

Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection

June - July 2014 Newsletter



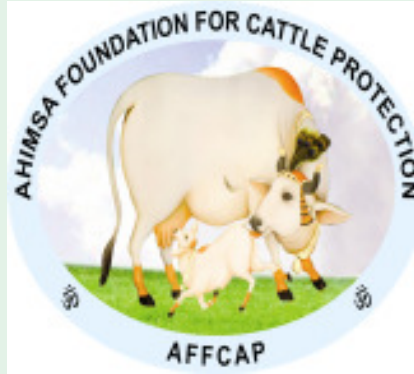
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THE GAUSHALA INSPECTOR

***MUSLIMS FIGHT FOR
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**No
Slaughter**



**No
Slaughter**

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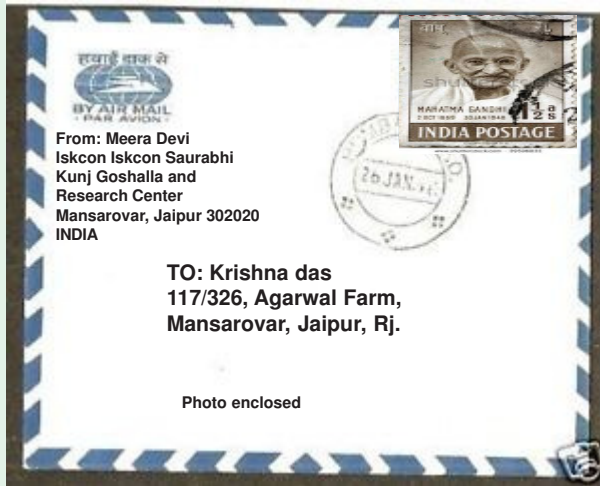
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VEGETARIANISM AND RELIGION



Dear Devotees: Hare Krishna!

Please excuse me for any offenses I may have made. I would like to introduce myself.

I don't have a name as my mother and father never gave me one. In fact I am not even sure where my mother is or who my father is. I know my mother is on a farm somewhere giving milk but I never met my father as I was born from artificial insemination.

Right now my body color is quite fair and I am a female calf residing in the ISKCON Jaipur Goshalla. Although when this story happened I was quite brownish and now as I have grown a little bigger and a little fatter the color of my coat has changed.

The farmer who owned me found me to be a great burden. I did not realize it at the time but he only wanted the milk from my mother and always got rid of the males first and now it seems even the female calves later. He could not afford or at least did not want to waste his hard earned money on feeding me and I was drinking his profits. I didn't ask for much.

So when I was about 10 months old he pushed me outside the gate and shut it tight, my mother cried and I cried, I can still hear her voice. I was taking milk from her, but they were not giving me much and I was eating grass. At first I did not realize what was happening so I stayed around there for a while and every time the gate opened I tried to get in, even made it once, but he soon pushed me out again. Slowly I realized and my stomach told me to move on, I was getting hungry.

Anyway I found some other young cows like me and we moved here and there looking for food. At times we got Prasadam scraps from the ISKCON Temple so we made that a part of our food run. I used to like to hear the Kirtan and would sit around in the front near the door to hear. Devotees were kind and some Matajis used to bring me Chappatis. I thought "they are so lucky to be blessed by the Lord and live in the Temple."

One night I got late at the Temple and the other cows had moved on, they were all a lot older than me. Later I found out they had been picked up by someone in a Tata 407 and taken to Uttar Pradesh. Someone said they will be slaughtered! I didn't believe that though. So I left the Temple after Sundar Arti and walked over to the 100 foot road. As it was getting late I found a nice Babool tree near the gate in the fence and thought this to be a good place to sleep.

Then the drama began and it is a day I will never forget. At about 11.00pm at night I heard a pack of dogs moving in my direction. I never felt so alone and afraid in my life. **Sure enough my worst fears were**

realized and they got my scent. Of course they were a bunch of cowards and pushing each other to harass me. But finally one, a bit bigger than the rest, took a lunge toward me and tried to bite my leg. I cried out for help but there was no one around. Seeing the first dog others got some courage and one after the other tried to nip my feet and bite my legs. One took a bite at my ear and almost managed to get his teeth into me. I was crying and trying to run away but they were barking like anything by now and I knew I was finished. I should have stayed in front of the Temple. At least there is one of the devotees who comes in the night sometimes and shoots at the dogs with a sling shot so I would have had a chance.

