Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection

April - May 2014 Newsletter

The Desi Cow: Almost Extinct

Sahiwal

Red Sindhu

Rathi

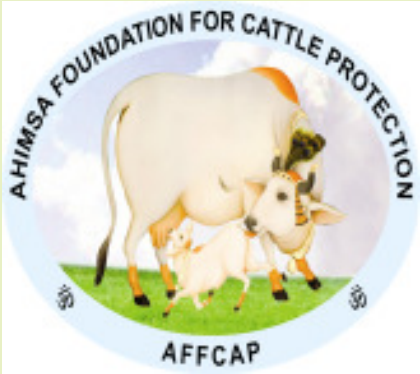
Gir

Tharparkar

Kankrej

Ongole

No Slaughter



No Slaughter

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Why Protect Cows

The following article was written by Syamasundara das, New Gokul's manager, explaining why the cow holds such special significance in our religion and why she, and the oxen, need to be protected.

The cow is like out mother

Our mother gave us her breast milk in our early months of life. This sustained us and nourished us and comforted us. Throughout the world mothers breastfeed their children from four months right through to two years or even more. In some cases a mother will feed her children even up to five or seven years. A mother wrote "Nursing a child is a deeply intimate experience. One of the most intense and gratifying relationships of my life (if not the most)."

In our early months and years we are dependent on our mothers and our mother's milk. We won't talk about the modern trend of powdered alternatives. To feed one's own child is very intimate and one would not let just anyone feed one's child with their own breast milk. Imagine a woman walks by and offers to feed your child with her own breast milk, would you do it? Most probably not. Even if you were agreeable to the principle of another woman feeding your child you would be very careful about knowing as much about the person as possible. So feeding a child is a very intimate exchange guarded carefully by the mother.

Now at some point, maybe after a few months, a mother will nonchalantly put her child to the milk of another in the form of cows' milk. To put her child on the breast of another would be a big thing and yet to put her child onto the milk of a cow is done with such natural ease and reassurance. The cow replaces our mother as a source of milk quite soon in our lives and continues to hold this role throughout our lives. The average lifespan of a person in the UK is 79.4 years (953 months) and during this time a baby may drink breast milk for about, let's say, 6 to 12 months or even 24 months. The maths is simple, for up to 2.5% of our lives we drink milk from our mothers and for 97.5% or more we drink milk from the cow.

When the Vedas (Hindu scriptures) present that the cow is our mother it is for good reason. In our own lives we put more trust in the milk of the cow than any other mother on earth apart from our own mother and even then for a relatively short period. It seems in the intimate exchange of milk the cow is a greater contributor than even our own birth mother. We can call the cow mother because that is the role we take from her.

The bull is like our father

In these days of artificial life, where we are dependent on the Earth's secretions in the form of oil to ship around the globe to feed hungry machines and fertilizers, the notion of being

dependent on the bull is difficult for us to appreciate. In the history of the UK we read that oxen practically disappeared from the 1800 to 1850's although there were ox teams used in the Boer War (turn of the 19th century). However, although us in the UK may have difficulty with appreciating the importance of the bull, in many countries throughout the world the bull still plays an important role in society for food production and transportation. It has taken two hundred years to bring about the demise of ox dependency, and it may take another few years to re-gain dependency on the ox if there is a fuel delivery break or price hike.

In a natural society the bull and ox (neutered bull used for draft work) are an integral part of life. Have you ever dug and cultivated a piece of land by hand? How large a piece can you do in a day? With a team of oxen you could cultivate an area of 4,000 m2 (one acre/0.4 hectare) a day. Imagine you and your friends are working cultivating a field. You are turning over a few tens of metres in a day but your friends are turning over thousands of metres in a day. Would you not be appreciative of what they are doing? The oxen are helping you turn over thousands of square metres of soil in a day. As your family are dependent on you to bring home the bread (money or food) similarly you are more dependent on the ox to help you bring home the bread.

How much can you carry? Maybe you can carry a few kilograms by hand or perhaps a hundred kilogrammes using a wheelbarrow. With an ox team you could move more than

two tonnes over a distance of 17 miles in one day. As a man your role is to be the father and to help provide for the maintenance of the family. The ox helps you in this role and can provide even more due to its strength. To say the ox is like the father is practical because that is the role we ask it to play.

Krishna has created a lifestyle where we are meant to produce food and transport goods around using oxen and to feel our dependence on them. To be dependent locally on the sustainable and reliable ox. Nowadays we are dependent on the oil and political sensitivity of a foreign country or we are dependent on another country polluting itself so we can have their oil. This is the modern way but it is not the natural way. The ox was created by God to help us In our duties of father and is called a father in turn.

