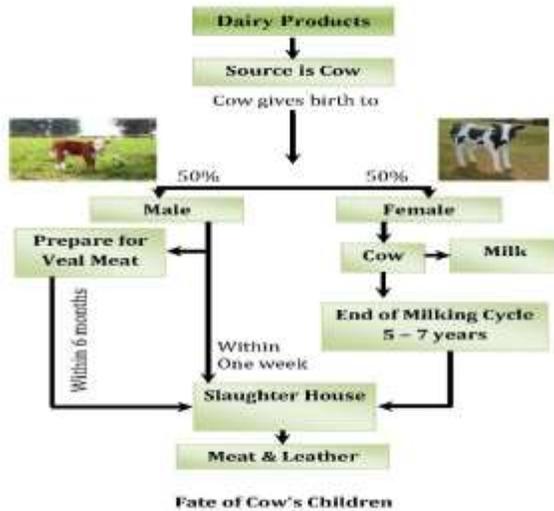


Practice Compassion During Paryushan and Das Lakshan



We received a letter from Nirva Kapasi who lives in Weston, MA with her husband and four children and have been practicing veganism for 2 years. Last year, she attended a lecture in Mumbai where a Jain Maharaja spoke about the dairy industry as it applies to Jainism. Nirva appeals to celebrate dairy-free Paryushan and Das Lakshana this year and writes:

Paryushana and Das Lakshan Parva are just around the corner. As you may know, the Jain Centers of Los Angeles and Houston do not allow dairy in the temple due to the incredible suffering animals go through in order to produce milk and its by-products. Unfortunately, many Jain centers today still use dairy products (whether it is ghee in pooja or food served). In our private homes, we must respect a person's wish to do as he/she pleases.

However, our Jain center is shared by a community of people seeking to observe and follow Jainism, and more specifically ahimsa. In order to follow ahimsa to the highest level, I ask that you observe a non-dairy policy for 18 days during Paryushan and Das Lakshan.

I understand that there are many viewpoints on dairy within our Jain communities. Replacing ghee with almond oil or coconut oil is not a hard thing to do. It is a simple change. Almond oil is free of himsa while dairy is full of it.

Based on conversations that I have had with members of our Jain community, it seems that people do agree that dairy is an inherently violent product – however, they are not willing to make changes. I kindly ask you to think about the mother cow every time you see dairy in your temple puja and ask yourself what she would

think after she has seen her baby being taken away and after she has cried for several days.

Let's face it, today's world full of factory farming and mass commercialization is not the same as it was in the days of Lord Mahavir. Whether you are using Amul ghee or Land Lakes, the butter was obtained in a way that was extremely painful to a 5-sense cow or water buffalo.



Even if you get the butter from an "ahimsa" dairy farm, you are promoting violence and pain because the baby cow is eventually slaughtered. Cows remain enslaved on all dairy farms.

Even when they can roam free in pastures, they must return to the farmer and supply a steady flow of milk. Their female organs are tampered with and often become bloody and infected.

This is not the biggest atrocity the female cow faces in her life. In order to continuously supply milk, the cow is artificially impregnated (using a sharp gun) two months after giving birth. Her only peaceful time is during the nine-month term of her 1st pregnancy. As soon as the baby is delivered, it is taken away from her and either follows in her footsteps and becomes a dairy cow or is sent to the veal factory where it is slaughtered at 6 months. The dairy cow is completely aware of what is happening and on numerous occasions, cries and cries for days. There are multiple YouTube videos showing her running after the truck that took her baby.

I know this is terribly hard to hear, but it is the truth and we Jains have a duty to embrace the right knowledge. There are many young Jains who grow up and look back with anger upon the Jain community for not telling them the truth about dairy. While we understand that it is hard to make an overnight permanent change, we ask you start by observing a dairy-free Paryushana.

Again, all of our rituals can all be replaced with almond oil or coconut oil. It is not possible to ask for forgiveness while simultaneously incurring paap. Let's work

together to make a small change that will hopefully blossom into more awareness for voiceless animals that suffer needlessly. Of all the audiences that hear the argument against dairy, the Jain center should be the most welcoming because we stand for ahimsa. Please urge your respective executive committee to make your center a leader.