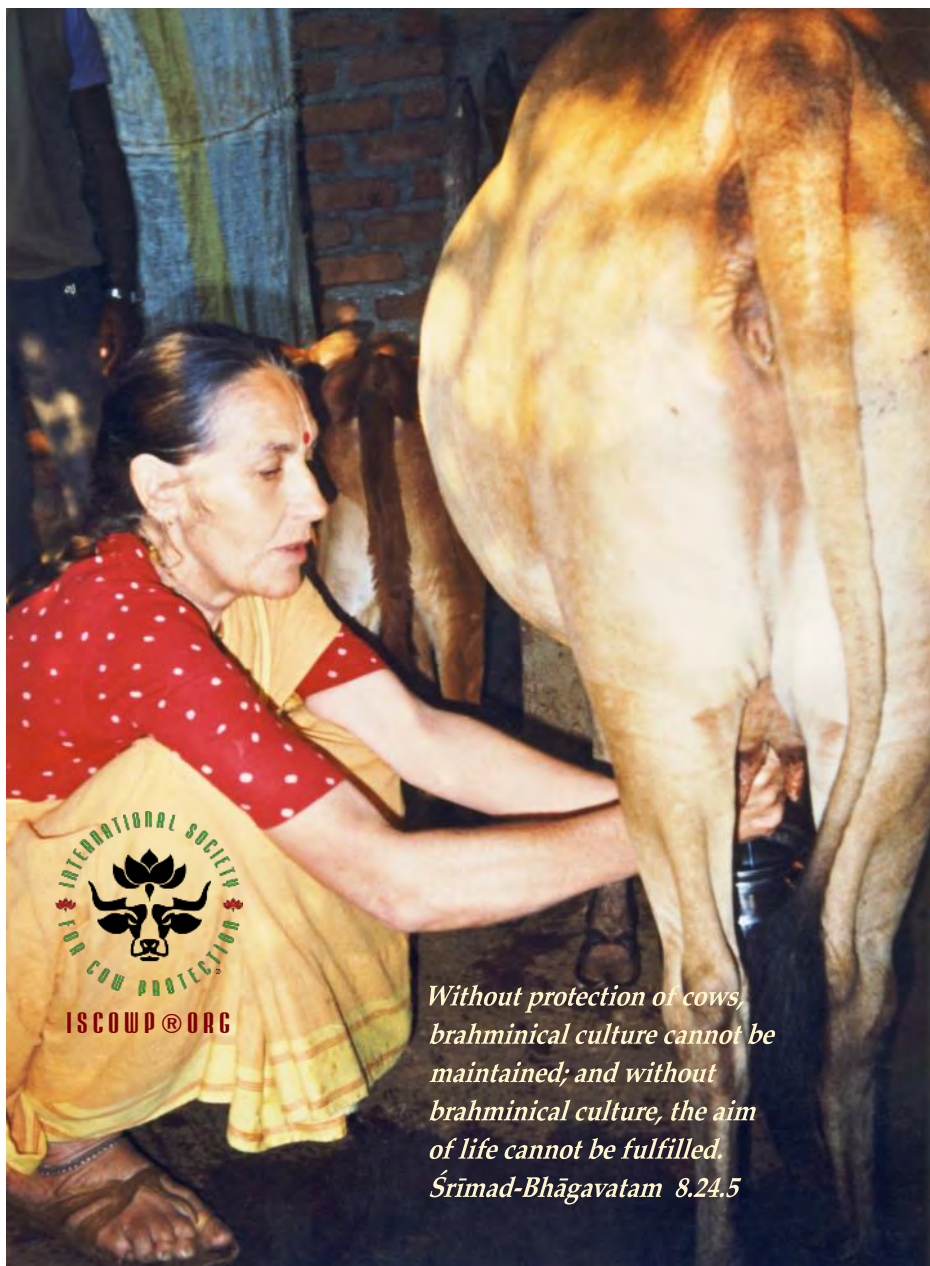


ISCOWP News

Kṛṣṇa-dairians



*Without protection of cows,
brahminical culture cannot be
maintained; and without
brahminical culture, the aim
of life cannot be fulfilled.
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 8.24.5*

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Amrita, a registered Brahman, enjoys a warm, sunny, fall day at the ISCOWP Farm.

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 Chāyadevī dasi) are its managing directors. They are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa 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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Dear Friends
Hare Kṛṣṇa!

The purpose of this special issue “Kṛṣṇa-dairians” is to share our realizations about the milk issue within the Hare Kṛṣṇa community from the perspective of 24 years of personally protecting cows. The main author, Balabhadra dās, was ISKCON Global Minister for Cow Protection and Agriculture from 1998 through 2012. He resigned in 2012 due to health problems. He writes and speaks not just from his personal experience caring for cows but from experience with ISKCON farms and devotees worldwide involved with cow protection.

What is the Milk Issue? The International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON) founded by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is based on the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared as a cowherd boy in ancient India. Hence cows and milk are important ingredients in the ISKCON culture.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had a vision of Hare Kṛṣṇa communities protecting cows whose milk was utilized by devotees both in the communities and local cities. Forty years later, establishing such communities has proven to be no easy task and thus the scarcity of milk from protected cows has given birth to ethical/spiritual questions about the usage of milk from other sources.

This booklet is food for thought and does not claim to have all the answers nor cover all the aspects of this issue. We pray that it may help you in some way to deal with the issue in your daily lives.

Your editor,
Chāyadevī (Irene M. Dove)

Credits

We give thanks to: our beloved spiritual master His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda for his enormous legacy of scriptural translations and purports from which we are able to quote, Kūṛma Rūpa dās (founder of Care for Cows) for his writings and photo included in this booklet, Priyavrata dās (founder of Food for Life, the world’s largest vegan food relief program) for coining the phrase Kṛṣṇa-dairians and his writings, Ekanātha dās for the Bhaktivedanta Vedabase of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s original books from which we quoted and Joan Delisio for her thoughtful questions that helped create this booklet.

All photos are taken by the ISCOWP staff and property of ISCOWP unless otherwise stated. Front cover: Photo courtesy of Labaṅgalatikā dāsī (cofounder of the Govardhan Trust with husband Prakash Malik.) who is pictured milking one of her protected cows at her farm in Raigad, India. Back cover: Mādhava and Keśava are practicing their commands at the ISCOWP Farm with Dhanañjaya dās in training and Balabhadra dās as trainer. Back cover mail out: Madhava traversing the ISCOWP Farm. Page 8 & 17: Priya, Sri and friends heading towards the ISCOWP barn. Page 18: Gauravānī and Keśava are resting. Page 26: Keśava is resting on a hilltop. Page 28: Balarām at ISCOWP.

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Value of Milk and Cow Protection



Balabhadra dās with the Brahmins on a sunny summer day at the ISCOWP farm.

“We must consider lifetime cow protection to derive religious principles as described by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the Sṛīmad-Bhāgavatam as the essential foundation for utilizing milk and milk products.” Balabhadra dās



The practice of rescue brings several breeds to the ISCOWP Farm creating a varied herd.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda's books there are countless references to milk and its many wonderful qualities and benefits for the peace and prosperity of mankind.

For example, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purport, Canto 1, chapter 17, text 3, Śrīla Prabhupāda lists some important points for using dairy products.