How can we kill and eat our mother or father

Imagine somebody who is so intimate to the family that we allow them to feed our children for their whole life. Would we ever think of killing such a person. If a person had fed your family for their whole life would you not appreciate that person and want to act always in their best interest. Even in their old age how would you forget what they have done for you. You would protect them and care for them even in their invalidity and sickness. This is the same as the appreciation for the cow. She is giving her milk that sustains our family in the best of foods, in appreciation of what she has given how can we kill her and how can we eat her.

Imagine a person who has worked by your side and helped you on the field or hauled your loads. A person who only takes some straw and a bit of grain as food. A person who has helped you gain more from life than you could by yourself. Would you not appreciate this person would you not take care of them in their sickness or invalidity. Similarly the ox is created by God to help with the growing of food and for transporting your goods how can we kill and how can we eat such an important animal in society.

Of all the animals in the world the cow and the bull are the most important to humans, because whilst some may have a relationship with cats or dogs or horses or something else practically all of us have a relationship with the cow and in a natural society with the ox.

The Desi Cow – Almost Extinct

India is the world's largest producer of milk. But in 10 years, we will be forced to start importing it. And the Indian cow will no longer exist. Jay Mazoomdaar investigates a looming disaster

MILK IN INDIA, is not just a drink, it is an elixir. For almost every Indian — rich or poor — the idea of a daily glass of milk holds a potent and emotional charge. It speaks of parental devotion, well-being and health. This faith in the power of milk is well-grounded: it is the primary nutrient for the young and the old. Nearly 63 percent of animal protein in the Indian diet comes from dairy products. For vegetarians, there is simply no alternative.

The idea of the cow, of course, is also emotively charged because of its mythical place in Hindu iconography, religion and culture: it is quite literally worshipped as goddess Kamdhenu: the cow of plenty. Premchand famously captured its centrality to Indian village life with his memorable tableau of grazing herds returning home at dusk in a cloud of dust, creating the magic hour of "godhuli".

Again, this veneration is founded in hard pragmatics. Traditionally, India has been home to some of the most varied stock of cows in the world: the red-skinned Sahiwal that milks through droughts, the mighty Amrit Mahal with swords for horns or the tiny Vechur that stands no taller than a dog. Different breeds to suit different climatic conditions. These cows have been the most crucial backbone of India's rural economy. Low on maintenance costs, their milk yield has not only been a succor and source of nutrition for otherwise impoverished families, their surplus has been sold by small farmers to State-run cooperatives and private companies, which further package and sell them to urban households under brands such as Amul, Vijaya, Verka, Saras, Nestle and Britannia.

The importance of cows to India's economy, therefore, just cannot be overestimated. India is the world's largest producer of milk. A whopping 68 percent of these milch animals are owned by small and landless farmers; their produce is distributed through over one lakh village milk cooperatives, which have more than 1.1 crore members. These arteries interconnect every strata of the country. In fact, milk is a bigger driving force for India's agro-economy than paddy, wheat or sugar.

But in a mere 10 years, all of this could disappear. India is at the precipice of a disaster that no one seems to be trying to avert. In the run up to India's 66th Republic Day, here's a really sobering thought: the indigenous Indian cow — one of the country's biggest assets — will soon cease to exist and we will be forced to import milk within a decade. This is going to have catastrophic and unimagined impact on lakhs of people.

Predictably, an almost criminal lack of government planning and foresight is responsible for this. India does possess the world's biggest cattle herd, but typically, the individual yield of these malnourished cows is very low. Merely helping small farmers increase their cows' food and water intake could have had miraculous results. (Indian cows, for instance, are doing really well in Brazil. In 2011, a pure Gir named Quimbanda Cal broke its own 2010 record of delivering 10,230 kilolitres of milk a year, with a daily yield of 56.17 kilolitres.) But instead of focussing on — and improving — the reasons why the yield of these cows was low in India, the government in the 1960s started crossbreeding Indian cows with imported bulls and semen.

