt](#)

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Data splitting

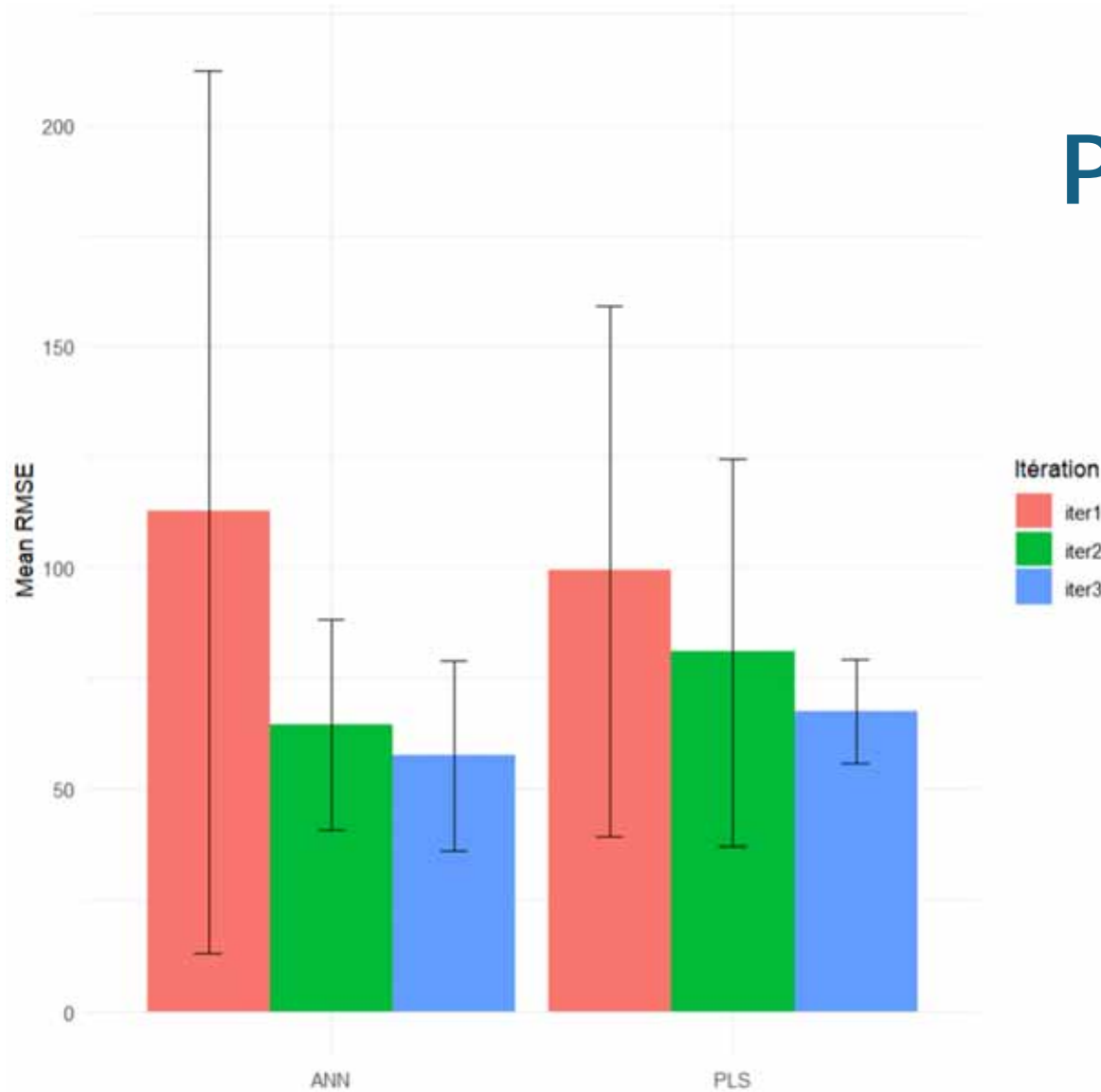
- Separation of dataset per country
 - 7 datasets
- Split between training and test sets for each dataset
 - 20 % for test set
 - 80 % for training set
- Hyper-parameters optimization
 - Cow-independent 5-folds cross-validation
- See the impact of increasing the datasets
 - 3 iterations : [countries 1 & 2], [iter1 + countries 3,4 & 5], [iter2 + countries 6 & 7]

