

ISCOWP News



Ox Training in Belarus



WWW.ISCOWP.ORG

Adopt A Cow Today! Nanda Moves to Greener Pastures, New Talavana, Questions and Answers



Dear ISCOWP Members,

Questions and Answers is a new column where Balabhadra answers questions about cow protection and agriculture. Since his

aging body has slowed him down in physical activities, he can now share his extensive knowledge in a literary way. Throughout this newsletter you will notice more of his literary participation.

Half our herd of 24 is elderly. Nanda, one of our elderly members, passed away in February. His picture appears on the front page and a tribute to him can be found on page 8. Our prayers go with him, an old friend.

You have participated in "cutting edge" cow protection by helping us purchase the 3 Brahman. They have successfully acclimated to the cold climate, after comfortably surviving -8 F degree temperatures. This is a first in cow protection. Thank you.

Yours, Chayadevi

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ISCOWP Profile

The International Society for Cow Protection, Inc. (ISCOWP) was incorporated in the USA, March 1990, as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization. William and Irene Dove (Balabhadra das and Chayadevi dasi) are its managing directors. They are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Through their spiritual master's teachings, they have imbibed the practices and benefits, both spiritual and material, of lifetime cow protection.

Cow protection means enabling cows to live out their natural lives with love and affection. The tenets of cow protection are universal and nonsectarian, available to all regardless of race, creed, or nationality.

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Editor's note

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Letters

Ox Training Video

----- Original Message -----

From: dianewv@netzero.com

To: iscowp@earthlink.net

Sent: Dec. 20, 2008 12:36 PM

Subject: visitor info

Hi, I am from WV, and would like to know if you offer a 1 day visit to your place to learn and work with oxen. We have two 4 month old Holstein/Milking Shorthorn steer calves to train. If you do what is the cost, etc? thanks for your website and time, Diane.

----- Original Message -----

From: balabhadra.iscowp@earthlink.net

To: Diane

Sent: December 22, 2008 1:32 PM

Subject: Re: visitor info

Dear Diane,

Thank you for you letter and interest in learning how to train and work with oxen. I do give training classes but at the moment I am having trouble with my right leg and am laid up and unable to walk.

We do have a training DVD which we can send to you to get you started, if you like.

What part of WV are you located? We are 1/2 hour from Wheeling. Can you send some photos of your "Boys"?

Sincerely,
William Dove

February 28, 2009

(Hand written letter from Diane)

Dear Mr. & Mrs Dove,

My goodness, thank you so much for the oxen training video. It is wonderful! I have already watched it several times. It has been very helpful to me. This is my first pair of steers that I have been training with. I got them as babies, just a week old. Bottle fed them. The two steers, Amos and Andy

are Holstein/Milking Shorthorns. Got Amos mid-June, Andy mid-July. They are now well over 600 - 700 pounds. I love them dearly.

Training has been progressing really well. They understand the basic commands and respond accordingly. We have developed a close bond. With time, patience and love, we are getting it!

I just wanted to sincerely thank you for all your valuable information. It has been a blessing to me. Hope your health continues to improve!! Thinking of you all...Take care- Diane.

From: ZoarFarms@aol.com

To: balabhadra.iscowp@earthlink.net

Sent: January 07, 2009 6:48 AM

Subject: Re: oxen

Enjoy your site. I'll have to check it out more thoroughly. We have oxen here at the monastery. What breed

old. We've had them about a year. I enjoy being with them very much.
Mother Katherine

----- Original Message -----

From: Balabhadra

To: Mother Katherine

Sent: January 31, 2009 4:22:25 P.M.

Subject: Re: Oxen

Dear Mother Katherine,

I have some Brown Swiss and like the breed very much. I worked on a farm in Pennsylvania for 10 years and we had all registered Brown Swiss. My first personal team was Brown Swiss twins. I have a pair of 2 year old Brown Swiss now and some Brahman oxen who I had just started to train when my health problems set in.

Currently we have 25 cows/oxen in our herd. All super spoiled. They love to be hugged and brushed and have attracted a lot of attention from visitors because they are so friendly.



Here are my calves. On the right is Amos, on the left is Andy, the two steers. Also in the picture is Bessy and Mable, two future family milk cows and Buddy a Bull.

are yours? They appear like Brown Swiss. I'm waiting for a Brown Swiss at a neighbor's to calve - I'd like to have a Swiss calf to train. Our boys are Milking Devons, about 6 years

What part of the country is the Monastery located? Why are you working with oxen? I am sending you our ISCOWP training DVD today.
William Dove

----- Original Message -----

From: Mother Katherine
To: Balabhadra
Sent: February 15, 2009 7:48 AM
Subject: Re: oxen

We are in Otsego County in upstate New York, about a half hour from Cooperstown.

We want to be good stewards of the land and go as "green" as we can. I had thought horses until I actually took a draft animal class at the Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown 3-4 years ago. The harness, size and temperament, not to mention cost of horses seemed prohibitive for us. The oxen are less mentally/emotionally complicated. And, face it, a hunk of wood, a length of chain and you're in business. I'm also genetically engineered for bovines: my father's people were cattlemen and teamsters for generations.

The farm up the hill had a heifer calf out of the Brown Swiss, so I ended up taking three half brothers: all out of the black Jersey bull. Two mothers are smallish Holsteins and the other is an Ayrshire. I don't know how they'll all grow out, so I took three, figuring two should be approximately the same size. They're pretty smart little buggers and learning to walk with me on lead fairly well. By next week we should be moving up to commands. I need a small switch for physical cues and am checking out the woodlots and roadsides for a nice flexible branch.