Then from across the field a man came running, he and his son. They were making a lot of noise and the dogs got distracted. They were swinging sticks and the dogs and I got scared of them. Then I saw they were chasing the dogs, they came to save me. I was cut here and there and bleeding a bit but they picked me up and carried me across the field to the ISKCON Goshalla. I was put in a small pen by myself and they gave me some grass and water.

In the morning the Temple President came over as usual and saw me there. There was some conversation going on and the Cow Herd man was telling my story and said that he would keep me there for a few days until I was strong and then he would let me go again.

Hare Krishna. The Temple President said NO. You make her strong and keep her here forever. Srila Prabhupada said “whenever a Cow comes under our protection he or she can never be given up at any cost” Jaya Srila Prabhupada. I was saved. I was saved and living in the Temple.

I get Prasad, I hear the holy name and one devotee from AFFCAP comes over here every day and gives me a good scratch with his brush. He gave me an eartag so that I can never get lost again. I think he is in charge of AFFCAP and I hear of the wonderful work they are doing. Counting cows, to make sure that no one else in an AFFCAP Goshalla gets pushed out the gate or sold to some so called nice farmer.

Lord Krishna’s mercy is certainly most wonderful and last year they took me to the Temple with all the other cows from the Goshalla and did Puja to us, fed us green grass and balls of Gour and everyone came and patted us. It was Go-Puja day and I found out they do it every year so I am looking forward to that day again.

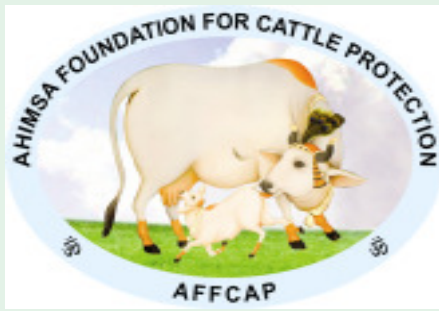
My prayer is that you all see the importance of the work AFFCAP is doing and support them, for the sake of all cows everywhere. We are helpless animals and can depend only on you.

The servant of the Vaisnava’s.

Meera Devi.

P.S. They also gave me a name, I am so proud to be a devotee.





NO SLAUGHTER

THE GAUSHALA INSPECTOR

The Inspector plays a crucial role in the certification process by conducting the inspection of the gaushala and interview of the workers and managers. The inspection is the foundation of determining the authenticity of the information contained in the application and how it relates to the gaushala facilities.

Who is an inspector?

The inspector performs the role of the “eyes and ears” of the certification committee.

Qualifications

- ✓ Has a sincere concern re. the protection of the cows and the integrity of the goshallas
- ✓ AFFCAP trained in certification procedures and concerns

What does he do?

- Performs a visual inspection of the herd and facilities
- Interviews the cowherds and goshalla staff
- Has right to inspect Goshalla documents and records relating to the care of the animals.

Responsibilities

- ✓ To verify the information provided in the application
- ✓ Writes an Inspection Report which is submitted to the Certification Committee.
- ✓ The inspector does not award certification but recommends, or not, certification to the Certification Committee



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Muslims fight for cow protection in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD: Muslims have taken the onus of cow protection in Gujarat. Following riots on Eid-ul-Adha over cow slaughter at Sansrod village in Vadodara district, local Muslims have formed a cow protection group.

"We are going to convince butchers that they should give up slaughtering cows. We are opposing cow slaughter as it is against the law," said Haji Dilawar Yakub, president of the newly formed Gujarat Muslim Gau Hifazat Samiti in Bharuch.

He said that the decision to form such a committee was taken by organizations after the alleged police torture of Sansrod villagers. These organizations have planned a demonstration in Vadodara on Wednesday in this regard.

The committee in Bharuch has 15 members and 150 volunteers who have begun sensitizing Muslims on how cow slaughter has resulted in exploitation of butchers and traders by animal protection activists in connivance with the police.

"Muslims in four villages, including Vahalu and Hingala, have given an undertaking that they will not indulge in cow slaughter," Dilawar said, and added they plan to start propagating this idea across Gujarat.

Organizations like Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind, Gujarat, Bharat Bachao Andolan, and Gujarat Muslim Development Council have supported the cause.