Red Sindhi
AVERAGE YIELD 6 kg | POTENTIAL 25 kg
As much valued as Sahiwals for their milking prowess, this breed is slightly smaller and belongs to Sindh, now in Pakistan, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

Sahiwal
AVERAGE YIELD 7 kg | POTENTIAL 25-30 kg
The best dairy breed of the subcontinent belonged to undivided Punjab. Post-Partition, much of its home tract belonged to Pakistan and the numbers have rapidly dwindled in India, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

This practice was followed more indiscriminately with every passing decade. Over time, it's triggered a two-pronged crisis. On the one hand, it has set off a systemic destruction of the indigenous Indian cow, which includes precious breeds developed over a millennium. On the other hand, the new exotic crossbreeds have not adapted to Indian conditions yet. In theory, these crossbreeds are capable of very high milk yields, but their capacity suffers drastically as the cows are very vulnerable to tropical weather and diseases. Unlike the indigenous cow, they also need to be kept in very high-cost, air-cooled, all-weather shelters, and require expensive stall feeding and medical care.

Clearly, the small farmer is not equipped to bear these costs of rearing exotic crossbreeds. But because of official negligence, the low-maintenance, weather-resistant local breeds are continuing to deteriorate. Rearing cattle, therefore, is fast becoming unviable for small farmers. Lakhs of them are facing a loss of livelihood; soon their families will not have access to their basic daily glass of milk — unless they can afford to buy it from big dairies with deep pockets.

But the brewing crisis does not end there. The obliteration of the *desi* cow will impact urban consumers too. In the next 10 years, as the new order of industrial dairy production begins to dominate, from being self-sufficient, India will not only have to import a large percentage of its milk demand, but will also become heavily dependent on importing everything from exotic semen to cattle feed for the exotic crossbreeds reared within the country. By controlling these key inputs, foreign markets will eventually decide the price we pay for exotic milk. Incidentally, unlike the milk from *desi* breeds, this milk is unsuitable for those susceptible to diabetes and cardiovascular problems.

The advantages of the exotic crossbreeds are also extremely shortlived: their yield may be higher in the short term but they also run dry much quicker. Even exotic bulls are not nearly as hardy as the desi ones. This is triggering a separate crisis. Millions of these crossbreeds are being abandoned by owners the moment they run dry as they cannot afford their high-nutrition diet and costly healthcare. Not only are feral cattle a civic nuisance, supporting these unproductive animals is stretching the country's already limited resources. According to a recent survey by the Punjab Gausewa Board (PGB), 80 percent of the state's nearly one lakh stray cattle are exotic crossbreeds. Alarmed, the PGB Chairman Kimti Bhagat is leading an agitation against the state's pro-exotic policy.

Finally, as the gene pool of the indigenous Indian cow is allowed to fade away, if some epidemic triggers a population slide in our cattle — already made vulnerable by its high percentage of exotic strains — there will be no scope for corrective intervention.

So here we are, heading with suicidal speed towards jeopardising our food security, ruining the backbone of our agro-economy and handing the control of our dairy industry to foreign markets. There are many reasons why India is poised on the edge of this disaster: each of them reads like a novella of frustration.

Gir
AVERAGE YIELD 5-6 kg | POTENTIAL 20-30 kg
The prized breed of Gujarat is highly valued for its milk and beef in Latin America. It was also used in North America to develop the Brahman breed. Gir animals are still available in good numbers in India, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

Rathi
AVERAGE YIELD 5-6 kg | POTENTIAL 20-25 kg
Mostly found in Bikaner and Ganganagar districts of Rajasthan and parts of Punjab, adjoining to Rajasthan. These are medium-sized animals with short horns, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

ONE OF the main reasons for India's looming milk crisis — and the disappearance of India's *desi* cows — is a f***aulty premise in official thinking about exotic crossbreeds (which no government has tried to revise despite contrary facts on ground). Add to this, a deliberate misrepresentation of the viability of desi cows and you have a window into why India will soon become an import-dependent nation.***

Here's how the story unfolds. Since 1951, milk production in India has jumped from 17 to 122 million tonnes. This might seem a positive figure, but the number is deceptively misleading because India also has the highest number of cattle in the world — 200 million — which brings the average yield in milk per animal down to only 3.23 kg. The global average is 6.68 kg.

In the next 10 years, the projected demand for milk in India will touch 180 million tones. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) warns that if India cannot keep pace, it will have to start importing milk, leading to higher consumer prices.

Unfortunately, the response to this warning is completely knee-jerk. Governments across the country are racing to replace the desi cow even faster with exotic crossbreeds. Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal is planning an advanced institute of dairy farming in Mohali, in collaboration with an Israeli firm. Earlier, the state had roped in an American company to source high-quality semen. In Kerala, the animal husbandry department wants to import improved cattle breeds from Denmark to crossbreed with local cows. The NDDB itself is planning to import 100 high-yield Holstein Friesian and 300 Jersey bulls in the next five years.