I've found a dairy with Brown Swiss and another with horned Herefords.....in the future. This fall I hope to take a logging with oxen seminar in New Hampshire. We'll keep you on the prayer list. Mother Katherine

----- Original Message -----

From: Mother Katherine
To: Balabhadra
Sent: March 12, 2009 6:34 AM
Subject: Re: oxen

The DVD has come and I've watched most of it. I love it. We made our little first yoke. The boys are doing very well with it. I took them out last night after dark for a short walk around the paddock. Rod is very alert and willing, I'd like to get a mate to match his temperament, but one of his brothers will come along, I'm sure. Duff is agreeable, just not as sharp. Mother Katherine

India to Launch Cow Urine as Soft Drink

----- Original Message -----

From: jerad mack
To: balabhadra.iscwp@earthlink.net
Sent: February 26, 2009 10:10 PM
Subject: "India to Launch Cow Urine as Soft Drink"

By Jeremy Page on 11 Feb. 2009 for www.timesonline.co.uk

Does your Pepsi lack pep? Is your Coke not the real thing? India's Hindu nationalist movement apparently has the answer: a new soft drink made from cow urine.

The bovine brew is in the final stages of development by the Cow Protection Department of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), India's biggest and oldest Hindu nationalist group, according to the man who makes it.

Om Prakash, the head of the department, said the drink – called "gau jal", or "cow water" – in Sanskrit was undergoing laboratory tests and would be launched "very soon, maybe by the end of this year".

"Don't worry, it won't smell like urine and will be tasty too," he told The Times from his headquarters in Hardwar, one of four holy cities on the River Ganges. "Its USP will be that it's going to be very healthy. It won't be like carbonated drinks and would be devoid of any toxins."

The drink is the latest attempt by the RSS – which was founded in 1925 and now claims eight million members – to cleanse India of foreign influence and promote its ideology of Hindutva, or Hindu-ness.

Hindus revere cows and slaughtering them is illegal in most of India. Cow dung is traditionally used as a fuel and disinfectant in villages, while cow urine and dung are often consumed in rituals to "purify" those on the bottom rungs of the Hindu caste system. In 2001, the RSS and its offshoots – which include the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party – began promoting cow urine as a cure for ailments ranging from liver disease to obesity and even cancer.

The movement has often been accused of using more violent methods, such as killing 67 Christians in the eastern state of Orissa last year, and assaulting women in a pub in Mangalore last month. It also has a history of targeting foreign business in India, as in 1994, when it organized a nationwide boycott of multinational consumer goods, including Pepsi and Coca Cola. The cola brands are popular in India, now one of their biggest markets, but have struggled in recent years to shake off allegations, which they deny, that they contain dangerous levels of pesticide.

Mr Prakash said his drink, by contrast, was made mainly of cow urine, mixed with a few medicinal and ayurvedic herbs. He said it would be "cheap", but declined to give further details about its price or ingredients until it was officially launched.

He insisted, however, that it would be able to compete with the American cola brands, even with their enormous advertising budgets. "We're going to give them good competition as our drink is good for mankind," he said. "We may also think of exporting it."

Adopt A Cow Today!

www.iscwp.org/AAC/Adopt%20A%20Cow%20Today.htm

Most of our cows are always adopted because a good amount of our adopters continue their adoption for years. Every once in awhile some cows become available for adoption. This is one of those times as Ujala, Bhima, and Asha are waiting for adopters to support them.

Adoption is available online at the address at the top of this page or by check by using the enclosed form. We send you an 8 by 10 photo and adoption certificate of your cow, one year's variety of monthly dried organic produce gifts from our garden, a year's subscription to the ISCOWP News, monthly email update letters of your cow and ISCOWP, and your name posted on the ISCOWP web site as an adopter of your cow.

Your adoption helps us care for the cows. In times of illness it is often not enough to cover all the cow's medical needs. If you look on the web page, you will see that some cows have more than one adopter. This helps us cover that cow's needs in times of illness.

You can periodically check the ISCOWP web page to meet other cows as they become available for adoption, or you can adopt one of these cows today! Thank you!



Ujala is is friendly, gentle and a friend to everyone in the herd.



Bhima is now the leader of the herd.



Despite her birth defect, Asha is able to keep up with the herd .

Ujala

Age: 14 year old cow

Breed: Holstein

Herd Status: Mid-management

Nature: If there is any trouble with any of the cows she will bellow very loudly so that we know. With a long narrow face, she is a classic beauty. She now has a problem with her hips and is in the geriatric barn where she can easily access her food.

Bhima

Age: 14 year old ox

Breed: Holstein/Simmental

Herd Status: Upper Level Management

Nature: He is trained for working. He is 2000 pounds and intimidating in size. However, he is very gentle and friendly and at times protects the smaller cows from the occasional bully. Since Vraja and Gita are no longer alive, he has become the leader of the herd, easily maintaining that position.