“Milking the cow means drawing the principles of religion in a liquid form. The great ṛṣis and munis would live only on milk. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī would go to a householder while he was milking a cow, and he would simply take a little quantity of it for subsistence. Even fifty years ago, no one would deprive a sādhu of a quart or two of milk, and every householder would give milk like water. For a Sanātanist (a follower of Vedic principles) it is the duty of every householder to have cows and bulls as household paraphernalia, not only for drinking milk, but also for deriving religious principles. The Sanātanist worships cows on religious principles and respects brāhmaṇas. The cow's milk is re-

quired for the sacrificial fire, and by performing sacrifices the householder can be happy. The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible.”

This is the first part of this purport with many wonderful reasons for drinking milk in the mode of goodness. Also please note that Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions numerous times the terms “religious principles” ... “deriving religious principles” ... and the fact that milk itself is referred to as “liquid religiosity.”

We must consider lifetime cow protection to derive religious principles as described by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the essential foundation for utilizing cows' milk and milk products.

We see today in Kali-yuga that everything about the dairy industry is corrupt and polluted. The commercial dairy industry is 100% based on

brutality exemplified in the exploitation of the female cows, murder of all the male cows and eventually murder of all the cows when they are exhausted.

The last cow we rescued from the dairy industry was not even 4 years old and gave just over 20,000 pounds of milk. But because she could not get pregnant again to keep her milk production high she was already slated to go to the slaughterhouse. She is a gentle soul and just loves to lick and lick and relishes being hugged.

The next part of the purport explains the current day situation in the commercial dairy industry. When I was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1969 he still had three sets of his *Bhāgavatams* which were published in India between 1962 and 1965. Śrīla Prabhupāda was speaking these words before he came to America and founded ISKCON.

“These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the troubles in present society.” Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.17.3 Purport

“But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The cow stands with tears in her eyes, the śūdra milkman draws milk from the cow artificially, and when there is no milk the cow is sent to be slaughtered.”

The next point Śrīla Prabhupāda makes classifies these activities.

“These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the troubles in present society.

People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development. The influence of Kali will keep them in the darkness of ignorance.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us the example of acquiring milk from cows who are being protected and taken care with the intent of deriving religious principles, and he has given us the example of cows being raped, exploited, their babies murdered and when there is not enough milk to make a profit for the farmer, they are sent to be slaughtered for the sole intent of deriving milk.

Now, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the solutions of how to bring peace and prosperity to humanity at large.

“Despite all endeavors for peace and prosperity, they must try to see the cows and the bulls happy in all respects. Foolish people do not know how one earns happiness by making the cows and bulls happy, but it is a fact by the law of nature. Let us take it from the authority of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and adopt the principles for the total happiness of humanity.”

Many quotes from Srila Prabhupada’s translation of the *Bhāgavatam* refer to the value of drinking milk in relationship with cow protection.

“The protection of cows maintains the most miraculous form of food, i.e., milk for maintaining the finer tissues of the brain for understanding higher aims of life.” -*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.5 Purport

Please note That Srila Prabhupada is referring to PROTECTED cows supplying milk that can maintain the finer tissues of the brain.

“The mercantile class is also required to give protection to the cows in order to get sufficient milk and milk products, which alone can give the proper health and intelligence to maintain a civilization perfectly meant for knowledge of the ultimate truth.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.5.37 Purport

“For the cowherd men and the cows, Kṛṣṇa is the supreme friend. Therefore “He is worshiped by the prayer namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca. His pastimes in Gokula, His dhāma, are always favorable to the brāhmaṇas and the cows. His first business is to give all comfort to the cows and the brāhmaṇas. In fact, comfort for the brāhmaṇas is secondary, and comfort for the cows is His first concern.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.16 Purport

“The Lord is the protector of cows and the brahminical culture. A society devoid of cow protection and brahminical culture is not under the direct protection of the Lord, just as the prisoners in the jails are not under the protection of the king but under the protection of a severe agent of the king. Without cow protection and cultivation of the brahminical qualities in human society,

at least for a section of the members of society, no human civilization can prosper at any length.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.14.34 Purport

“In this verse the words dvija-gavām pārameṣṭhyam indicate the most exalted position of the brāhmaṇas, brahminical culture and the cows. In Vedic culture, the welfare of the cows and the welfare of the brāhmaṇas are essential. Without a proper arrangement for developing brahminical culture and protecting cows, all the affairs of administration will go to hell.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.3.13 Purport

“Without protection of cows, brahminical culture cannot be maintained; and without brahminical culture, the aim of life cannot be fulfilled.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.24.5 Purport.

“Where wealth and strength are not engaged in the advancement of brahminical culture, God consciousness and cow protection, the state and home are surely doomed by Providence. If we want peace and prosperity in the world, we should take lessons from this verse; every state and every home must endeavor to advance the cause of brahminical culture for self-purification, God consciousness for self-realization and cow protection for getting sufficient milk and the best food to continue a perfect civilization.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.19.3 Purport

What Does Lord Kṛṣṇa Want?

“**A**nd as my husband just reminded me, an important point also is that Kṛṣṇa is always offered a variety of foods made with milk, because He loves it.” Joan

We described in the previous article how Śrīla Prabhupāda writes of protecting cows to derive religious principles and how this should be the essential foundation in using milk.

How can offering milk produced by the cows’ horrific suffering derive religious principles?

Does Lord Kṛṣṇa “love” milk produced in the mode of ignorance which includes the rape of mother cow, the killing of her children, the torture of her male babies in veal crates and her eventual murder after she is totally exhausted both physically and emotionally?

“If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it.”-*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.26 Translation

“Kṛṣṇa wants only loving service and nothing more. Kṛṣṇa accepts even a little flower from His pure devotee. He does not want any kind of offering from a non devotee. He is not in need of anything from anyone, because He is self-sufficient, and yet He accepts the offering of His devotee in an exchange of love and affection.”

-*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.26 Purport

“The Lord does not hanker for a small leaf or flower; He has enough to eat. Indeed, He is feeding all living entities.”

-*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.2.7-8 Purport

It is not what the offering is that pleases Lord Kṛṣṇa, it is the consciousness with which the offering is made that pleases Him. He does not need anything from us but our love and devotion.

According to the Global Healing Center’s: “Ingredients Added to Cow’s Milk”:

“1) A Veritable Hormone Cocktail: including pituitary, steroid, hypothalamic, and thyroid hormones (remember most cows are extremely stressed).

2) Gastrointestinal Peptides: Nerve and epidermal growth factors, and the growth inhibitors MDGI and MAF.

3) rBGH (Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone): a genetically engineered hormone directly linked to breast, colon and prostate cancer. This is injected into cows to increase milk production. [1] (rBGH is used widely in the U.S. but has been banned in Europe and Canada because of concerns over human health and animal welfare.)

4) Pus: National averages show at least 322 million cell-counts of pus per glass! [2] This is well above the human limit for pus-intake, and has been directly linked to paratuberculosis bacteria, as well as Crohn’s disease. The pus comes from infected udders on the cows known as mastitis.

5) Antibiotics: Currently, cows are in such a state of disease and mistreatment that they are continually being injected with antibiotic medicines, and rubbed down with chemical-laden ointments to deal with their chronic infections. Currently, regulating committees only test for 4 of the 85 drugs in dairy cows. This means that the other 81 drugs in cow's milk are coming directly into your glasses and bodies. Estimates show that 38% of milk in the U.S. is "contaminated with sulfa drugs or other antibiotics," according to a study by the Centre for Science in the Public Interest and published in the Wall Street Journal on December 29, 1989. A study from the FDA data showed that over half of all milk was laden with traces of pharmaceuticals yet nothing has been done to control this.