Kankrej
AVERAGE YIELD 3-4 kg | POTENTIAL 15 kg
Also known as Wadhiar, Kankrej is one of the heaviest Indian breeds and belongs to the region southeast to the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

Tharparkar
AVERAGE YIELD 4-5 kg | POTENTIAL 15-20 kg
Also known as White Sindhi, these are hardy animals known for their ability to cross the Thar desert with a single drink of water. Larger than Red Sindhis, Tharparkars are also good as drought animals, Photo: Courtesy NBAGR

At a surface glance, this might seem a great option. Rajbir Singh, a middle-range farmer, who owns a large dairy farm in a village near Karnal in Haryana might certainly think so. In 2009, two of his Friesian crossbred cows — Ganga and Yamuna — were showcased by the National Dairy Research Institute in Karnal as India's highest ever milk yielders at 51.5 and 59.5 kg a day.

Last year, Yamuna, the younger of the two, died of reasons still unidentified. But Ganga remains the most remarkable of many success stories in the region where 30-35 kg milk from exotic crossbreeds is commonplace. Governments across the decades too have routinely bought into this idea that imported exotics would achieve a daily yield of 30 kg and above. Unfortunately, the facts on ground prove otherwise. Success stories like Ganga are rare: despite the huge costs in rearing them, the national average yield from exotic crossbreed cows in India stands at 6.62kg.

Contrast this with Israel. In just four decades, a dairy-deprived Israel has developed its own Friesian crossbreed cattle that have consistently started giving 26 kg of milk daily. After five decades of expensive effort, the exotic crossbreeds in India produce only one-fourth that quantity. Despite this, governments insist on pursuing this policy. Their defence is that even at 6.62 kg, the average yield of exotic crossbreeds in India is still thrice that of desi cows, which averages at 2.2 kg.

It would've been a relief if even that fig leaf had been true. Unfortunately, it is not. A crucial defect in India's myopic milk policy is an over-valuation of the benefits of exotic crossbreeds and an undervaluation of the robustness of desi

cows.

INDIAN COW breeds are a crucial part of the country's ecological heritage. Since ancient times, different breeds were developed in different parts of the subcontinent by selecting the best animals for preferred traits such as their milking capacity, draught power, feeding requirements, capacity to adapt to local weather, immunity, etc. The purity of such breeds was maintained with great discipline and wisdom in each geographical pocket known as a breeding tract.

Over time, unfortunately, this social rigour was lost. Indiscriminate mating between different breeds and inferior animals within the same breed resulted in a high number of cattle of poor genetic quality. These non-descript animals today accounts for 80 percent of India's cattle. At no point, in the past 65 years, did any government think of stepping in to preserve the careful science of crossbreeding.

But this dismal scenario is still not an accurate picture of the desi cow. India has 37 pure cattle breeds. Five of these — Sahiwal, Gir, Red Sindhi, Tharparkar and Rathi — are known for their milking prowess. A few others, such as Kankrej, Ongole and Hariana, belong to dual breeds that have both milch and draught qualities; ie, they are good plough animals. The rest are pure draught breeds.

But when official data records the average yield of indigenous cows as 2.2 kg daily, it clubs these dual breeds and non-dairy draught breeds together with the five top milch breeds. This deliberately undermines the performance of India's best milch cows — such as Girs and Rathis — to establish the supremacy of the exotic cattle.

"Over the years, this has justified a policy that discards Indian milch breeds to promote exotic crossbreed animals. Due to this neglect, quality desi cows have become rare. So dairy farmers are easily lured to exotic cattle that start milking at a younger age but often trip soon after," explains a senior official in the Department of Animal Husbandry, Union Ministry of Agriculture, on condition of anonymity.

Echoing this official's views, a senior veterinarian at a government hospital in Mumbai says ruefully, "First we blame our cows for low milk yield without considering the field constraints. Then we replace those cows with exotic breeds that are more vulnerable to the same constraints. Meanwhile, our desi breeds keep setting new records abroad."

But it's not just Quimbanda Cal — the Gir wonder in Brazil — that is proof of how desi cows can perform with adequate support and care. There are enough examples back home.

Satyajit Khachar, for instance, has a Gir farm at Jasdan in Gujarat; he also exports bulls to Brazil. His best cows produce milk in excess of 30 kg daily; his farm average is between 18-20 kg per cow. Khachar's farm does not necessarily have to be a startling exception. Every year, the government's own Central Herd Registration Scheme records a number of Girs with 10-14 kg daily yield. In Rajasthan, UrmulTrust promotes the indigenous Rathi cow in 10 villages each in Bikaner and Ganganagar districts. The average daily yield of these Rathis is between 8-10

Random Crossbred
AVERAGE YIELD 0 kg | POTENTIAL Uncertain
A dry 'American cow' bought for Rs 7,000 by Sheesh Pal, a dairy farmer in Uttar Pradesh. It was a gamble: the owner was banking on some local bull performing a miracle to make it yield milk, Photo: Jay Mazoomdaar

Ongole
AVERAGE YIELD 2-4 kg | POTENTIAL 10-15 kg
These cows belong to the Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh. Ongole bulls were used to develop the Brahman breed in North America, Photo: NBAGR

kg, while the best produce up to 25 kg a day.