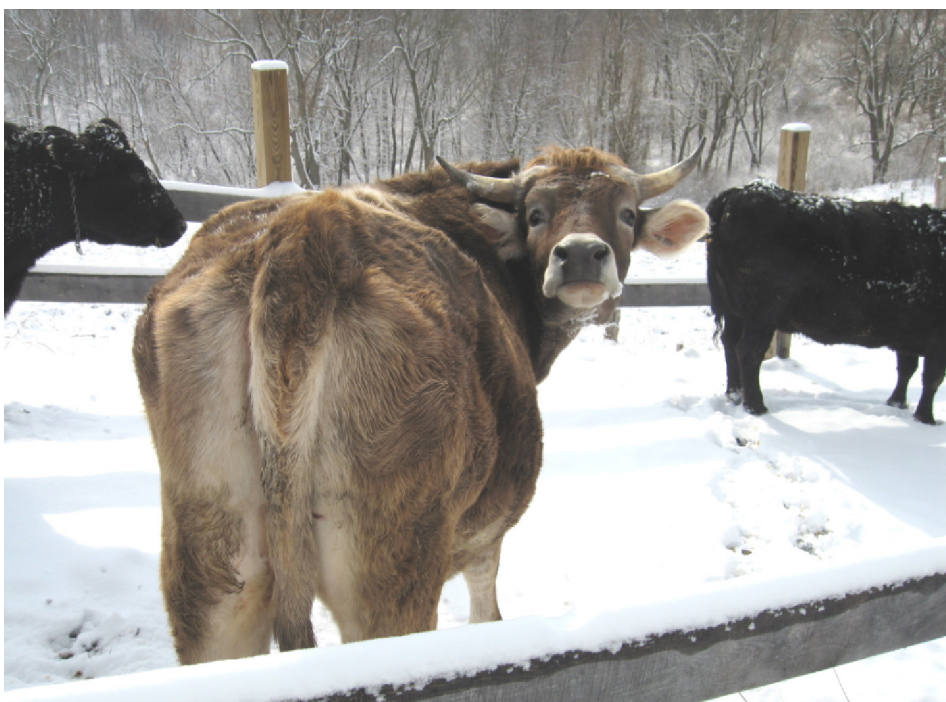
Asha

Age: 7 year old cow

Breed: Angus

Herd Status: Everyone's friend

Nature: Asha is a determined survivor. She must have some Hawaiian blood because when she walks she does the hula. Actually, She was born with a walking impediment in her hindquarters so when she walks her hips swing "to and fro."



Kesava and his friends grew thick, warm winter coats that will shed in the spring.

ISCOWP Update

This winter has been the coldest one since our purchase of the ISCOWP farm in 1996. With -8 F degree temperatures, it was a real challenge to care for the cows. As many of you know, this winter was challenging in another aspect, the health crises of both Balabhadra and Lakshmi. (You can read more about this at the end of this update.) This resulted in myself, Chayadevi, doing the winter farm work which mostly consists of caring for the cows in the barn. Ray came almost every day to help me and he was a tremendous help, especially with the heavier tasks.

I was fortunate to have good gear (see picture on following page) and I was able to stay warm for most of the time while pitching hay, filling water troughs, and giving grain and medicines to the herd. As you may have guessed I have never had the inclination or physical capabilities for this part of the service and at 63, I thank Krishna that I have been able to do it. It was actually fun, I just wish I was a bit younger :).

Cows

All the cows, including the Brahman, grew thick furry coats that protected them from the frigid winter temperatures. When we purchased the Brahman, there was no example of a cow protection program that protected Brahman acclimated to cold weather. Now, it is known that Brahman can live comfortably in the cold. Following our example, MISCOWP (page 9) has also purchased an Indian breed.

Due to the warmer weather, the cows are now in the barnyard enjoying the sun and warmth. In mid-April, they should be on pasture enjoying the tasty, lush, green grasses and the freedom to roam. This is the most joyful time of the year for the cows. As the barnyard gates open, they run through the gates and jump and kick their heels in the air as they access the green pastures.

Guests

Jimmy Devine and his wife Terry donated the funds to purchase Sri, one of the Brahman oxen. Jimmy

stayed in our guest cabin for a few days to visit Sri and help with repairing fencing on the farm. The cabin is available for those who would like to spend time on the farm and help with the chores. Anyone interested in this engagement, please notify us. Shelda Bloomingdale also came for a couple of days to help.

Indradyumma Swami gave a seminar at the New Vrindavan temple. While in the area, he came to visit the ISCOWP farm. He encouraged us in our service to the cows and spiritual life. He also visited the Brahman cows. He was lucky to get away with all his clothes as Sri was chewing and pulling on them until Indradyumma Swami brushed his dewlap (neck), at which time Sri became peaceful.

Two College groups came, one from Pittsburgh and the other from New York. Balabhadra took them on tour of the cows in the barnyard, distributed literature and spoke about the meaning and importance of cow protection. Since it is in the winter, the tour is not as lengthy as it can be when the cows are on pasture in the spring and summer.



Jimmy with Sri (right) and Priyavrata.

Back To Godhead Magazine.

The BTG is the Magazine of ISKCON, The International Society for Krsna Consciousness. In the January/February 2009 issue, an article by Chayadevi about the ISKCON European Farm Conference which we attended in May 2008 was given a wide spread with front cover attention. A short version of this article appeared in the last issue of the ISCOWP News.