TNN | Oct 30, 2013, 03.00AM IST



Sri Vrindavan Gaushala

Jaipur, Rajasthan

This month's highlighted gaushala is the Sri Vrindavan Gaushala in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. The SVG Gaushala is run by a Mr. Raju Lashkerry, one of the Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection's Trustees. All of the milk produced in the gaushala is donated to local temples, including the world-famous Sri Sri Radha Govinda Mandir, located in the old city of Jaipur. We happened to drop in for the inspection at feeding time and the animals relished the green fodder with great delight.





PICTURE PERFECT



What's behind that glass of milk?

The author throws light on some grim details about the cow in India, the world's largest producer of milk.



You know that child who throws a terrible tantrum over a glass of milk. How he kicks and screams and refuses to touch the stuff? Haven't you wondered what the fuss is all about? After all, it's just a glass of milk.

It turns out the child may just have the right idea. The business of producing milk — indeed, the multi-crore rupee cattle industry it's a part of — is sustained by a process of relentless cruelty towards animals, from birth till death, with little letup. Cruelty compounded by poorly defined, poorly implemented methods and gross violations.

In 1998, India, hitherto a milk-deficient nation, surpassed the U.S. as the highest milk-producing nation, a position it holds till date. According to the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, the government has invested Rs. 2242 crore to help meet a national demand of 150 million tonnes of milk by 2016-17. Millions of cattle will be produced (mainly through artificial insemination) for this purpose.

This will be done through “productivity enhancement, strengthening and expanding village-level infrastructure for milk procurement and providing producers with greater access to markets. The strategy involves improving genetic potential of bovines, producing required number of quality bulls, and superior quality frozen semen and adopting adequate bio-security measures etc.” Today India is home to the world's largest cattle herd, with 324 million head.

The government is positioning this as a food security measure for the future. From the point of view of the animals, though, unthinkable cruelty lies ahead.

That image of tender care and worship that we are raised with, the image that is propagated in films and integrated with our cultural values — that's a myth. In reality, the life of a cow in India is a horror show.

The first three stages of life — birth, maturity and motherhood — happen with inhuman haste. The female calf is born. She reaches puberty somewhere between 15 months and three years of age, depending on the breed, and is then impregnated, increasingly through artificial insemination.

Arpan Sharma, external relations in-charge at the Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations, builds partnerships for better protection of animals by bringing together various stakeholders such as industry, government and regulators. He says, "Due to poor equipment and a lack of proper training, artificially inseminated cows sometimes become infertile and develop infections with few to care for them."

Soon, the calf is born. While the cow is seen as a metaphor for motherhood, she is rarely given a chance to experience its joys for very long. Calves are separated from their mothers soon after they are born so that they don't drink up all the milk. Just what does this do to these docile creatures?



The American physician Dr. Michael Klaper, the author of books such as *Vegan Nutrition: Pure and Simple* and *Pregnancy, Children, and the Vegan Diet*, provides an insight. "On the second day after birth, my uncle took the calf from the mother and placed him in the veal pen in the barn — only 10 yards away, in plain view of the mother. The mother cow could see her infant, smell him, hear him, but could not touch him, comfort him, or nurse him. The heartrending bellows that she poured forth — minute after minute, hour after hour, for five long days — were excruciating to listen to. They are the most poignant and painful auditory memories I carry in my

brain," he said in a 2010 interview with the Northwest Veg, a non-profit organisation based in Portland, Oregon.

Eileen Weintraub of Help Animals India and Vishakha Society for Protection and Care of Animals, Vishakhapatnam, takes this fact to its logical extreme. She states firmly, "With 1.2 billion people and 400 million vegetarians, anyone who does not have a vegan diet contributes to the suffering of cows."

I once asked my mother, "If we take milk from cows, then what does the calf drink?" She said the milk a cow produces is more than the calf requires, and humans use what's left over.

Apparently not. "The quantity of milk a calf gets varies. By and large, unless the calf is what is called "replacement stock," it will get only the bare minimum necessary for survival. Often it will not even get that," says Sharma.

To increase yield, the cows are also injected with Oxytocin, a hormone banned in India under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and section 12 of Food and Drug Adulteration Prevention Act, 1960. “Studies around the world show that cows injected with Oxytocin have a greater incidence of abortions, mastitis and lower conception rates, and their calves suffer higher than normal infant mortality and delayed puberty,” says Erika Abrams, founder of Animal Aid Unlimited, an animal rescue organisation based in Udaipur.