How Does This Affect the Cows?

Not only are people drinking these toxins, they are also taking in the energetic effects of the life of the cow. Studies show that many cows are infected with incredibly painful infections such as mastitis.⁽⁴⁾ Due to over-milking, artificial hormones, bacteria and medications, cow's udders can become chronically inflamed, thus altering the color and taste of the milk. Over time, this bacterial invasion causes harm to the cow's mammary gland, reeking havoc on the milk being produced. From parasitic worms to cancerous tumors, these diseases are often passed along to the next generation of cows, and more often, into the milk we drink. Often times the conditions in which cows live, as well as the rigorous milking regimes, cause dairy cattle to live in a permanent state of sympathetic (stress)

response, as well as adrenal over-load. When our adrenal glands are overworked for long periods of time, there is a overload of cortisol in the blood. When we drink this milk, we are then exposed to the millions of stress-response cells in the milk of cows. It is no wonder that we are a chronically stressed society!"

If Kṛṣṇa does not need anything from us except love and devotion why is it necessary to offer Him milk from tortured cows?

"Extravagance in the matter of eating, sleeping, defending and mating—which are demands of the body—can block advancement in the practice of yoga. As far as eating is concerned, it can be regulated only when one is practiced to take and accept prasādam, sanctified food. Lord Kṛṣṇa is offered, according to the Bhagavad-gītā (9.26), vegetables, flowers, fruits, grains, milk, etc. In this way, a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness becomes automatically trained not to accept food not meant for human consumption, or not in the category of goodness." -*Bhagavad-gītā* 6.17 Purport

Is this commercial milk in the category of goodness or ignorance? With the great suffering of the cow and bull involved in the production of this milk, plus all the contaminating added ingredients, it would be difficult to claim this milk is in the mode of goodness and acceptable to a devotee. As described in the above verse a devotee is trained to not accept food that is not in the mode of goodness.

Is this milk equal to the milk from protected cows?

Obviously not.

Is this the same milk as the milk referred to in the Vedas?

Obviously not.

It is true that Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as a cowherd boy and is described in the Kṛṣṇa Book to very much love his milk and milk sweets. His family were vaiśyas and protected cows from whom they acquired all their milk.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead generally appears in various types of incarnations to give protection to the cows and brāhmaṇas. The Lord is described as go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca; in other words, He is always eager to benefit the cows and brāhmaṇas. When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared, He purposefully became a cowherd boy and showed personally how to give protection to the cows and calves. Similarly, He showed respect to Sudāmā Vipra, a real brāhmaṇa. From the Lord's personal activities, human society should learn how to give protection specifically to the brāhmaṇas and cows. Then the protection of religious principles, fulfillment of the aim of life and protection of Vedic knowledge can be achieved.”

-Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 8.24.5 Purport

“Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by His personal example, taught us the importance of cow protection, which is meant not only for

the Indian climate but for all human beings all over the universe.”

-Light of Bhāgavata Verse 27 Purport

“The Lord's exemplary behavior is to teach us. We should learn from His personal behavior how to give protection to the cow, how to cultivate brahminical qualities and how to respect the brāhmaṇas and the Vaiṣṇavas. The Lord says in Bhagavad-gītā (3.21), yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ: “If the leading personalities behave in a certain manner, others follow them automatically.” Who can be more of a leading personality than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and whose behavior could be more exemplary? It is not that He needed to do all these things to acquire material gain, but all of these acts were performed just to teach us how to behave in this material world.”

-Srimad Bhagavatam 4.21.38 Purport

Lord Kṛṣṇa wants us to follow his example as a protector of cows.

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- (1) The Cancer Prevention Coalition and Food & Water. “New study Warns of Breast and Colon Cancer Risks from rBGH Milk.” 1996 January 23.
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- (3) Adkinson RW, Gough RH, Graham R, Yilmaz A. “Implications of Proposed Changes in Bulk Tank Somatic Cell Count Regulations.” J Dairy Sci. 2001 Feb;84(2):370-4
- (4) Merck Veterinary Manual. “Mastitis in Cattle.” Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp.

What Does Śrīla Prabhupāda Want?

“Śrīla Prabhupāda drank milk from cows in the commercial dairy industry...so it must be all right for us to follow in his footsteps.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda did use milk from the commercial dairy industry for a number of reasons. In those early days of founding and establishing ISKCON, there were no Kṛṣṇa based farms so there really were no cruelty free dairy products available. Śrīla Prabhupāda needed to show us the culture of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness so he used dairy products from the commercial dairy industry to show us how to cook different milk sweets and how to make ghee for cooking and for offering into the sacrificial fire at initiations, weddings and so forth. At the same time, Śrīla Prabhupāda very often spoke and wrote about the importance and necessity of cow protection as quoted in chapter one.

“So similarly, vaiśya. Vaiśya, they should be trained in three things, productive—kṛṣi-gorakṣya-vāṇijyam vaiśya-karma svabhāvajam—kṛṣi, agriculture; gorakṣya, cow protection. Go-rakṣya. That is essential, agricultural and cow protection. And vāṇijyam. Vāṇijyam means trade. If there is excess milk product, if there is excess grain product, then you can sell to others.

Nowadays the trade is that you take as much milk as you can, and then kill the animal and sell the flesh to other countries. That is going on. No. Go-rakṣya. Go-rakṣya.” -Lecture Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.61.1 December 29, 1973, Los Angeles

And how did Śrīla Prabhupāda want His disciples to show cow protection in “living color” for the world to see? By developing rural communities dependent on the land and cows and centered on Lord Kṛṣṇa. Please note that these quotes begin in the early days of ISKCON’s development until a year before his departure. This shows how Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted, both in the early and later years, his devotees to acquire their milk from their own protected cows on their own farms.

“We must have sufficient pasturing ground to feed the animals all round. We have to maintain the animals throughout their life. We must not make any program for selling them to the slaughterhouses. That is the way of cow protection. Krishna by His practical example taught us to give all protection to the cows and that should be the main business of New Vrindaban. Vrindaban is also known as Gokula. Go means cows, and kula means congregation. Therefore the special feature of New Vrindaban will be cow protection, and by doing so, we shall not be loser.”

-Śrīla Prabhupāda letter to Hayagrīva, June 14, 1968

“Your proposal for establishing a Krishna Consciousness community on the land which you have is very good. Whenever we get some land available we should take the opportunity to develop it into an ideal community as envisioned for New Vrindaban. We can have a great many such communities all over the world so that people everywhere can see how by

leading a pure and simple life of Krishna consciousness, all one's needs in life can be satisfied. Actually, the so-called civilization of the Kali yuga with its over-industrialization, has not been able to give to man the happiness he is seeking. So as you say that your land is very suitable for cow protection and for Tulsi to grow, then Krishna is giving you the oppor-

“Our farm projects are an extremely important part of our movement. We must become self-sufficient by growing our own grains and producing our own milk, then there will be no question of poverty. So develop these farm communities as far as possible.”

-Śrīla Prabhupāda *Letter to Rūpānuga*,
December 18, 1974



Srila Prabhupada, 1974, Honolulu, taken by Chayadevi with an Instomatic camera.

tunity to develop this program. Protect some cows, grow crops, and if possible provide fresh milk and butter for the Temples near by. And the rest of the time chant Hare Krishna and read my books. In this way you can live very peacefully without any disturbances from anyone.”