Clearly, some focussed thinking on how to rejuvenate and maximise these indigenous breeds — with all their added advantages of lower maintenance cost and greater adaptability — would have stood India in great stead. But shockingly, even after five decades of promoting exotic semen and expensive imported crossbreeds, government institutes have no comparative data on the maintenance cost of different breeds. It is only in 2012 that the central ministry of animal husbandry finally commissioned a two-year project to NDRI, Karnal, to develop methodologies for estimating the cost of milk production.

This is a step that should have been taken urgently several decades ago. The sheer fatality of exclusively promoting exotic cattle over desi cattle would have become evident much earlier. The story of Ammo, a small dairy farmer in the Gautam Budh Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh, is profoundly telling. Ammo recently lost two exotic crossbreds that had cost her a staggering Rs 70,000 each, to foot and mouth disease after spending Rs 5,000 on their treatment. Close to her house stood tethered another "American cow" bought for just Rs 7,000. "The previous owner did not get any milk from it. I hope a local bull will perform some miracle," says Ammo's **neighbour Sheesh Pal, explaining why he'd bought the cow.**

The story of Ammo and Sheesh Pal succinctly captures the short-termism of investing in expensive crossbreeds. But the costliness of these cows or their vulnerability to disease is only one part of the picture. The argument for crossbreeds over *desi* cows is always presented through data skewed in other ways.

It is true that, maintained well, crossbreeds often produce milk in excess of 30 kg per day. But as their average yield in India is stuck at 6.63 kg, it's clear that the majority of this cattle, in the care of resource-strapped farmers, is not delivering to potential. In such a scenario, quality *desi* cows with an average yield of 8-20 kg would be a far more lucrative option. Again, it's true exotic crossbreeds can produce 4,500 kg per annual lactation. *Desi* cows, on the other hand, rarely cross 2,500 kg per lactation in standard home conditions. But, crossbreeds rarely lactate more than four times; while *desis* lactate 10-12 times. In effect, this means a crossbreed can only produce 18,000 kg of milk in a lifetime, while a *desi* can give up to 25-30,000 kg.

Unfortunately, thanks to government policy, such robust *desi* cows are hardly available any longer. We are witnessing the end of the Indian cow.

Such is the callousness, even a reliable breed-wise census has never been conducted in India, says Sosamma Iype, who taught at Kerala Agricultural University and revived India's "zero-maintenance" Vechur breed, the smallest milch cattle in the world. Despite this shocking absence of official data, every piece of anecdotal evidence suggests that, except for the Gir, indigenous milch breeds in India have become extremely vulnerable.

In Uttar Pradesh, for example, there are 1.8 million exotic cows and 1.4 million desis. More than a million of these pure desis are made up of the local Hariana cattle. But, inexplicably, the state also counts some 1.51 lakh Sahiwals, a top milch breed from Punjab, and 75,000 Tharparkars, the hardy desert milcher of Rajasthan.

A district veterinary officer in western UP dismisses these figures as hallucinatory. "We do have some Sahiwals — but one and a half lakh?! And if you find me a Tharparkar here, I will felicitate the owner at my own expense," he guffaws.

While a number of prime *desi* breeds such as the Red Sindhi, Sahiwal and Tharparkar are facing extinction in India today, not one exotic crossbred has been able to take their place. There is no answer from the NDRI on the field performance of Karan Fries and Karan Swiss breeds. The silence over the success of Sunandini being developed since 1965, the Friesian-Sahiwal or Sindhi-Jersey cattle is equally intriguing.

"In general, crossbreeding has not been successful," says Dr Iype. "No exotic crossbred has stabilised till now. As long as import and use of pure exotic bulls continues, no stabilisation can be expected."

THINGS NEED not have gone so badly wrong. Back in 1965, when an expert group was asked to formulate a cattle-breeding policy, they came up with a scientifically robust, multi-pronged approach: selective breeding of quality indigenous cows in their breeding tracts; using these improved breeds to upgrade the non-descript stock; and the use of exotic semen to upgrade non-descript cattle into exotic crossbreeds only near urban centres where dairy owners could afford to support such high-maintenance herds.