And what happens to unwanted male calves? This is where we wade into the red zone of this bloody business. “Milk cows need to produce a calf every year and half those calves are male. While a fraction of these are used to pull ploughs, others are butchered. Their skin is used for leather, and their meat for local consumption and export,” says Abrams. Calf leather comes from male calves of which India has a huge number.

The ones that live don’t fare much better. With traditional backyard agriculture slowly giving way to ‘intensive dairy farming’, hundreds of cows are confined for long periods within cramped, dark and acrid quarters. “More times than not even where there is a lot of space they are tied with a two-foot rope and in most cases all they can do is sit down and stand up even if they are in the open,” says Nandita Shah, Director at Sharan, Sanctuary for Health and Reconnection to Animals and Nature, Pondicherry. “At some places in Mumbai, calves are tied outside till they die of starvation; so technically they have not been killed.”



Divya Narain, an animal rescue volunteer from Bhopal, says, “At the State-run animal shelter in Bhopal, we often get recumbent little male calves, which have been dumped on the streets to die.” In other words, male calves, more or less, suffer an early death.

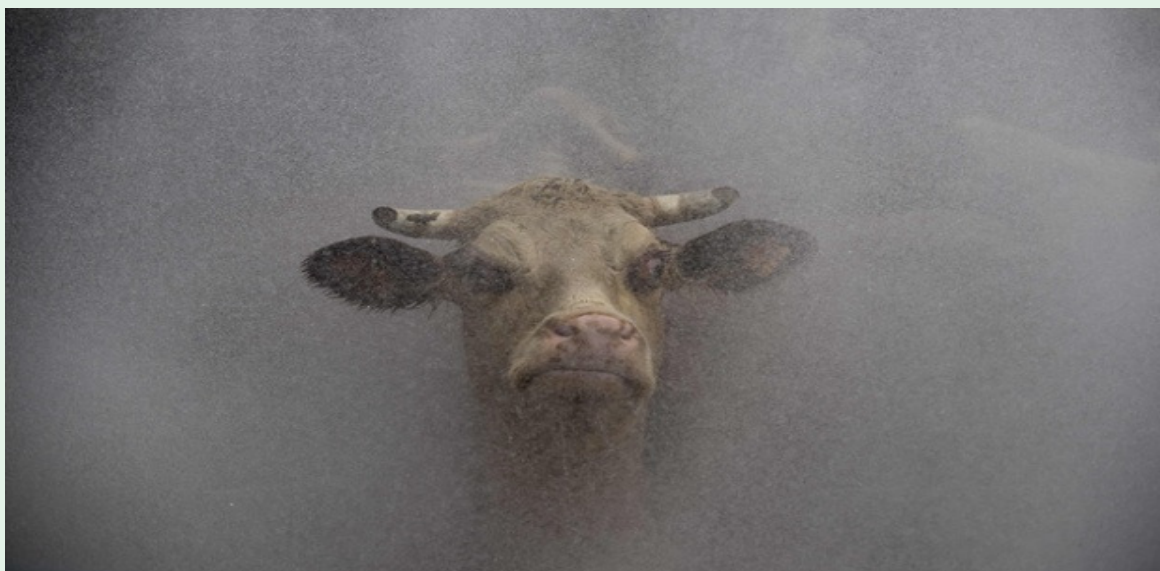
And what about cows? Cows and buffaloes can be productive until about the age of 14 years. But in the existing set up, in which cows are kept pregnant for almost 300 days a year, most of them dry up by the age of five or six. And after spending most of her life being milked, enduring hormone injections and the trauma of separation, the cow is sent off to the slaughterhouse.

Twenty-eight Indian states have cow-slaughter protection legislations in place. Unproductive cows, therefore, are routinely trafficked to slaughterhouses in the states where laws are less stringent or non-existent — Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Lakshadweep, and especially Kerala. A large number of cattle is trafficked to

Kerala, under inhuman conditions, from the neighbouring states as it is a major consumer of beef and does not have any regulation pertaining to cow slaughter. Apuroopa Podhardha, the legal adviser of People for Cattle in India (PFCI), a Chennai-based animal rescue group, says, “Thirty animals are crammed into a truck meant for six. In some instances, the legs of calves are tied and they are dumped in one on top of the other. Furthermore, no provision for food or water is made”. Cattle are also trafficked to West Bengal, from where they are taken to Bangladesh.