-Śrīla Prabhupāda *letter to Von Paul Reed*
January 2, 1972

“Cow protection is the business of the vaisyas and along with our preaching, this is the most important work. We must have a good section of Brahmanas in our society and we must also have a good group of vaisyas who can grow grains and tend cows, and thus supply the society with food-grains and milk products from the cow like ghee, curd, cream, etc.”

-Śrīla Prabhupāda *Letter to Hāsyakārī*,
Honolulu, May 26, 1975

“Where there is agriculture there must be cows. That is our mission: Cow protection and agriculture and if there is excess, trade. This is a no-profit scheme. For the agriculture we want to produce our own food and we want to keep cows for our own milk. The whole idea is that we are Iskcon, a community to be independent from outside help. This farm project is especially for the devotees to grow their own food. Cotton also, to make their own clothes. And keeping cows for milk and fatty products.”-Śrīla Prabhupāda *letter to Yaśomatīnandana*, November 28, 1976,
Vṛndāvana, India

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted us to produce our own milk from our own protected cows on our own farms where we live a Kṛṣṇa conscious lifestyle.

Offering Commercial Milk Products to Kṛṣṇa?

“We need to know what you think about the concept we always used to hear amongst devotees of how when we offer the milk products to Kṛṣṇa the cows get liberated and the farmers also benefit (and hopefully the whole thing will turn around eventually, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa).” Joan Delisio

This concept is known as ajñāta-sukṛti.

“The theory of chance can best be explained in the Vedic literature by the words ajñāta-sukṛti, which refer to pious activities performed without the actor's knowledge.” -*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Purport 4.21.27

Milk offered from a cow in the commercial dairy industry to Lord Kṛṣṇa through ajñāta-sukṛti is believed to be sanctified and the cow is believed to receive spiritual benefit.

This has been going on for many years with milk usage in ISKCON and has actually become the standard for offering dairy products to Lord Kṛṣṇa that come from the commercial dairy industry. Forty years ago when Srila Prabhupada came to America he utilized ajñāta-sukṛti to use dairy products from the commercial dairy industry because there were no dairy products available from protected cows. At the same time and until his passing, he wrote and spoke of the importance of cow protection and how we should acquire our milk from our own protected cows.

Forty years after telling us the importance of acquiring our milk from our own cows that are protected, are we really so pure that we can counteract the horrific treatment of the cow as we continue to offer her forcibly stolen milk again and again?



Kūrma Rūpa dās is the founder and director of Care for Cows International.

Isn't it time we took a look at the protecting cow aspect of utilizing milk?

Here is a dialogue From Kūrma Rūpa dās's (founder of Care for Cows) Facebook page which touches on this subject of ajñāta-sukṛti in regards to milk.

“Don't be a Butcher-bandhu (friend of a butcher)”

“My mother has been kidnapped by terrorists and is being tortured. The

miscreants allowed her one phone call and she pleads that I do something to help.

I respond, ‘Don’t worry Mom. I’ll go to your home and offer all the food in your kitchen to Kṛṣṇa and distribute the remnants to my family and friends. Kṛṣṇa will be soooo pleased with you for this.’

She responds, ‘But my dear son, isn’t there anything else you can do? These devils are causing me so much pain!’

I answer, ‘OK Mom. Don’t worry. We’ll use your savings to purchase Bhagavad-gītā’s and your car to distribute them on sankirtana! Be assured that Śrīla Prabhupāda and Lord Caitanya will bless you for this!’

She sobs...

To console her, I say, ‘Don’t worry Mom. You’re not that body... and remember, we love you soooo much!’

It rings hollow doesn’t it?

Do you think attending to one’s spiritual wellbeing while completely ignoring their material plight indicates compassion, concern and love?

I don’t.

The above scenario parallels the attitude some devotees have towards serving those cows imprisoned and tortured by the commercial dairy industry. They think that to purchase commercial dairy products and offer them to Kṛṣṇa serves the spiritual well-being of those cows, and perhaps it does... if offered with sin-

cere devotion. But offering the milk of those cows to Kṛṣṇa is the very LEAST one can do. Offering their milk without making any effort to relieve their suffering leads one to ask, ‘Are such people actually serving the cows, or are they just serving their tongue? Does satisfying their palate take priority over cow protection?’

The above attitude announces an unwillingness to do more than the minimum. It indicates that avoiding personal inconvenience and staying within one’s comfort zone takes priority over protecting Mother Cow.

What I find uglier still is the insidious attempt to pass off this complacency and indolence as the virtue of compassion. Some propose that the tortured cows’ only hope is that we continue purchasing their milk mixed with pus, blood and anxiety to offer to Lord Kṛṣṇa for if we stop, those cows are doomed.

But purchasing commercial dairy products only fuels the slaughterhouse industry and keeps those horrible works alive. We become ‘butcher-bandhus’ (friends of butchers). It assures that the female calves of the tortured cows will soon meet the same fate and the bull calves will end up in the veal crate.

What such people propose is a perfect survival formula for the slaughterhouse industry as it inspires both those who favor and oppose the cruelty to purchase their products! And the bloody butchers cheer and encourage this indolence masquerading as compassion.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Incremental Instructions

This chapter is taken from a dialogue on *Kūrma Rūpa das's* Facebook page. *Kūrma Rūpa* is the founder of *Care for Cows* which rescues cows from the streets of *Vṛndāvana*, India and administers them medical attention.

“You will remind me that Śrīla Prabhupāda allowed us to offer commercial milk to Kṛṣṇa. Yes, he did. But simultaneously he told us to start farm communities where we could obtain milk from protected cows and grow our own vegetables and grains to offer to Kṛṣṇa. It's clear that his allowing us to offer commercial dairy products is a temporary concession much like that made by Nārada Muni to Mṛgrāri the hunter. Nārada told Mṛgrāri that instead of half-killing forest animals, he should kill them fully. Nārada did not advocate or sanction animal killing; rather he gave an incremental instruction meant to bring Mṛgrāri one step closer to Vaisnava behavior.

Similarly, forty years ago when Śrīla Prabhupāda told us savages we should offer milk to Kṛṣṇa, he wanted us to take one short step towards serving Kṛṣṇa. As service to Kṛṣṇa must be favorable (ānukūlyena) he ordered us to establish farms for protecting cows and offer their milk as the next step.

Nārada ultimately told Mṛgrāri to break his bow and desist from animal killing — that was his intent from the start. Similarly, as there was nothing else, Śrīla Prabhupāda allowed us to offer commercial milk but simultaneously

ordered us to establish farm communities to protect cows and offer their milk to Kṛṣṇa. We are too lazy and attached to follow his full instruction and we rationalize obedience by following only half of it. Shame on us!

One may shrug and say, ‘I don't have the power to stop the monstrous dairy industry.’ And it may be that no individual has that power. But each of us does have the power to control our tongue... and if enough of us do, and refuse to purchase slaughterhouse products, it will have a detrimental effect on the industry.

By following Śrīla Prabhupāda's order to establish farms to produce and offer milk, vegetables and grains to Kṛṣṇa we automatically boycott commercial dairy products and all junk foods which are tailored to reduce longevity. Then we will have the potency to preach with conviction and influence others to do the same, and by our united effort, the commercial dairies will dry up!