Health of Staff

Since our last newsletter in which we explained that Balabhadra had continuous trouble with his back most of last year, there has been further health crises. Balabhadra hurt his leg during physical therapy resulting in extreme pain from his knee through his thigh and hip. He could not walk for almost 2 months at which time he had a heart attack. Lakshmi, our daughter who was doing all the service to the cows in the barn and paper work, fell on the snow and ice and broke her wrist. She had metal rods in her wrist bones for 2 months which had to be cleaned with hydrogen peroxide every day. She could do nothing for herself, not to mention the cows. The two primary cow care takers at ISCOWP were down for most of the winter. The good news is that both have made progress in the healing process. Balabhadra is walking about the farm with minimal amount of



Sri is relaxing as Indradyumna Swami brushes his dewlap.



Top: Article by Chayadevi about ISCOWP's 5/08 trip to Europe on front cover of BTG. Right: In -8F degrees, fashion is thrown to the snow and ice.



Chayadevi in -8F degrees.

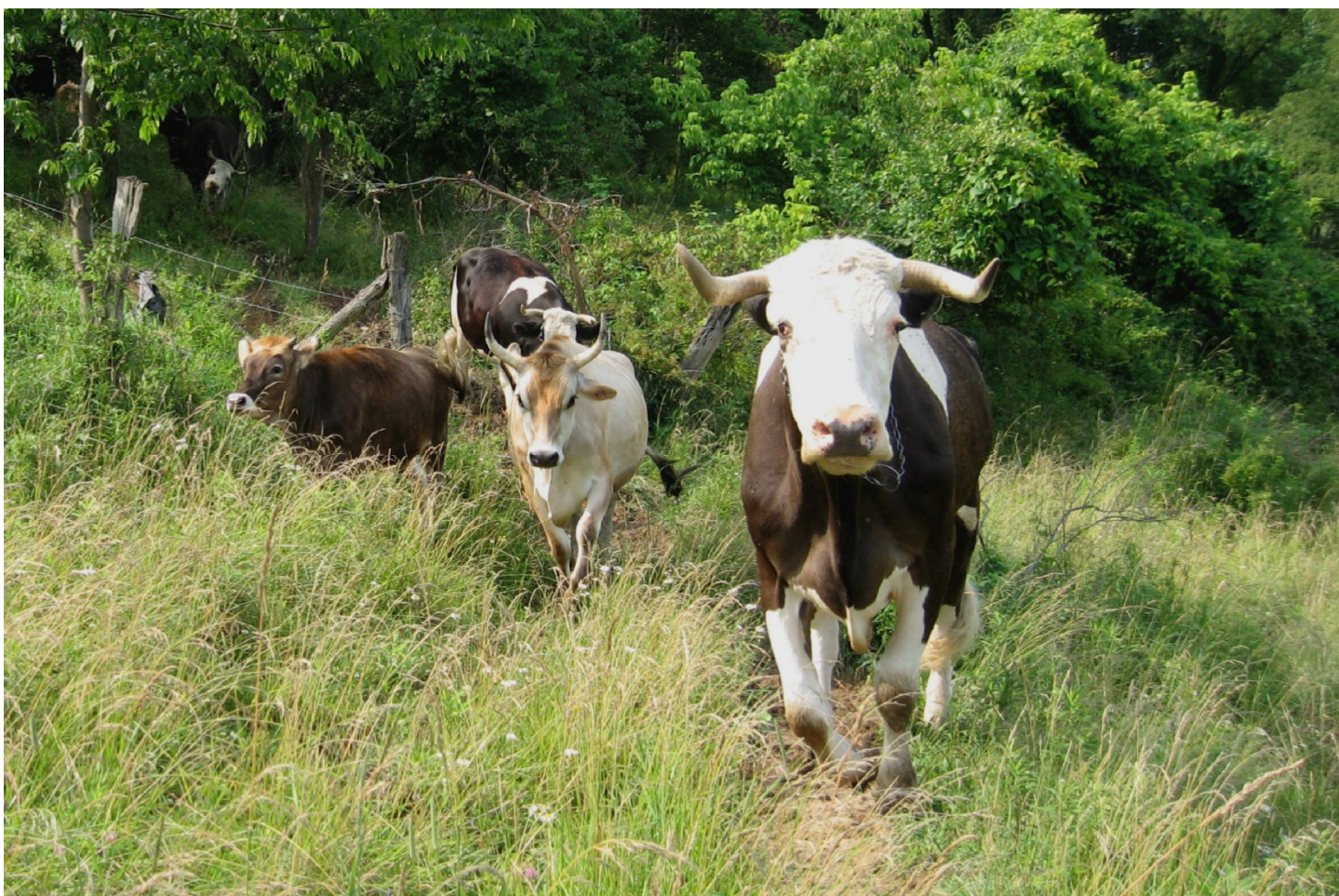
pain. He does not have the energy and stamina that he had before, but we are hoping that will improve. He is being very careful in his physical activities. We are hiring help to do heavy physical chores on the farm and Balabhadra oversees and teaches those who we hire. Lakshmi has the metal rods out of her arm now and is in physical therapy. At this moment, she is not allowed to use her wrist and hand. She is also expecting a baby boy in June which will limit her activities with the cows.

We thank all of you for your heartfelt letters and offers of help. It was very encouraging to us at our time of need. Somehow or other we got through the winter taking good care of the cows. It seems we have entered into a new era at ISCOWP, where much of the physical labor is done by others than ourselves. This gives Balabhadra more time for activities such as writing, teaching, advising, some travel, and giving ISCOWP tours.

We are proceeding carefully, with Balabhadra carefully realizing his limited physical potential. Since we never took a salary for our labor on the farm, it will now cost more to run the farm since we are hiring help. Your donations are essential to continuing the ISCOWP farm. Please refer to the enclosed form. We greatly appreciate your help in the past, now, and in the future. Thank you.