PFCI has conducted three cow-rescue operations in Chennai. Podhardha’s colleague Arun Prasanna G. says, “The latest delicacy in demand in the Middle Eastern markets is veal (the meat of a calf no older than three months). Flesh of unborn calves is known to bear medicinal value hence pregnant cattle are slaughtered.”

Prasanna says, “In many slaughterhouses, the act of slaughtering involves smashing the head of a cow with a sledgehammer, which renders it unconscious; then skinning it; and or hanging it upside down so that all the blood can be drained from the slit jugular vein, then skinning it live.” In a recent raid in an illegal slaughterhouse in Chennai recently, there were 20 cattle. “We could only rescue six of them. The police insisted we file a complaint first, which gave the cattle owners time to hide the remaining cows.” The slaughterhouse owners received an anticipatory bail.



According to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, India has 3,600 slaughterhouses, nine modern abattoirs and 171 meat-processing units licensed under the meat products order. These do not include the numerous and ever-growing number of illegal and unregulated slaughterhouses, estimated to be more than 30,000. According to the U.S Department of Agriculture’s report on Livestock and Poultry: World Markets and Trade, India became the biggest beef exporter in the world in 2012(till October) with 16,80,000 tonnes of beef and veal exports, followed by Brazil with 13,94,000 metric tonnes and Australia with 13,80,000 metric tonnes of exports. In 2013, India’s beef exports are forecast 29 per cent higher to a record 2.16 million tonnes, accounting for nearly a quarter of world trade.

“The government gives subsidies to slaughterhouses because beef exports are a gold mine,” says Prasanna. A US beef export federation study states India exported \$1.24 billion worth of meat in the first half of 2012. According to Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animals Sciences authorities 1.4 million tonnes of cattle were legally slaughtered in 2012 nationwide.

“One dead animal is worth approximately Rs. 30,000. Tissues from a cattle’s heart are used to rebuild livers. Horns and hoofs are used to make buttons, skin is used for leather, flesh for meat, tail is used for fertility treatment, bones are used for whitening sugar, and producing gelatin,” says Prasanna.

In states such as Madhya Pradesh, where cow slaughter is illegal, trafficking is rife, and the dry cattle that are not transported are let loose on the streets, where they live the last days of their lives foraging in dustbins, eating plastic-infested garbage and drinking polluted water from open drains.

The government runs several goshalas, shelters for old cattle, across the country, but these are too few and are not governed by serious norms. Suma R. Nayak, an advocate and a trustee of the Animal Care Trust, Mangalore, says, “Goshalas have started to operate along the lines of dairy farms; only accepting healthy, productive cows.”



For all this, milk may not even be as rich in calcium as we have been led to believe. Amy Lanou, Ph.D., Nutrition Director for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in Washington, D.C., says, “The countries with the highest rates of osteoporosis are the ones where people drink the most milk and have the most calcium in their diets. The connection between calcium consumption and bone health is actually very weak, and the connection between dairy consumption and bone health is almost non-existent.”

Also, the growing numbers of cattle casts a heavy shadow on the environment. Bovines produce methane when they pass gas. It is estimated that a bovine produces, depending on the breed, anywhere between 100 litres to 500 litres of methane a day. This is equivalent to the per-day carbon dioxide emissions of a car. India’s huge bovine population makes methane a dangerous pollutant.

There is also the ecological problem. Producing fodder for 324 million cows puts immense strain on scarce land and water resources.

The Humane Society of India’s report states: Animal agriculture occupies 30 per cent of the

earth's total land area. Approximately 33 per cent of total arable land is used to produce feed crops, in addition to vast areas of forested land that is clear-cut to graze or grow feed for farmed animals.

What, then, is the alternative? Narain, who is also a major in Ecology from the University of Oxford, suggests a plant-based diet.

“The government is using taxpayer money to subsidise dairy products (and indirectly the leather and beef industries). What it should be doing is to promote the production of protein-rich plant-based foods such as legumes, soybeans, pulses, fruits and nuts using the land and water resources that are otherwise used to produce cattle feed. That, and only that, will work if we are to put food on the plates of our starving children.”