If we are too entrenched in the urban lifestyle and require more dairy products than our farms produce, then we should find alternative whole milk obtained with minimum violence and be willing to pay more for it. Moreover, we should be honest and admit our weakness and attachment and, instead of shunning those who do control their tongue, support them and seek their blessings so we can develop the strength and conviction to follow.

By imagining that tortured commercial dairy cows are pacified when we offer their milk to Kṛṣṇa, we indulge in the first of the five nescient activities created by Lord Brahma — self deception (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.12.2).

Playing the devil's advocate, His Grace Mādhavānanda Prabhu offered a question that may arise after reading my short post entitled "Don't be a Butcher-bandhu" (bandhu means friend). That question is: By his granting us permission to offer commercial dairy, is Śrīla Prabhupāda a butcher-bandhu?

It's clear that his allowing us to offer commercial dairy products is a temporary concession much like that made by Nārada Muni to Mṛgrāri the hunter.

I shot off a quick answer from the hip and am not at all satisfied with it. In fact looking at it now, I'm embarrassed to admit that I dodged the question...and thus feel compelled to address it again. I have reconsidered and now answer with a resounding YES!

Furthermore, I say with full conviction that to consider Śrīla Prabhupāda' not a friend of butchers is an offense!

Read on.

Friends of butchers fall in two categories: approving friends and disapproving friends.

The approving friends are those who encourage the butcher in his sinful activities: raising cows for slaughter, transporting them to the slaughterhouse, killing and butchering them, cooking the meat, serving it to others and eating it... in short, approving friends are those who increase the butcher's profit and those who themselves profit from cow killing... In exchange they inherit a corresponding portion of the sinful fruits. Approving friends encourage the butcher to continue and even increase his sinful acts.

Śrīla Prabhupāda certainly does NOT fall in this category.

The disapproving friends are those who mercifully offer advice to the butcher with the intent to first make him reduce his sinful acts and ultimately convince him to abandon them entirely. In the company of Sri Nārada Muni, Śrīla Prabhupāda falls in this category. Such friends offer a temporary concession to reduce sinful activity but their INTENT is to eradicate sinful activity completely. This is the identifying characteristic of the disapproving friend.

Friends in this category hate the sin... but try to help the sinner. It's obvious to me, that when Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us permission to offer commercial dairy to Sri Kṛṣṇa, it was an incremental instruction never intended to be final. His final instruction in this matter is: Refrain from cow killing... don't eat meat, fish or eggs... protect cows as they are your mother.

His initial instruction conflicts with the final in the same way that Nārada's recommendation to Mṛgrāri to kill animals fully, conflicts with his final one... to refrain completely from killing.

Why do great sages like Nārada Muni and Śrīla Prabhupāda use this technique? Is it authorized in sastra to do so?

Yes. Sri Kṛṣṇa employs it.

Sri Kṛṣṇa's paramam vacha, (supreme instruction) is to become His devotee, abandon all other duties and surrender to Him. But knowing that the majority of aspirants cannot do this, He offers concessional... incremental instructions designed to bring one to the final stage. He says if you cannot fully absorb your mind and intelligence in ME,

'Just Fix your mind upon Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and engage all your intelligence in Me. Thus you will live in Me always, without doubt.' -*Bhagavad-gītā 12 8 Translation*

then follow the regulative principles of Bhakti Yoga.

'My dear Arjuna, O winner of wealth, if you cannot fix your mind upon Me without deviation, then follow the regulated principles of bhakti-yoga. In this way you will develop a desire to attain Me.'

-*Bhagavad-gītā 12.9 Translation*

If you cannot do that, then assist those who can.

'So, even if one cannot directly practice the regulated principles of bhakti-yoga, he can try to help such work.'

- *Bhagavad-gītā 12.10 Purport*

If you cannot do that, then engage in some pious philanthropic work.

'That is also mentioned here because by the practice of giving up the fruits of one's activities one is sure to purify his mind gradually, and in that purified stage of mind one becomes able to understand Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.'

-*Bhagavad-gītā 12.11 Purport*

If we take Sri Kṛṣṇa's recommendation to engage in philanthropic work, to be His final recommendation, we have failed to understand His INTENT. We follow the concessional instruction instead of the final one... something akin to following the letter of the Law rather than the Spirit... and we seriously err.

'In summary, to reach the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal, there are two processes, one process is by gradual development and the other process is direct.Everyone is advised to take to the direct method and surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead.'

-*Bhagavad-gītā 12.12 Purport*

So YES! Śrīla Prabhupāda is a butcher-bandhu, In fact he is their very BEST one!"



Establishing Cow Protection

Establishing communities that protect cows must be done according to practical formulas like the carrying capacity of the land (how many cows the land will support self-sufficiently) in relationship to breeding policies and the quantity of milk that is desired.

In 2010 we printed an article in the ISCOWP News from Pancharatna das (Stephen Raisz) in which he calculated a model cow protection community. The following is a letter, which we also printed) written by Hare Kṛṣṇa dasi (author of *Speaking About Varṇāśrama*) in answer to Pancharatna das's article.

"Pancharatna -- Bless you for beginning to *articulate* this problem and the solution!

There are just a couple things I want to add:

1. Breeding cows to provide the neighboring devotee community (Philadelphia, NYC) with milk is exactly what Gita-nagari did in the 1970's-1980's. And how it got stuck with more cows than it could easily support -- when future waves of temple presidents decided that milk from protected cows was too expensive for their temples. Please, never forget this fact.

2. I took particular note of the breakdown of expenses for maintaining the cows:

A. I would strongly suggest that

before a farm breeds cows for the devotee community, you find out what your market is. A person might be willing to purchase 1 gallon of \$9 milk for a special occasion, but might not be prepared to spend \$500 per year for the next 10 years for milk.

B. All the costs here are based on current prices for input commodities. However, experts in the petroleum industry are warning us to expect \$200 per barrel (it was \$19 per barrel in 1998) petroleum by the year 2020 (\$7 per gallon) nine short years from now. A cow or bull born today should live until 2025 at least, so you must keep in mind how this major economic shift will impact your business plan.

C. I note that the costs above factor in the price of diesel fuel for operating the tractor in the field, but it does not factor in the price of the fuel required to deliver the milk. Even if the devotees will themselves come and pick up the milk, when prices increase, just a few years from now, price of transporting milk may be a deterrent in some devotees maintaining their commitment to purchase milk. So, in working out your business model, please keep in mind that participants who live at a distance of more than 20 miles from your farm may not be able to maintain their participation after a certain point. At \$7 per gallon, a number of devotees will give up owning a car.

D. I see that no mention is made of using ox power to produce grains and hay (and even grind the grains) required to maintain the cows. I hate to say it,

but I admire your realism. Probably no one will learn to work oxen, and it is not realistic to include that factor in your business model.

E. I see that there is no pay calculated for 'volunteers who look after' the cows. I have to say that at the scale you are talking about -- 20 cows -- that sounds troubling to me. In terms of our experience in ISKCON-wide, one of the

families (not brahmacaris) who can expect to make a reasonable living by taking care of the cows and working the oxen. And, they need strong support and appreciation from the devotee community, when it turns out that they can't fully participate in the morning program because of needed duties in the barn and the field.



Kesava is a trained protected ox living at the ISCOWP Farm.

greatest areas of vulnerability, and one of the greatest causes of suffering for cows comes from having unstable, uncommitted, disputative, or insufficiently trained personnel to look after them.