With a broken wrist, Lakshmi interacts with guests.



Nanda, the gentle giant, leads the herd through the spring pastures of last year.

Nanda Moves to Greener Pastures

We have some sad news to tell you. Nanda passed away Sunday evening the 15th of February 2009. He was 14 years old which would make him 70 years old in human years.

I had checked the barn in the late afternoon of the 15th, and everyone was fine. We found him the following morning lying in the barn, his soul had already left his body. The other cows seemed calm, they had already accepted the fact that he was gone.

Since he was 3 years old he had leg and back problems. Throughout those years we tried different treatments and medicines like homeopathy and acupuncture. These did seem to help

and therefore give him a quality life and a longer life. He was able to pasture and mingle with his herd mates till his last hours.

What we understand happened is that he lost his balance, due to his ongoing leg and back problems, fell and then could not get up. Such a huge ox, 7 feet at his shoulder, can not last long in a lying position due to much stress on the internal organs.

We are thankful he went quickly as with his ailments he could have lingered a long time because he was healthy otherwise. During last summer, he fell once and could not get up. It was during the day and on pasture. We tried to flip him, pull

him, etc. but he could not move. We then went for help and when we arrived later we could not find him. He was found happily pasturing under the nearby trees. That time he was able to get up.

Jaya and Nanda were one of our first ox teams. They were named after Jayananda, a very inspiring and pure disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Nanda was a gentleman despite his huge size (half Simmental). He stood 7 ft at his shoulder and then his horns added another foot and a half.

It was a pleasure to have Nanda's association as he was never rowdy and aggressive. He will be greatly missed due to his brahminical nature.

Questions & Answers

MISCOWP, a non-profit organization, signed a sales contract on January 11, 2009 to purchase a beautiful 80-acre farm at Whitmore Lake, Michigan, now named Vedic Village.

"The five members of our devotee MISCOWP board of directors have always greatly appreciated the dedication and hard work of Balabhadra, Chayadevi and Laksmidevi to manifest Srila Prabhupada's vision of a world-wide network of Hare Krishna self-sufficient farm communities. One purpose of MISCOWP is to further the standards and ideals of ISCOWP in Michigan. Therefore, we thought it would be appropriate to name our non-profit organization, The Michigan Society for Cow Protection (MISCOWP). We pray and envision that someday soon the devotional service of the founders of ISCOWP will expand to every region in the world," wrote Adiraja das.

The following is a discussion between Vedic Village and Balabhadra about the training of their oxen.

----- Original Message -----
From: mark48225@yahoo.com
To: Balabhadra
Sent: Friday, Feb. 27, 2009 8:39 PM
Subject: Vedic Village bulls

Today Dharma, the skittish one, let me put a lead rope on his halter. He is still for

the most part completely uncooperative, 2 days ago he was completely cooperative after being pet with a long stick on his lower back. There was lots of hand contact and petting. Yesterday, he barely let me

inch. What do you do in such a circumstance?

Also, should they be given treats after they do something good, like follow a command?
ys, Navadwipa das



Balabhadra training at the Czech Farm.

pet him with the stick. Today he let me pet him with the stick more and even let me pet him for a few moments with my hand on the small of his back. But anyway I clipped on the lead rope and then touched the stick to his upper leg and said "Getup Dharma." He started moving, but he did that I think more because he is skittish rather than following my instruction. Then at one point I tapped him with the stick and said "Getup Dharma" and he would not move one inch. I did that repeatedly and he still would not move an

----- Original Message ----
From: Balabhadra
To: Navadwip
Sent: Friday, Feb. 27, 2009 9:19 PM
Subject: Re:Vedic Village bulls

It seems like you are expecting too much too soon from Dharma. You have only had the bulls for a short time. With Dharma you really need to develop a relationship with him. He has to trust you in order to feel like going somewhere with you. Be patient and spend time rubbing both of them and brushing them. The old timers say you

can't talk to them enough. During your visits with them, talk to them and call them by name. The first voice command they need to learn is their names.

Its nice you were able to hook the lead rope on to the halter. In petting them, if you can rub under their necks, down the dewlap and in between their front legs, they will like that and raise their heads in the air for you.

If you ask them to "Get Up" the name always precedes the command. When asking an animal to "Get Up" the place on the body you would touch with the stick is the butt. Each command has a spot on the body that coordinates with the command.

You can give treats after they do something correctly. Vraja and Gita liked the cookies for awhile and then would not eat them. You might want to stick with apples and carrots. You can also give them nice massage and sweet words. When you come we can spend time doing these things.

Be patient, make friends with them so they feel secure and they trust you. Don't forget, life as they knew it has completely changed and you are now their all and all.

If you would like to learn more, or donate to the Vedic Village, Call or write to:
(313) 823-3815
tommi.lano108@yahoo.com.

Ox Training in Belarus



In this area of the world, fences are not common and pastures are wide open. Hence, Ananda devi is herding the farm's sixty cows.

