Cow Protection - Manor

# Five principles of cow protection

1. No cow or bull is ever slaughtered.
2. Calves suckle from their mothers.
3. Oxen are engaged in work.
4. Cows are hand milked.
5. Cows and bulls are fed appropriate, natural food.

Cow protection means looking after cows in the way that Krishna looked after them.

Cow protection at New Gokul operates on five main principles, which are all based on information from the Vedas, given by Krishna Himself, which guide us in how to take care of these sacred beings.

1. No cow, ox or bull is ever slaughtered.

All the residents of New Gokul live out their natural lives. The average life span of our cows is 18 years, although for some breeds it can be 20-25.

Like humans, cows and bulls cannot work their whole lives but eventually reach a retirement stage where they can relax and grow old in peace. Ours usually retire between 12 and 15 years of age depending on their constitution, strength and productivity. For example some oxen are strong and healthy enough to work happily when they are 14, but others grow weary of work by the age of 10 or 12.

Also like humans, our cows and bulls need a pension when they are retired. This means we need enough resources to look after them in their final years, which the cows themselves cannot pay because they are no longer giving milk or working in the fields. So we have a pension plan in the milk sales, and a few pennies per litre sold are dedicated to looking after all the New Gokul cows in their old age.

2. Calves suckle from their mothers until weaning at 6/7 months.

In modern dairy farms calves are taken from their mothers 24-48 hours after birth. This is so the farmer can steal all her milk for the pleasure of humans, whilst depriving her calf of his or her food. The calves are either slaughtered immediately, fed on iron deficient milk substitute from a bucket until they are fat and anaemic enough to be sold for veal, or raised for the same sad fate as their mother - the hard life of a non-protected dairy cow.

Not so at New Gokul. Our calves suckle from their mothers until around 6 months of age, though sometimes longer. Surabhi and Mukti were not weaned until they were almost 10 months old. This allows our calves to engage in normal behaviour, develop a close and loving bond with their mothers, and to grow strong and healthy on the food God has designed for them.

3. Oxen are engaged in meaningful work.

The fate of non-protected dairy cows is bad, but for bulls it is even worse. Many are shot at birth, and the others are fattened up for 3-12 months before being slaughtered for meat. Cow protection aims to show that there IS a use for bulls besides as food for greedy meat-eaters. They have immense strength that requires no fossil fuels to harness, just a good supply of grass. God has provided enough fuel to run almost unlimited number of ox teams on the land, but clearly He did not intend for us to use so many gas guzzling machines because the oil will not last forever. There is a good and natural way to engage bulls in work, and no need to slaughter them.

4. Cows are hand milked.

Milking machines are bad for cows without a doubt. They remove any need for contact between the cows and their farmer, making the relationship cold and artificial. The machines do not know when to stop milking and sometimes carry on until they draw blood. The prevalance of mastitis and other painful illnesses are higher for machine milked cows.

So here, we hand milk each cow individually. This gives the milkers a great chance to check her mood and health, bond with her, and make her happy to let down her milk.

5. Cows and bulls should be fed only natural vegetation: grasses, grains and suitable vegetables.

This is the natural diet of cows. It is what wild cows eat by choice. BSE (Mad Cows' Disease) was caused by cows being fed the infected brain tissue of slaughtered cows, which infected them in turn and then the humans that ate their muscle tissue (meat). When we deviate from the natural diet of the cow we upset the delicate interactions between her four stomachs and sometimes cause devastating diseases that kill millions of animals and people. Therefore we should only feed her suitable foodstuffs.

For further information please visit: <http://bhaktivedantamanor.co.uk/newgokul/index.php/cowprotection/>

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