If you have just a few cows, a program can limp along, one way or another. But lots of cows requires committed farm

Will that type of stable staff be available, and strong emotional and spiritual support be there from the community - when you go to scale? This is not a theoretical question. It is a question that is *crucial* to the long-term welfare of the cows. Everyone should consider it carefully before taking this big step.

Please keep in mind that in all the most successful programs that we see around the world, there is one clearly recognizable devotee -- who has the emotional, spiritual and financial (even if never sufficient!) support of the devotee community -- who has invested years of commitment to the cows to make sure the program is running as smoothly as is possible, and who is *dedicated to the comfort of the cows.* These leading cow protectors include Śyāmasundara, Balabhadra, and Kūrma Rūpa These are not fair weather volunteers. They are devotees with long-term commitment. No cow program can be successful unless it is headed by a devotee who has a long-term commitment, and is supported by the community. Don't think that you will get out of this on the cheap with labor. Kṛṣṇa's cowherds must be properly honored for their labor. You will get what you pay for. Please keep that in mind.

And, I am not kidding about \$200 per barrel petroleum. Please watch this video of Jeff Rubin, a Canadian petroleum expert, regarding oil prices at The Business of Climate Change conference in January 2010. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgBpt9_FSV0)

Jeff Rubin comments on how world oil prices are set to be trading around the \$200 US dollar mark in the future. Rubin, the former Chief Economist of CIBC World Markets warns that higher oil prices are a result in a lack of affordable, extractable global world oil, which has now passed the easy peak oil extraction year of 2005.

Imagine that you are watching the video with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Then try to think what he would advise us to do next.

Establishing Cow Protection And Milk Demand

In Vedic times cows were not bred to produce milk they were bred to produce bulls so that agriculture and transport could be accomplished. The second reason for breeding cows was to produce dung for many village uses such as fertilizer and cooking fuel for the village residents. The third reason was for the production of urine for medicinal purposes. The fourth reason, and it wasn't even considered a reason, was milk. Milk was considered a by-product and would come automatically when the cow had a calf. It was not the main reason for breeding cows.

In this age everything is backwards. The cow is bred specifically for milk and the bulls are considered useless and murdered. Old cows and cows who no longer can produce milk are also considered useless and murdered.

Devotees must be very careful not to lose sight of the value of holistic cow care and focus only on acquiring milk as the goal of cow protection. To do so would be similar to operating as the commercial dairy. The bulls, old cows and non productive cows become burdensome to the goal of producing milk. What to do with them? Whereas in the scheme of cow protection the bulls and all the cows are worthy of protection and religious principles can be derived by protecting them.

What about the Ox?

When we speak of cow protection, most people think of cows (females) not oxen or the males. When a cow gives birth she has a 50% chance of producing a male. Since the male will not produce milk, what value does he have to the farmer? As we know, in the dairy industry, he has no value except to be kept on a feedlot to be fattened for meat or confined in a veal crate to be sold for veal after a few months. Since the ox will live possibly 25 years, not produce milk and eat a great deal, what will be done with him when you are protecting him for life?

A few years back, there was an animal sanctuary in a neighboring state that protected farm animals including cows. They said the cows were the most difficult to protect because they ate so much. With the cost of protecting one cow, they could protect hundreds of chickens. They decided they would not take any more cows.

His Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda, founder Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, explained the position of the ox in the following 1975 conversation at the ISKCON New Orleans farm.

“Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda? A materialist or someone who wouldn't know, he may say that when the bull is not plowing, all he is doing is eating. You have to pay money to feed him grain or to grow grain to feed the bull.

Prabhupāda: They will grow, and they will eat. Rather, they will help you for your eating. The father also eats, but he maintains the family. Therefore the bull is considered as father and the cow as mother. Mother gives milk, and the bull grows food grains for man. Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu first challenged Kazi that "What is your religion, that you eat your father and mother?" Both the bulls and the cows are important because the bull will produce food grain and the cow will supply milk. They should be utilized properly. That is human intelligence.

This is filling up with paddy or...? No?

Nityānanda: With food for the cows. This one has forage or fodder, and that one has grain.

Prabhupāda: So everything is for the animals. Nothing for the man?

Nityananda: The cows give us milk.

Prabhupāda: That's all? And you are not growing any food grains? Why?

Nityānanda: Er... We've been trying to establish self-sufficient cow protection program first, to grow our own food for the cows.

Brahmānanda: There is no land available for growing rice or wheat?

Nityānanda: Yes, but the number of devotees we have to do it...

Brahmānanda: But you have so many machines.

Prabhupāda: All these machines require oiling and keeping nicely. Otherwise it will spoil.

Nityānanda: Down the road we have fifteen acres of sorghum, grain for the cows.



ISCOWP's Nara and Naryana, milking short-horns, are learning to stand still on command.

Prabhupāda: And everything for the cows, but what for the man? They will give everything for cows because they will eat cows, other farmers.

But you utilize the animals for growing your food.

Brahmānanda: The idea is we should maintain the animals, but then the animals should provide foodstuffs for the men.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Brahmānanda: And that way there is cooperation.

Prabhupāda: Yes. The animals, bulls, should have helped in spite of that... instead of that machine.

Then it is properly utilized. And others, they cannot utilize these animals. Therefore, what they will do? Naturally they will send to slaughterhouse. But we are not going to send to the slaughterhouse. Then what we will do? They must be utilized. Otherwise simply for growing food that the cows and bulls we engage ourself?

You are already feeling burden because there are so many bull calves. You were asking me, "What we shall do with so many bulls?"

Nityānanda: Well, when they grow up we will train them as oxen.

Prabhupāda: No, what the oxen will do?

Nityānanda: Plow the fields.

Prabhupāda: Yes. That is wanted. Transport, plowing fields. That is wanted. And unless our men are trained up, Kṛṣṇa conscious, they will think, "What is the use of taking care of the plows (cows)? Better go to the city, earn money and eat them."

Ref. VedaBase, New Orleans, August 1, 1975 Walk Around New Tālavana Farm

One may say that was 1975 and this is now 2012. We live in the age of technology now. Anything man or animal can do, a machine can do better. But let us examine this position more carefully.

Recently, Tāraka das posted a link to a New York Times article on the ISCOWP Facebook page entitled “On Small Farms, Hoof Power Returns.” It was written by Tess Taylor and published on May 3, 2011. Here are some excerpts from that page discussing ox power in this age.

“Now, as diesel prices skyrocket, some farmers who have rejected many of the past century’s advances in agriculture have found a renewed logic in draft power. Partisans argue that animals can be cheaper to board and feed than any tractor. They also run on the ultimate renewable resource: grass.

‘Ox don’t need spare parts, and they don’t run on fossil fuels,’ Mr. Ciotola said.

Animals are literally lighter on the land than machines.

‘A tractor would have left ruts a foot deep in this road,’ Mr. Ciotola noted.

In contrast, oxen or horses aerate the soil with their hooves as they go, preserving its fertile microbial layers. And as an added benefit, animals leave behind free fertilizer.

‘You still have to walk nine miles for every planted acre,’ said Dick Roosenberg, the founder of Tillers International, a 430-acre farm learning

center in Scotts, Mich. A former Peace Corps volunteer, Mr. Roosenberg helped farmers who practiced hand cultivation in third world countries learn about oxen. Eventually, he also taught ox techniques to interpreters at historic communities like Plymouth Plantation.