~ COUNTERPOINT ~

We ,at the Ahimsa Foundation for Cattle Protection, appreciate and agree with the arguments against cow slaughter presented in the essay “What is behind that glass of milk.” However, we disagree with its pro-vegan conclusion and find the argument simplistic.

There is no consideration of the benefit of oxen employed for plowing. As per Wikipedia, about 11.3 million draft oxen are employed in sub-Saharan Africa while India, in 1987, employed 65.7 million head. About half the world's crop production is thought to depend on land preparation (such as plowing) made possible by animal traction. How are these many millions of farmers going to put in and harvest their crop without the use of animal draft?

Another concern is manure, which if not well-managed, can lead to adverse environmental consequences. However, manure also is a valuable source of nutrients and organic matter when used as a fertilizer. As an example, manure was used as a fertilizer on about 15.8 million acres of US cropland in 2006, with manure from cattle accounting for nearly 70% of manure applications to soybeans and about 80% or more of manure applications to corn, wheat, barley, oats and sorghum. Substitution of manure for synthetic fertilizers in crop production can be environmentally significant, as between 43 and 88 [megajoules](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle) of fossil fuel energy would be used per kg of nitrogen in manufacture of synthetic nitrogenous fertilizers. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattle>).

Anyone who has travelled in India is well aware of the benefit of manure (gobar) within rural areas. It is common practice to see gobar collected and dried for use in the kitchen fire and dried dung is used by over two billion people worldwide.

Some of the benefits of cow dung are as follows:

- Cheaper than most modern fuels
- Efficient
- Alleviates local pressure on wood resources

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VEGETARIANISM AND RELIGION

<http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~soa29/Religious%20Issues.htm>



Hinduism

Hinduism's encourages a vegetarian diet, though not all Hindus are vegetarian. Hindus almost universally avoid beef since they consider the cow sacred. Hinduism's vast scriptures contain thousands of passages recommending vegetarianism based on the profound link between ahimsa (nonviolence) and spirituality. For example, the Yajur Veda says, "You must not use your God-given body for killing God's creatures, whether they be human, animals, or whatever." (12.32) Mahatma Gandhi, however, took Hindu vegetarian observance one step further by declaring, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be measured by the way in which its animals are treated."

While the violence of slaughter wrongs animals, it also harms those who consume animals. Causing unnecessary pain and death produces bad karma (ill-effects on oneself as a consequence of ill-treatment of others). Belief in the sacredness of life, reincarnation, nonviolence, and the law of karma are central, inter-related features of the Hinduism's "spiritual ecology." While Hinduism's basis for vegetarianism is deeply spiritual, its practical merit has also been confirmed by science. For example, the prohibition against harming or killing cows frequently benefits nutrition in India. Cattle contribute milk and dairy foods, labor, transportation, and dung fuel.



Jainism

Vegetarianism is expected practice among Jains, who hold that it is wrong to kill or harm any living being. Jain traditions respect ahimsa (nonviolence), aparigraha (non-acquisition), asteya (respect for other's rights) and satya (truth). While Jains comprise less than 1% of India's population, they contribute more than half of all the money donated in India to pro-

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- Readily available - shorten the walking time required to collect fuel
- No cash outlays necessary for purchase (can be exchanged for other products)
- Less environmental pollution
- Safer disposal of animal dung
- Sustainable and renewable energy source

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dry_animal_dung_fuel)

From AFFCAP's perspective, the vegan diet throws the baby out with the bathwater. It is a simplistic, ineffective reaction to a complex problem.

The true remedy is to be found in traditional Vedic values, as propagated by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, of a "simple living, high thinking" devotional lifestyle centered around bhakti with the cows .being the main pivot of the agricultural and nutritional ecosystem. It is a proven system that has worked for centuries.

vide medical and other social assistance to India's poor people.



Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, was a Hindu who accepted many of Hinduism's core doctrines, such as karma. His life and teachings offered special insights into how to address problems of human existence, and he explicitly taught vegetarianism as a component of his general instruction to be mindful and compassionate.

The Buddha in certain Mahayana sutras strongly denounces the eating of meat. In the Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha states that "the eating of meat extinguishes the seed of great compassion", adding that all and every kind of meat and fish consumption (even of animals already found dead) is prohibited by him. The Buddha also predicts in this sutra that later monks will "hold spurious writings to be the authentic Dharma" and will concoct in the Lankavatara Sutra their own sutras and mendaciously claim that the Buddha allows the eating of meat, whereas in fact (he says) he does not. A long passage shows the Buddha weighing strongly in favor of vegetarianism, since the eating of the flesh of fellow sentient beings is said by him to be incompatible with the compassion a Bodhisattva should strive to cultivate. Several other Mahayana sutras also emphatically prohibit the consumption of meat.