Recently I traveled to Belarus (October 7, 2008) which is located next to Poland and Russia. I met with some very sincere devotees at the New Vraja Mandala Farm and spent 1 week with them and the cows they are looking after. The cows all looked healthy and happy. There were many little bull calves who needed to be trained for working purposes. Every morning I would spend at least 1 hour with Ananda devi dasi who has spent 10 years growing up with these cows and calves. I showed her the basics of training oxen and the importance of loving exchanges with the animals. She was 14 years old at the time and just a few days ago has turned 15. She is a remarkable young lady and is very sensitive to the cows and calves. When

I left the farm I had asked her to train all of the baby bulls, who have just become oxen. If I remember correctly, that would be 12 to 17 animals to be trained through the winter months. The following is a recent letter I have received from her. I have not changed the language in the letter. She speaks Russian and is learning English. She was very happy to practice her English with me when I was at the farm.

Hare Krsna! Dear Maharaja, please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada

When you came for us at the second time, I was training 6 bulls: Darshan, Mitra, Chandra, Rupa, Kirtan, and Jay. After the Sanyasis ceremony (neutering of the bulls) they



Fifteen year old Ananda devi dasi and one of the teams she has trained since Balabhadra's visit. "Prabhu Volodja came to us from Ukraine, sent by Dhaneshvara prabhu, to study simple life and work with oxen. He is a new devotee and has good qualities. He helps us. Ananda teaches new prabhu how to work with oxen. She tries to tell him all that you told her." Vishvambhara das, January 30, 2009

had one-week holidays, they had little swelling for two weeks. Than I continued to train them and began to train Vrata, (he was shy but friendly). At the beginning, he behaved as Mitra at the first time, little widely. But than Vrata showed himself as very-very clever pupil, (he was born on Pandava ekadashi 14.06.08). Now his

Balabhadra spent an additional week speaking to other devotees in Belarus, mainly at the cities of Minsk and Vitbesk, about the importance of the farm and cow protection. Since his visit, the farm has received some help. The electricity has been turned on by paying the bills and now they have water access at all times. A washing

machine was donated and a power saw that will help them cut their wood for heating. Other devotees are coming to the farm to visit and give hands-on help. Balabhadra continues to correspond with contacts he made there to encourage further help.

All their vegetables, fruit, dairy products, and fuel for heating and cooking are obtained from the farm. There is no tractor and oxen are used for farm chores.

This farm has tremendous potential to develop into a very nice Krsna Conscious rural community. In traveling from place to place one can see that the great majority of Belarus is still attuned to an agrarian lifestyle. In every yard there are berry bushes, fruit trees and small vegetable gardens. Even in the cities if there is some ground around a house, it is planted in berries, fruit trees and vegetables. Even though the collapse of the global economy is threatening all countries, it seems that Belarus is ahead of many countries because most of the people are growing their own food.



Prabhavati and Vishvambhara digging up potatoes with a trained team of oxen.

level of knowledge is the same, as other six baby oxen (the commands OP, WOOL, STAY, FOOT, HA, JEE). Chandra wants me to train him. Often he comes near to me, when I put the halter on somebody's head. Every day I can train 2 or 3 oxen. While I was training 7 baby oxen, I tried to make relationship with the wildest baby ox Yukta. Short time ago he allowed me to put on the halter, and I started to train him. Once when I put the halter on Madhu his brother Simha (the father of all calves, he was licking your hands) watched attentively at me. I decided to train him too. When he was just born, I planned to make ox team: Madhu and Simha, they were the only white bulls in our herd at that time. A few days ago, I began to train Simha.

Your pupil Ananda d.d.



Vishvambhara das and Prabhavati dd. hauling their firewood with an ox team. They heat and cook with wood



Little Shyama and Bhaktin Nina are some of the Belarus devotees who are now coming to give hands-on help.



Three calves were born at New Talavan in 2008.

New Talavan Farm

As ISKCON Ministry for Cow Protection and Agriculture, we conducted a survey of ISKCON cow protection farms around the world to report to the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON the status of their farms at their February meeting in Mayapur, India. Next issue we can report the facts and results of that presentation. Now we would like to present to you one of the farms in that survey that we feel deserves praise for their long term efforts to protect cows.

The following is some information from www.newtalavana.org, our survey, and the New Talavana annual cow report for 2008: New Talavana is exceptional amongst ISKCON cow protection farms as they keep excellent cow records.

The New Talavana farm community was begun in June of 1974 at Carriere, Mississippi, USA. This was done at the suggestion of His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder Archarya of ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness.)

At first it was just a few devotees from the New Orleans temple who came out and slowly began planting gardens. They worked as time permitted and then returned to the New Orleans temple at night, a round trip of about 130 miles.

Soon some devotees began staying on the farm full time and the first cow was purchased from a stockyard. The

devotees named her Kunti. She gave the farm its first fresh milk as well as its first calf, named Subhadra. Later more cows were purchased and now there is a herd of 98, the largest protected herd in the USA. Six of these cows are taken care of by community members at their homesteads. At New Talavana, there is no paid cowherd. The cows are taken care of by a group of community members, some of them second generation. They have jobs to support themselves and volunteer their spare time for the cows.

Since 1994, more land was gradually purchased creating a total of 1300 acres. On this land there are 16 bodies of water, and a myriad of temporary streams and springs. The temperatures rarely drop to freezing.

Currently New Talavana is producing wheat, fruit, vegetables, flowers, and pecans. They also have about 60 acres set aside for hay and collect hay at no purchase price from another 100 acres not owned by New Talavana. Krishna's cows are also producing fresh milk from which the devotees supply the presiding Deities with delightful milk sweets. If you would like to learn more and help this project, please refer to their web page.