But now Mr. Roosenberg’s plowing workshops fill with a new demographic: farmers from Wisconsin, Minnesota and even Alaska who hope to use animal power in their fields. Last year, about 320 signed up.

‘It’s suddenly not just historic replication, it’s reinvention,’ he said. ‘A new generation wants to do this again, now.’

Oxen are also cheap, at least compared to a tractor, and can work for 10 to 14 years. Since the dairy industry relies on keeping cows pregnant so they lactate, millions of baby bulls are born each year. A pair of calves start at \$150 and range up to \$1,500, depending on their breed and how much training they have.

As draft power spreads, a 7,000-year-old technology is being looked at in different ways. Some young farmers are developing a hybrid practice, using oxen to supplement, rather than replace, tractors. Some use them just to log and plow, while others have their teams haul machines with engines. Even this can be energy efficient.

‘If you use animals to pull a motorized hay-baler,’ Mr. Roosenberg said, ‘you can bale hay pretty fast with about one-third the gas.’ ”

Kṛṣṇa-dairians



Nara and Balaji are friends.

“**D**o you consume the milk from protected cows? If not, can you explain your reason why not?” Joan Delisio

The answer is YES, we do honor milk and dairy products from protected cows. Currently, in December 2013, we rescued a young Holstein cow from a dairy up around Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. One of the ladies who is an employee there has her own little cow protection sanctuary and has rescued four cows from the dairy already. She does not have much land and calls us when there is a particular cow who she would like to see rescued. We already rescued a six year old cow from her about two years ago and her

name was Maddy then and since coming to us her name has been changed to Mādhavī. She had been “dried up” before coming to us as my health was not so good and I would not have been able to milk her.

The young cow who we just rescued is not even four years old and was going to the slaughter house. My health is somewhat better now so we requested she come to us still “in milk.” In this way we would be able to have some milk and make curd and yogurt for our Deities and also be able to provide some cruelty free

milk to some of the families close to us. Her name was Jeannie which has been changed to Vegan Indirā. She is so loveable and loves to lick and lick whenever she is allowed.

She is giving about two gallons of milk a day and with this production we are able to supply 9 families with milk for some of their daily dairy nutritional needs.

It is so calming to have her association during milking. Knowing that after 600 days of milking at the dairy and giving 20,380 pounds of milk for the commercial market, she is finally giving milk to be offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The happiness is not that we are having some milk, but that finally this special soul...Vegan Indirā...is producing milk and is engaged in devotional service.

I am so glad to hug her after milking and to get licks from her and to tell her “Thank You” for her milk for Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure.

We have called ourselves vegans but Priyavrata das, director of Global Food for Life, has coined a description which is more accurate, Kṛṣṇa-dairians. A Kṛṣṇa-dairian is one who takes milk products from lifetime protected cows but not from the commercial dairy.

The devotees who become Kṛṣṇa-dairians feel that the offering of commercial dairy products is contrary to the non-violent Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy because of the suffering the cows are put through to acquire the milk. Nor do they feel that religious principles are derived from offering such milk, nor is Lord Kṛṣṇa pleased with the offering of such milk since His most beloved animal, the cow, was tortured to acquire it. Nor do they feel that they would be benefitting health-wise nor their brain developed by such milk full of growth hormones, antibiotics and mother cow’s extreme anxiety.

Some devotees say that it would not save cows’ lives by abstaining from commercial dairy products and the goal is to influence more people to become vegetarians and that would save cows’ lives. We feel this position completely denies the connection between the dairy industry and the meat industry.

In the dairy industry a cow must be impregnated at least once a year to produce enough milk for the dairy farmer to make a profit. If the result of that pregnancy is male offspring then profit is made by selling the calf to the veal industry or the beef industry. When a cow can not produce enough milk she is also sent to the beef industry. The meat and the dairy industry are intrinsically connected.

Yes, it would have some affect if there are more vegetarians and therefore less demand for beef, but as long as there is the current or increased demand for milk and milk products there will be the abuse of mother cow by the commercial dairy industry to achieve a profit.

The dairy industry is at the least equally as cruel as the beef industry. In the commercial dairy industry the cows are 24/7 on cement floors and never or rarely pasture. The cow is kept in a state of constant pregnancy with each child being taken away from her at birth. She is routinely injected with chemicals to make her produce more milk and antibiotics to rid her of disease. When she is worn out and can not produce the profitable amount of milk, she is sold to the beef industry to be slaughtered for the price of her flesh.

The ISKCON Hungarian farm is a successful example of a community protecting cows to supply milk based on religious principles. In 2011, HH Śivarāma Swami, who is the spiritual leader of the Hungarian ISKCON centers, announced that the temple in Budapest would no longer use

commercial dairy products. In reply to this announcement, Priyavrata daś wrote the following letter. Priyavrata is the director of the International Food for Life program which feeds up to 3 million meals a day throughout the world with non-dairy food offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa (prasādam).

Priyavrata daś writes:

April 25, 2011 at 4:38 pm

“Dear Śivarāma Mahārāja,

Thank you for taking this stand.

ISKCON cannot honestly justify the use of commercial dairy products. The fact is: commercial milk is not the same as the “milk” that is glorified in the Vedas. Indeed, it cannot even be considered “milk” in the strictest use of the word. Milk in its purest form, flows naturally and happily from a mother. It is quite factually, “liquid love.” On the contrary, commercial milk is forcibly extracted from very unhappy and diseased cows. In adopting this new policy, however, I would like to point out that you should not be endorsing veganism. A devotee is not a vegetarian nor a vegan, but rather a prasadarian. By definition, this means that devotees only consume the most pure food — food that has been mercifully accepted by the Lord. And as Krishna clearly states, He will only accept pure food that has been offered with love. With all the horrors that surround the commercial dairy industry, it is a tough case trying to prove that commercial dairy is in any way pure, when it comes from diseased cows filled with fear, sadness, pain, and anger, and forcibly sucked out by machines operated by men filled with selfishness and lust.

I suggest that in introducing this new policy you also clearly state that the devotees are not conforming to a vegan diet, but in fact emphatically endorsing a “Prasādarian” or “Kṛṣṇa-dairian” diet. To consume commercial dairy is in direct opposition to the ideals of a peaceful society — a society based on respect for all living beings, especially our mother, the dairy cow. As long as ISKCON buys milk in the market place, the drive to establish such a peaceful and ideal society will fail to ignite.

Your example and the efforts of the Vaiṣṇava community in Hungary are exactly what ISKCON needs.”

Being a Kṛṣṇa-dairian is not the same as being a vegan. A vegan will abstain from all milk products and a Kṛṣṇa-dairian will abstain from commercial dairy products but utilize milk from protected cows. Although different in philosophy, both the Kṛṣṇa-dairian and the vegan are in most incidences living the same dietary lifestyle due to the lack of milk products available from protected cows.

Just recently, at the Māyāpur, India 2014 ISKCON Governing Body meetings, four of the leaders, who are also initiating gurus, declared they were abstaining from commercial dairy products: H.H. Śivarāma Swami, H.H. Devamrita Swami, HH Rādhānāth Swami and H.H. Guru Prasad Swami. Over the years we have had discussions on this topic with them and other leaders and we are full of admiration that they have publicly taken this dietary position.