The policy was firmly against introducing exotic semen in the breeding tracts of indigenous milch breeds. So were our dairy farmers. When the NDDB was launched under Verghese Kurien, the proud Gir herders of Gujarat resisted the exotic cattle for years. One story has it that a group of local dairy farmers contemptuously dragged a few exotic crossbreeds to Kurien's house on the day of his daughter's marriage to give away in dowry.

But once artificial insemination became popular, the floodgates were thrown open. Like almost everything in India, the looming milk crisis is the result of a colossal planning mess.

According to Gujarat government data from Rajkot district for 2002-05, for instance, the high yield Gir was callously edged out by exotic crossbreeds in its own core breeding tract: 62,095 Gir semen straws were produced for artificial insemination in those three years. The number for exotic crossbreeds was more than double at 1,63,435.

There were many warning signs from the beginning, but unfortunately, few took heed of them. In the 1980s, a herd of Holstein Friesians capable of 8,000-kg per lactation was bought from Israel. But once they landed in Bengaluru, the animals refused to eat. So their feed too had to be imported from Israel. When the cows were finally milked, the yield was a sad 2,200 kg. Same was the story with Danish Jerseys brought around the same time to Koraput in Odisha.

"Yet," says a retired bureaucrat, who was part of the Operation Flood team, "policy-makers trained in the West persisted with their love of European breeds. Frequent foreign sojourns to procure cattle kept the babus happy. We wanted to emulate Israel's success story without imbibing the Israelis' rigour. India is a vast country; we could have singled out one district for a disciplined experiment. But we did not bother."

The country will have to pay a high price for that callousness. The practice of cross breeding ought to be very exact and carefully monitored. But unlike Israel, no records of herds and their mating patterns have been maintained in India. So, though the first generation of exotic crossbreeds showed encouraging results, as they were randomly mated, the whole thing began to backfire.

Two years ago, the NDDB finally developed its own software — Information Network for Animal Productivity and Health (INAPH) — to maintain live field data on pedigrees and the selection of the right bulls for breeding. So far, around 12 lakh animals have been registered in eight states. This, of course, is a very small percentage of India's cattle. And the programme's field success is yet to be established.

But proof of indiscretions lies everywhere. The 11th Five-Year Plan set a target to produce a mind-boggling 40 million doses of semen every year. Less than one-fifth of the lot was indigenous. The focus on quantity also compromised the semen's sanitary, biological and genetic quality. The overwhelming emphasis on exotic strains also lowered the conception rate. A NABARD report for Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh, quoted in the 11th Plan, put India's overall cattle conception rate at 35 percent: the international standard is 50 percent.

A high level of inbreeding due to the massive global use of Holstein- Friesian semen from an original population of less than 100 breeding bulls has weakened the gene further. Tropical conditions make conception even more difficult and increases embryo deaths.

In 2011, an article in Farmers' Forum by Dr OP Dhanda and Dr KML Pathak cautioned that crossbreeding had led to "higher incidences of reproductive disorders like anoestrous and repeat breeding, poor libido and lower freezability of semen… leading to a very high culling rate in bulls".

These are not alarmist voices. Dr Dhanda was the assistant director general (animal science) at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Dr Pathak is the serving deputy director general at ICAR.

There are other factors that make crossbreeds unfeasible in India. An average exotic crossbreed, says Dr Sagari Ramdas, a veterinarian and director of NGO Anthra at Hyderabad, requires at least four times the water a local breed does. "In Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, for example, water is being literally mined to keep the exotic crossbreeds in business."

THE THREAT of extinction is not an empty one. India's rush for exotic semen has had other major fallouts: there are few quality *desi* bulls left for natural mating. If a climatic upheaval or epidemic trips India's already

Karan Swiss

AVERAGE YIELD 4-8 kg | POTENTIAL 25-30 kg
Work on the Karan Swiss started in 1963 at the NDRI, Karnal, using Sahiwal or Red Sindhis with Brown Swiss. In 1971, the institute started trying to cross Holstein Friesian, Brown Swiss and Jersey with Tharparkar before settling with HF to develop the Karan Fries. Neither has fully stabilised in the field, Photo: Ankit Agarwal

Holstein Friesan

AVERAGE YIELD 9-10 kg | POTENTIAL 30-40 kg
The large animals with black and white markings originated in northern Holland and Friesland. Known for its high milk yield, it has become the mainstay of the global dairy industry and outnumbers all other breeds in the US, Photo: Ankit Agarwal

tottering exotic crossbreeds in the future, only infusion of indigenous genes can save the day. But, most of our pure *desi* breeds are likely to disappear within this decade.