Subhru is a New Talavan 17 year old cow in excellent health

All About You



Labangalatika dasi and Mahadev, a young bullock

Although I was a lover of nature and wilderness, I lived at the Los Angeles temple for many years distributing Srila Prabhupada's books at the airport and collecting money in the parking lots. I knew it was important to be in the city to reach the public with the transcendental knowledge.

Now, by the turns of fortune and the Lord's mercy, I find myself for the past nearly 20 years in this remote forest region of Maharashtra, India taking care of a fairly large herd of cows and bulls, 54 in all. My husband is a retired chemical engineer. Despite his training he is now dedicated to organic farming, and cow protection.

Forty acres is mostly grazing area for the herd with mango trees (the prized Alfonso mango) and cashew, coconut, bamboo,

and Chikoo trees. We grow enough rice for ourselves, a little nachani (like millet), a few vegetables, and some green fodder for the cows. We are dependent on the monsoon but do some rain water harvesting.

We started with one local cow Laxmi and her bull calf Bhim as we were householders and it was our duty to protect a cow or two. Then a friend gave us a Jersey calf, Lalita, who is now 16 years old. Jerseys are very difficult to care for in India. Then Haripriya came and her calf Jayaradhe. At this point I got in touch with Balabhadra and Chayadevi and ISCOWP and received the most valuable guidance in cow protection. I am absolutely indebted to their association for inspiration. I learned the standards of cow protection, that no cow or bull can ever be given away, that they should not be bred without a lifetime

plan for the offspring and that Srila Prabhupada says without cow protection there can be no brahminical culture and human civilization will come to an end. I really woke up to the terrible plight of the cow and the danger she faces for survival in the holy land of India.

It took us a little while to get the breeding under control and we accepted some rescued calves and cows, so our herd has grown. I do allow the young cows to have one calf for their natural development. One cannot exercise a too draconian control. We collect and distill cow urine for Ayurvedic medicine and make vermi compost for sale. We train

essary, especially for devotees, to set the example in how to take milk from the cow at home and maintain the bull calves by engaging in agriculture. I also believe pasture lands need to be restored in India, preaching on cow protection is needed in the villages in India, and city devotees and temples should sponsor large scale cow protection.

We are in our old age and depend on the mercy of Lord Govinda to send a suitable person to take care of our cows. We have their land and funds for their care in a Trust and some workers, but the person who can take full responsibility for the



Draupadi, Nandini, Yamuna and the herd. "I am glad we live far from the road and far off as in a shocking incident fifteen Jersey cows and bulls were stolen at night from a goshalla on the road from the village industries center near Panveli. So now they are raiding goshallas too." Labangalatika dasi

and work our bullocks on the farm to plough and carry loads in the cart. We do drink a little milk, the most valuable food, while letting the calf drink his fill. While I respect the vegan position, I believe it is nec-

essary, especially for devotees, to set the example in how to take milk from the cow at home and maintain the bull calves by engaging in agriculture. I also believe pasture lands need to be restored in India, preaching on cow protection is needed in the villages in India, and city devotees and temples should sponsor large scale cow protection.

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Practical Benefits of Cow Protection and Vegetarianism

Chand Prasad, Ph.D.

While disregarding the harmful economic, environmental, and social impacts of industrialized agriculture, many individuals in India are embracing the meat culture, even to the point of recommending cow slaughter. India can meet its growing demand for food through farming systems in which bovine animals are bred to obtain bulls that are used to provide draft power. Such bovine-based agricultural models allow India to cope with rising energy prices and effectively eliminate unwanted cow population by transforming them into an asset, rather than a liability. Simply sanctioning the slaughter of cows falls far short of a holistic solution. Meat diets are irrational, in that they are a wasteful use of the earth's resources. For example, approximately sixteen pounds of grain are required to produce one pound of beef. Moreover, the consequences of the meat culture include diseases such as bird flu and mad cow, which are costly to contain and may also pose a threat to human life.

The solution to India's challenges lies not in the abandonment of compassion towards the cow, but rather in a fundamental reordering of agricultural production systems as well as a correct understanding of cow protection. Specifically, the underlying principle of cow protection is to engage and employ bulls to work the land, implying that cows are bred only to the point where the bovine population meets the demand for draft power, rather than the demand for the byproducts, e.g., milk. In sharp contrast, raising cows for the purpose of producing milk is

an egregious error -- the cow will not produce milk unless it has calves, and since half will be male, the result is an excess bovine population that is costly to support. Farming practices that do not engage the bulls will essentially condemn them to the slaughterhouse, since they will have no economic value other than their meat.

After calibrating the growth of the bovine herd to the demand for draft

One acre of corn production in the U.S. requires approximately 140 gallons of oil [9], and if the corn goes to livestock, only about one-fifth of the protein is returned as food, and four-fifths of it is lost [10].

power, the byproducts such as manure, urine, and milk can be put to good use. Cow dung, for instance, is widely burned as a cost-effective fuel in rural areas. India would be ill advised to replace manure with natural gas or coal, and moreover, it is completely irrational for India to intensify her dependence on these nonrenewable energy sources that are likely to continue experiencing sharp price increases. Intensive "modern" agriculture is not a practical example or roadmap for India to follow, in part because it is a vast user of fossil fuel, mainly for the production of animal feed.