The Choices You Have

The question is, do we continue to support the commercial dairy industry and their awful practices against Lord Kṛṣṇa's dear most friends, the cows? Do we become vegan and boycott milk and its byproducts altogether? Do we boycott only the commercial dairy industry by following a Kṛṣṇa-dairian diet? Do we establish cruelty free dairies showing the world the way to protect cows and train and work their offspring the bulls (oxen) thus showing they are more valuable alive than dead? Do we do a combination of any of these?

Developing Rural Communities

"Mahāmāṇa: This morning I read in the newspapers about the exodus to village soon by the Prime Minister, and there the Prime Minister says that he is eager on developing village programs to establish agriculture facilities and village programs.

Prabhupāda: That is real work. If the Prime Minister has got this thing in his brain, then I can understand that he can do so.

Mahāmāṇa: And this is a very nice thing he said, Prabhupāda. He said that "We want to improve things in the countryside to an extent that people from the cities start running to the villages."

Prabhupāda: Yes. That I want. I...

Everywhere I go and say, how these rascals...? So much land is lying, and these rascals are not developing. And they are making... What is that? Coal stone. Coal. They are interested with these bricks and stones, not green

vegetables. Such a rascal government. Give them facility. We know how to do it. Annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḥ anna-sambhavaḥ, yajñād bhavati parjanyaḥ [Bg. 3.14]. Let them engage in kirtana. There will be more water for gardening, and it will be moist, and then produce fodder for the animals and food for you. And animal gives you milk. That is Vṛndāvana life. And they are absorbed in this so-called opulence. Kṛṣṇa has taken birth. They are bringing so many nice, pleasant foodstuff, very well-dressed and ornamented. These are description. In the morning we were reading. How they were happy, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana with Kṛṣṇa and living and cows. That I want to introduce. At any cost do it and... Don't bother about big, big buildings. It is not required. Useless waste of time. Produce. Make the whole field green. See that. Then whole economic question solved. Then you eat sumptuous. Eat sumptuously. The animal is happy. The animal even does not give milk; let them eat and pass stool and urine. That is welcome. After all, eating, they will pass stool. So that is beneficial, not that simple milk is beneficial. Even the stool is beneficial. Therefore I am asking so much here and..., "Farm, farm, farm, farm..." That is not my program-Kṛṣṇa's program. Annād bhavanti bhūtāni [Bg. 3.14]. Produce greenness everywhere, everywhere. Vṛndāvana. It is not this motorcar civilization....." May 27, 1977, *Śrīla Prabhupāda conversation, Vṛndāvana, India*

A few months later Śrīla Prabhupāda passed away.

You can support such communities financially, volunteer your time, and/or organize devotees in your area to work together to create your own community protecting cows. However, it will take time to reach the point where milk from protected cows is available to all devotees.

Diet Change

What is the average devotee to do when milk from protected cows is unavailable? Diet change is a choice and becoming a Kṛṣṇa-dairian is a diet change that does not contradict Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings. Someone who is a Kṛṣṇa-dairian is most likely consuming very little dairy products because of the scarcity of milk and milk products from protected cows. Although not a vegan by philosophy, the kṛṣṇa-dairian is living the diet of a vegan on a daily basis.

Reduce Dairy In Your Diet

If you find this to be too much of a change in diet all at once, then you can reduce your dairy intake.

“Because this body belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and we are using it in His service, it should be kept in good working order. A little dal, a little rice, some vegetable and a few chapaties is a substantial diet, along with a little fruit and milk. Two cups of milk a day is sufficient. The Ayurvedic system of eating is to decide how much you can comfortably eat, then take half of that amount, filling the remaining half one quarter with water and leaving one quarter for air. This simple, regulated diet along with strict

cleanliness will keep one healthy, strong and free from disease.”

- Śrīla Prabhupāda Letter to Koumadaki, March 27, 1972, Australia

We received this letter from Kānti dāsī, Jan 29, 2014 in regards to a small article about ISCOWP's new rescued dairy cow, Vegan Indirā

“Back in the 70's, maybe 75 or 76, I visited the Miami temple from France. Śrīla Prabhupāda had expressed to one kavirāj life member that he would like him to instruct the devotees about their health and I happened to be there when the doctor came. When I first arrived the devotees were honoring dairy prasad in large quantities and many varieties at all meals... yogurts, cottage cheese, panir, sour cream, milk breakfast and evening.... I was bowled over at the opulence of every meal and had not experienced anything like this in France where the prasad was much simpler and milk good but limited. It seems that the devotees had convinced a large grocer to donate his almost expired dairy products to the temple and the bounty was tremendous...

At that time many devotees were suffering from health issues and when the kavirāj came he connected the health issues to the over consumption of the dairy. He explained that as a general rule for good health, most people can benefit from taking up to two cups of milk in a day and not more.... that would be milk in whatever form, so two cups of pāṇir would actually be a few cubes, not two full cups.... over the years I have tried to honor that as far as possible, except for special circumstances, feasts in the

temple, etc. or other holidays and I always suggested it to my kids as well....so a long email to agree that if humans reduced their consumption to what was healthy for them, it would also be healthier for the cows and milk production while also sheltering cows would not be such a difficult task...take care, much affection, yhs, K ”

As a community we have a tendency to lavish in milk products which are not necessary for our spiritual as well as physical well being. Milk, and only two cups a day, is required for development of spiritual brain cells. That little amount can also provide us with enough protein and other nutrients. If there is need for more nutrition, it can be acquired from other sources acceptable to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

“The U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance of protein is your weight in pounds times 0.4 grams of protein. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, you require 60 grams of protein a day. A cup of milk contains about 8 grams of protein. By drinking two cups of milk a day. plus daily servings of cereal, bread, dried-bean soup, and rice or another grain dish, you can easily meet your protein requirements.”- *Viśākhā-devī dāśī, Back to Godhead Magazine, 1987*
Liquid Religiosity

Again, one has to remember the milk from commercial dairy cows is full of growth hormones, antibiotics, and more additives not to mention the extreme stress/anxiety of the cow. Therefore it is questionable whether this milk can develop your spiritual brain cells. It is certainly not the same milk of Vedic times which could do so.

Commercial Milk Offsets

I looked back in our *ISCOWP News* archives and found a letter explaining the concept of “blood milk” by Mādhava Gosh written in 1999. From that point, and especially in 2003, he headed up the commercial milk offset concept. The basic concept is that you monetarily give some per cent back of what you spend on commercial milk (blood milk) to a cow protection program. This will help cow protection programs develop and will offset your implication in the offenses to the cow when you buy from the commercial dairy industry. This concept never took hold. Perhaps it is too cumbersome and costly with only a few persons able to keep tabs on the costs and per cents.

Conclusion

Forty years ago when there were no cow protection communities, Śrīla Prabhupāda allowed us to offer commercial dairy products to Lord Kṛṣṇa and at the same time instructed us to create cow protection communities to obtain our own milk from our own protected cows. Isn't it time we did something more than follow the first part of his incremental instructions and seriously consider fulfilling Śrīla Prabhupāda's final instructions?

Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as a cowherd boy to show us by example the importance of cow protection. Śrīla Prabhupāda has instructed us to protect cows and if we are taking milk to take milk from protected cows. It is up to us to do something for suffering Mother Cow either by diet change and/or by assisting cow protection. But please do something, do not accept the status quo. The suffering of Mother Cow and her calf is real.

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Dānakeli dāsī feeding Kṛṣṇa the ox a treat while Asha watches.



*The bull is the emblem of the moral principle,
and the cow is the representative of the earth.
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.16.18 Purport*