PLS model

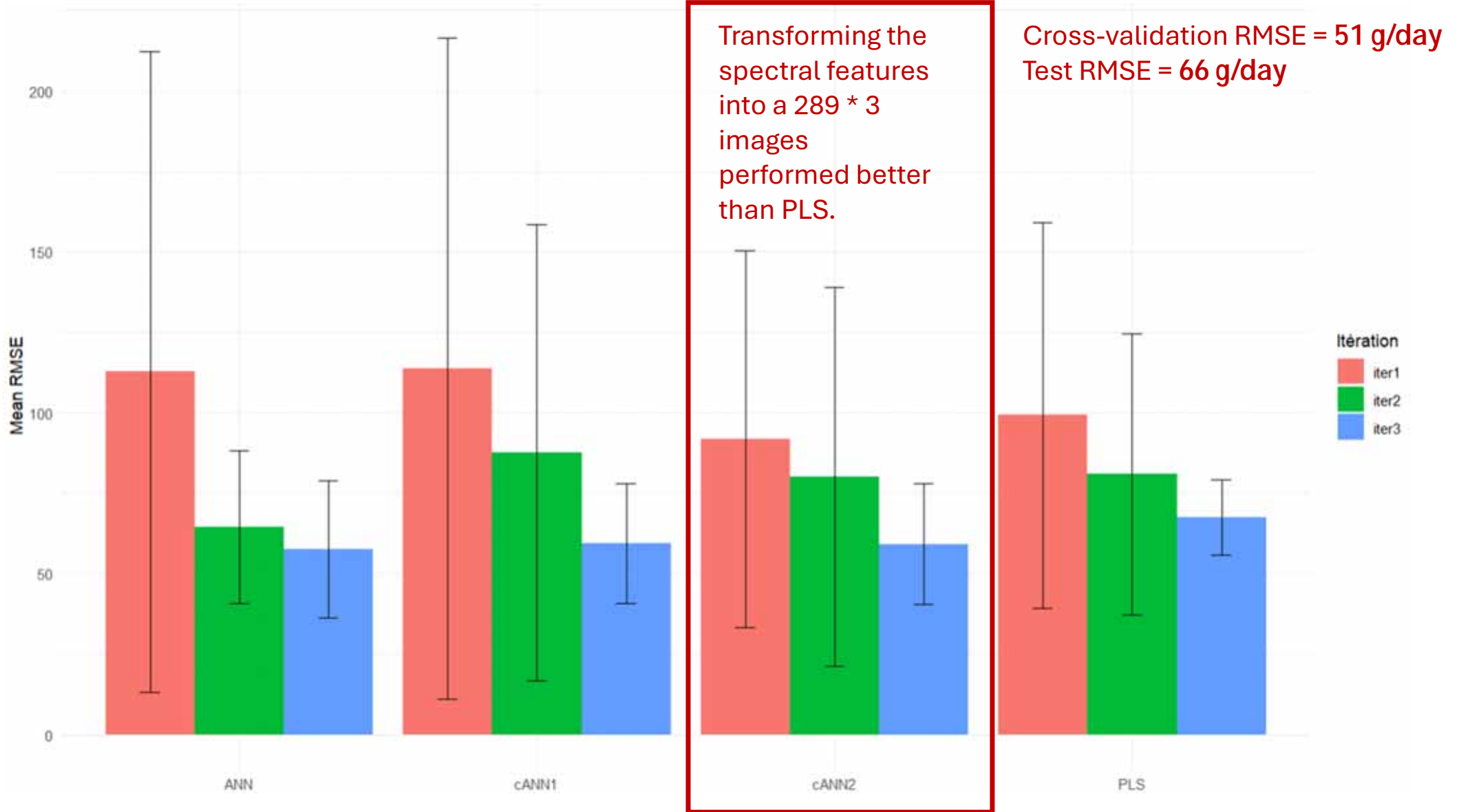


- Different training set:
 - Iteration 1 : 410 samples
 - Iteration 2 : 611 samples
 - Iteration 3 : 890 samples
- Same dataset for each iteration (N=199)
- Test RMSE ↓ when the training dataset increases as well as the SD

PLS vs. ANN model



- Same dataset for each iteration (N= 199)
- Test RMSE ↓ when the training dataset increases as well as the SD
- The performance is better when the training dataset is sufficient.





Conclusions

2D-convolutional neural network (cANN2) can improve the performances of PLS

- Cow-independent 5-folds cross-validation for cANN2 gives a prediction error of **51 g of CH₄/day**.
- The test error for cANN2 was of **66 g of CH₄/day**.
- The test RMSE SD was greater than PLS → check the robustness
- When the structure of cANN2 will be fixed, transfer learning approaches could be tested.

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