This shift to exotic blood has not only damaged the domestic milk cows but also the draught breeds. The Ninth Plan had underlined the importance of animal carts for their huge employment potential in the rural economy. But many states such as Kerala have almost wiped off their sturdy draught breeds.

The fate of exotic crossbreed bulls is even worse. Vulnerable to Indian weather conditions, they are useless as draught animals. Unless they are selected as breeders, these bulls are either killed immediately after birth or starved to death. Those who escape join the long, brutal march to slaughterhouses both In India and abroad as illegal consignments. The Indian beef trade is worth 6,000-10,000 crore a year. Many believe the ineffective ban on cow slaughter has only ended up creating a revenue loss to the State and magnifying the unthinkable cruelty these animals face in transit. But even to suggest lifting the ban is anathema. India's holy cows must be kept safe. At least on paper.

Unfortunately, though we can still turn things around, the signs are not encouraging. Free Trade Agreements with and duty exemptions to the European Union, Australia and New Zealand are likely to flood our markets with subsidised dairy products. While dairy processors in India will welcome cheap skimmed milk and butter fat and convert these into milk, the already struggling small dairy farmers may not be able to cope with the still lower procurement price.

Indian industry, of course, already has its strategies in place. As a former Amul executive explains: "Indian brands will always be competitive thanks to low cost inputs such as labour. Farmers who can't maintain exotic crossbreds can be absorbed as farm hands in large dairies. For rural consumers who cannot afford milk cartons, we will introduce small sachets good enough for whitening a few cups of tea."

In the emerging order, it seems that is all the traditional keepers of the Kamadhenu apparently deserve. And that is all they will get.

http://www.tehelka.com/the-desi-cow-almost-extinct/?singlepage=1

AN AHMISA-CERTIFIED GOSHALA

~Sri Sri Radha Madhav Goshala~

Iskcon Kanpur

Iskcon Kanpur is in the midst of an ambitious temple construction project with the goshala being situated next door to the temple.

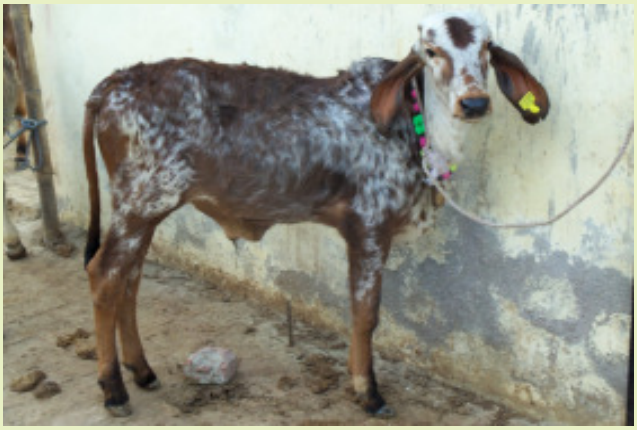
The goshala complex is situated next to the new temple being constructed and comprises three large sheds

Sri Sri Radha Madhav Goshala's capable staff

Our handsome friend didn't take to being ear-tagged and still needs to be tagged. If anyone is looking for volunteer work...

Both lucky and unlucky: this calf was born blind and his future would be bleak if born into a non-protected goshala.

PICTURE PERFECT



SOME REFERENCES OF COW PROTECTION IN ISLAM

By: Vaishnavapadadhuli Kripaprathi

http://www.speakingtree.in/spiritual-blogs/seekers/faith-and-rituals/some-references-of-cow-protection-in-islam

1. Islam lays great emphasis on animal rights and man's responsibility for their welfare. Quran disapproves cow slaughter : "Akar mul bakar fainaha saidul bahaima" which means 'respect COW the four leg captain'

2.Muzaffer Hussain, a Padmashri, an eminent Muslim lawyer, and a writer has a chapter entitled 'the cow & the Koran' in his latest book 'Islam and Shakahar' (vegetarianism). According to Hussain, there is NOT a SINGLE SURAH (chapter) in the HOLY QURAN that allows any killing of cows or bulls.

3. Deoband Darul Uloom FATWA for Muslims nationwide to avoid slaughtering cows on the occasion of the forthcoming Id-ul-Zuha on January 11, out of respect for Hindu sentiments.

4.Rath- a Sunni Muslim tribe of Rajasthan protects cows as their daily life is based on Cow by products. They were the Muslim patriots revolted in 1857 against British for Cow fat in cartridges.