In the U.S., one ton of oil (2000 pounds or 6.75 barrels) is required to produce one steer weighing 1250 pounds [8]. One acre of corn production in the U.S. requires approximately 140 gallons of oil [9], and if the corn goes to livestock, only about one-

fifth of the protein is returned as food, and four-fifths of it is lost [10].

The value of cow urine-based pesticides provides further evidence of the utility of cow protection. For example, in Tamil Nadu, India, more than 8,000 farmers in 10 districts have been using herbal pest repellents. A Karikali-based group in Tamil Nadu, Vazhviyal Multiiversity, has produced an herbal pest repellent from knowledge derived from Vriksha Ayurveda. Ideally the repellent contains neem, tulsi, and datura, which are fermented in cow urine for 10 days. This solution can be used as an herbal spray before the insects appear [1].

Industrial livestock farming systems are in fact incubation centers for disease outbreaks. Seventy five percent of emerging diseases in humans are of animal origin [12], and humans are at risk of being killed in large numbers by cross-species transmission of illnesses between, pigs, humans, birds, and other animals. Over the past 25 years, 38 illnesses have jumped to humans, as disease-causing pathogens have mutated and moved up the food chain [13]. Various countries are attempting to develop a coordinated response to these diseases, as they tend to spread from one part of the world to another. Unfortunately, government planning commissions and task forces fail to recognize the value of following basic regulations that include vegetarianism, choosing instead to prop up destructive and impractical systems of animal agriculture.

Animals tend to be housed in extremely crowded sheds, surrounded by their own fecal matter. High concentrations of ammonia in the air destroy the animals' lungs and weaken their immune systems. The result is that they are highly vulnerable to deadly disease outbreaks such as hoof-and-mouth disease, mad cow disease, Mycobacterium paratuberculosis (which is thought by most scientists to cause Crohn's disease in humans), and bird flu. Moreover, because of the crowded conditions, when one animal contracts an illness it spreads rapidly to others. Farmers attempt to prevent and control disease outbreaks through heavy doses of antibiotics, which are only temporarily effective against bacteria and completely ineffective against viruses such as bird flu. Avian influenza is prevalent on Chinese poultry farms, and the widespread use of the drug amantadine to control viral outbreaks in animals has made the bird flu resistant, rendering the drug useless to protect people [14].

Avian influenza poses a grave threat, with the potential to kill one in eight human beings, including 40 million Americans, and cause a collapse of the world economy [15]. This assessment cannot be dismissed as simply the view of uninformed extremists, particularly since the Senior UN System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, Dr. David Nabarro, described bird flu as a threat to "the survival of the world as we know it." [16]. Intensive animal agriculture is the functional equivalent of a time bomb, as these viruses are constantly changing, and weaker forms in birds are known to mutate in just months into highly pathogenic forms for which there exists no effective treatment or vaccine [17].

Millions of Indian farmers and businessmen have been drawn into the darkness of the meat industry, and they have experienced substantial

financial losses due to outbreaks of animal diseases. Several outbreaks of bird flu were reported in two districts of Maharashtra (Navapur and Jalgaon), as well as in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, over the period spanning January 27 and April 18, 2006. Although these disease incidents were initially reported at the end of January, it was not until February 18, 2006 that India issued a notification of an outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) virus subtype H5N1 in poultry birds in western India. After implementing costly control measures, which included killing more than one million birds and destroying over 1.5 million eggs, as well as cleaning and sanitizing the infected area, the government of India declared, perhaps prematurely, that India was free of bird flu on August 11, 2006 [18]. The presence of bird flu was again officially confirmed on 15 January 2008, and within three weeks of a massive culling operation, 3.7 million birds were killed [19].

In many instances, poultry farmers refuse to kill their birds despite government issued directives aimed at the destruction of potentially infected chickens. Poultry owners obviously lose money when their flocks are eradicated, and although the government attempts to provide financial compensation for the farmers, some local officials have been known to take a big cut of the compensation. Culling teams have also protested against pressure from local officials to sign false cull certificates to boost their compensation claims. Consequently, the meat culture breeds corruption as well as animal diseases [19].

In conclusion, commercial agriculture and meat-centered diets incur risks that are completely unnecessary while failing to provide a sustainable substitute for cow protection. A key principle of cow protection involves breeding bovine animals to obtain

bulls that are engaged in working the land, as opposed to excessively expanding the herd to obtain byproducts such as milk. In contrast, commercial agriculture depends heavily on petroleum-based chemical inputs, in the absence of which conventional crop yields would fall sharply. It is interesting to consider the remarkable length people will go through just to satisfy their taste for meat, even to the point of risking pandemics and millions of human deaths that originate from livestock diseases. Be that as it may, we do not advocate vegetarianism as the end all, be all. Rather, we recognize that meat eating is the main barrier to understanding God. Whatever seemingly pious things meat eaters may do, those who are animal killers, meat-eaters, can never understand God. It is simply not possible. So the real objective is spiritual advancement, which is demonstrably practical, for the following reason: the most life-threatening problems can be solved in an almost incidental manner, simply as a by-product of accepting the spiritual principles that were taught by Srila Prabhupada.

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Chand Prasad is a Ph.D. Agricultural Economist. His areas of specialization are international trade, finance, and industrial organization. This article is the abbreviated version. The complete article can be read at:

www.iscownp.org/Articles/Practical%20Benefits.htm where all the references are quoted. Contact Chand Prasad page at: biodynamic_theology@yahoo.com.

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The Brahmans have
acclimated to the cold climate
by growing thick furry coats.