Taoism

The Chinese religion of Taoism holds nature as sacred, and this view also favors vegetarianism. Taoism teaches that yin and yang are the two fundamental energies in the world, and Taoists have always "taken the accomplishments of yin [the non-violent, non-aggressive approach] and rescue of creatures as their priority." (Journal of the Academy of Religion, 54: no. 1, 1987) For example, the famous Taoist Master Li Han-Kung explicitly prohibited "those who consume meat" from his holy mountain.

Taoism is distinctive in stressing simplicity. As early as the 6th century BCE, the Taoist scripture called Tao Te Ching warned against waste (80 TTC). The Tao Te Ching teaches that simplicity allows the individual to live a peaceful life and it protects nature from overuse and pollution. Modern studies of ecology and factory farming have demonstrated that meat production today is extremely complicated and inefficient. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that meat consumption is far less efficient in producing protein than consumption of beans and grains. Because it requires far more grain, modern meat production requires more pesticides, more water, and more fossil fuel to run tractors to farm the extra fields of grain. Burning more fossil fuel wastes natural resources and pollutes the planet. Taoist simplicity encourages eating vegetables, grains, and fruits instead of meat. According to the Tao, the process of meat production tends to be too yang – too aggressive; it involves extreme and unnecessary impact on the environment.



Judaism

The Torah (Hebrew Scriptures) describes vegetarianism as an ideal. In the Garden of Eden, Adam, Eve, and all creatures were instructed to eat plant foods. (Genesis 1:29-30) The prophet Isaiah had a utopian vision in which everyone will once again be vegetarian: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb ... the lion shall eat straw like the ox ... They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain" (Isaiah 11:6-9).

Judaism forbids tsa'ar ba'alei chayim, inflicting unnecessary pain on animals. For example, Exo-

Leviticus 23:5 requires that one relieve the burden of an overloaded animal, and the Fourth Commandment includes the instruction that Jews must allow livestock to rest on the Sabbath. The parameters of such laws are discussed in the Talmud and codified in the Shulchan Arukh (Code of Jewish Law). The revered medieval legal authority/philosopher Moses Maimonides wrote that we should show mercy to all living creatures. The 16th Century mystic Rabbi Moses Cordovero and 19th Century thinker Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch expressed similar sentiments. By contrast, factory farms routinely confine animals in cramped spaces; often drug and mutilate animals; and deny animals fresh air, sunlight, exercise, and any opportunity to satisfy their natural instincts. In response to this, former Chief Rabbi of Ireland Rabbi David Rosen has written, "The current treatment of animals in the livestock trade definitely renders the consumption of meat as halachically unacceptable [not kosher]." Other rabbis, while agreeing that animals should be raised and slaughtered in humane ways, do not agree that such meat is forbidden.

Other Jewish values favor vegetarianism. Judaism advocates treating the environment respectfully, while animal agriculture squanders water, energy, land, and other resources. Judaism holds that human life is sacred, and we should diligently care for our health. Since animal-based foods can increase the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers, we should move towards a plant-based diet. Judaism encourages us to share our bread with hungry people. Yet, the inefficiencies of animal agriculture waste grains and lands that could be used for staple crops, thereby depriving hungry people of food. In summary, although Judaism does not mandate vegetarianism, many Jewish teachings support the diet.

Christianity

Christianity, based on Judaism, prohibits cruelty to animals. Jesus' central teachings involved love, compassion, and mercy, and it is hard to imagine Jesus looking upon contemporary factory farms and slaughterhouses and then happily consuming flesh.

Christians have always striven to minister to poor and hungry people. However, today the inefficiency of meat eating works against that ministry. In the United States 66% of the grains are fed to animals being raised for slaughter, wasting most grains' calories and proteins. Ron Sider of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary has observed, "It is because of the high level of meat consumption that the rich minority of the world devours such an unfair share of the world's available food." (Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger, pp. 43-44). Knowing the deleterious effects of animal-based foods on human health, Christian principles favor a plant-based diet.