5. There is no single evidence of any type of Cow slaughter house in India during Moghul period as even the Moghul Kings protected Cows . Babar in ' Tuzuk-e- Babari' (his autobiography) says that 'the day any Mughal emperor ignores this will of COW protection, the common people or the citizenry shall reject him'.
* Cow Milk : A blessing for humanity in Islam

6. The famous Iranian Islamic philosopher and scholar Alghazali (1058-1111 A.D) who established the Islamic Academy of Baghdad says in his book 'Ahya ul Deen'(Revival of Religious Science) : "The meat from cows is an illness (marz), its milk is pure (safa) which means good for health and its ghee is a medicine.

7.Sufi saints always nurtured Cows, one such Goshala established by a Sufi Muslim saint is at Nagpur, Maharashtra.

So brothers why to kill this special creation of God. Think over it.

AHIMSA FOUNDATION FOR CATTLE PROTECTION

Patronship Program

http://www.affcap.org/BecomeApatron.aspx

AFFCAP's certification involves inspecting goshalas throughout India, ear-tagging the animals and tracking them in a database. In this way it is determined if the animals are being properly cared for and protected throughout their lives.

When we began our work, the goshalas were charged a membership fee plus a registration charge per animal. However, experience revealed that the added financial burden was difficult to bear for many goshalas.

Since it is our desire to encourage and assist the protection of as many animals as possible, animal registration charges have been stopped. This significantly reduces the cost of certification. However, the certification costs are already at a minimum and need be subsidized if AFFCAP's work is to be continued. This is the rationale behind AFFCAP's Patronship Program; so please follow the link above and help shoulder some of the costs of cow protection. This will ensure the cows receive proper care and your life will certainly be better for it.

PLEASE HELP US HELP THE COWS

MILK

A1 versus A2

Milk of European breeds is addictive, triggers schizophrenia,diabetes and cardiovascular diseases

In July 2007, Dr Keith Woodford, a professor of farmmanagement at New Zealand's Lincoln University published a paper titled *A2 Milk, Farmer Decisions, and Risk Management* that reported how "approximately 500 New Zealand dairy farmers are converting their herds to eliminate production of A1 beta-casein within the milk" responsible for "Type 1 diabetes, heart disease and autism".

Dr Woodford went on to explain: "The alternative (to A1) is A2 beta-casein, and the associated milk is known as A2 milk. Originally all cow milk was of the A2 type. However, a genetic mutation, probably between 5000 and 10,000 years ago, has resulted in a proportion ofcows of European breeds producing a casein variant called A1 beta-casein. A1 beta-casein is absent in the milk of pure Asian and African cattle."

He offered "eight strands to the evidence" to the ill-effects of A1 beta-casein: countries with high intakes of A1 beta-casein are the countries with high levels of Type 1 diabetes and heart disease; A1 and A2 beta-caseindigest differently and only A1 beta-casein releases beta-casomorphin7 (BCM7) which is a powerful opioid(addictive) and causes arterial plaque; rabbits fed A1 beta-casein develop considerably more plaque on their aorta and rats show higher incidence of Type 1 diabetes; evidence from American and European investigations show that autistic and schizophrenic persons typically excrete large quantities of BCM7 in their urine; and many who are intolerant to milk are able to drink A2 milk.

Dr Woodford was worried that most consumers and dairy farmers worldwide remained unaware of the issues surrounding A1 and A2 milk. Within four years, Indian scientists at the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) came up with their own study. "The A2 allele gene in Indian milk breeds of cows and buffalos are 100 per cent, while in foreign breeds, it is around 60 per cent," it said in 2011.

NBAGR screened the status of the A2 allele of the beta-casein gene in 22 indigenous breeds and the two dominant foreign breeds Holstein Friesian and Jersey. While the A2 allele was 100 per cent in the top five indigenous milch breeds –Red Sindhi, Sahiwal, Tharparkar, Gir and Rathi – and around 94 per cent in other indigenous dual and draught breeds, its status was merely 60 per cent in Holstein Friesian and Jersey.

According to Dr Woodford, the major consumer market for A2 milk is in Australia where it is available in some 800 supermarkets and 200 convenience stores.However, overall market share is probably less than 1% because of limited publicity. In an increasingly health conscious world, this creates a huge potential for global demand for the A2 milk of our indigenous breeds. For now, we must rethink our strategy of flooding the domestic markets with A1 milk by aggressively pushing exotic breeds at home and opening up the dairy sector to foreign brands.

http://www.tehelka.com/the-desi-cow-almost-extinct/?singlepage=1