

Happy Cows: Behind the Myth



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www.HumaneMyth.org



For decades, advertising firms hired by the dairy and veal industry have been producing multi-million dollar campaigns promoting the idea that dairy products from “happy cows” are healthy and wholesome.



These campaigns often feature cartoon depictions of cows that create an aura of child-like innocence around the industry and its products.



Over time, the buying public has come to associate dairy products with positive feelings about childhood and family.

In recent years, some animal advocacy organizations have begun to promote the idea that there are ways of using and killing dairy cows and their offspring that could be fairly described as compassionate, and even certified as humane.



The image of Old MacDonald's Farm, long debunked by animal advocacy organizations as a marketing myth, is now being promoted by some of the very same animal advocacy organizations.



One press release from a well known animal organization promoting their “Humane Choice” label claimed the animals had the “best life and death offered to any farm animal,” and that they “live their lives as they would have done on Old MacDonald's farm.”



Humane
Choice



Since both the industry and some animal advocacy organizations are now promoting “humane” dairy and veal products, the public is being convinced that products from operations that “treat the animals right” really are perfectly wholesome.

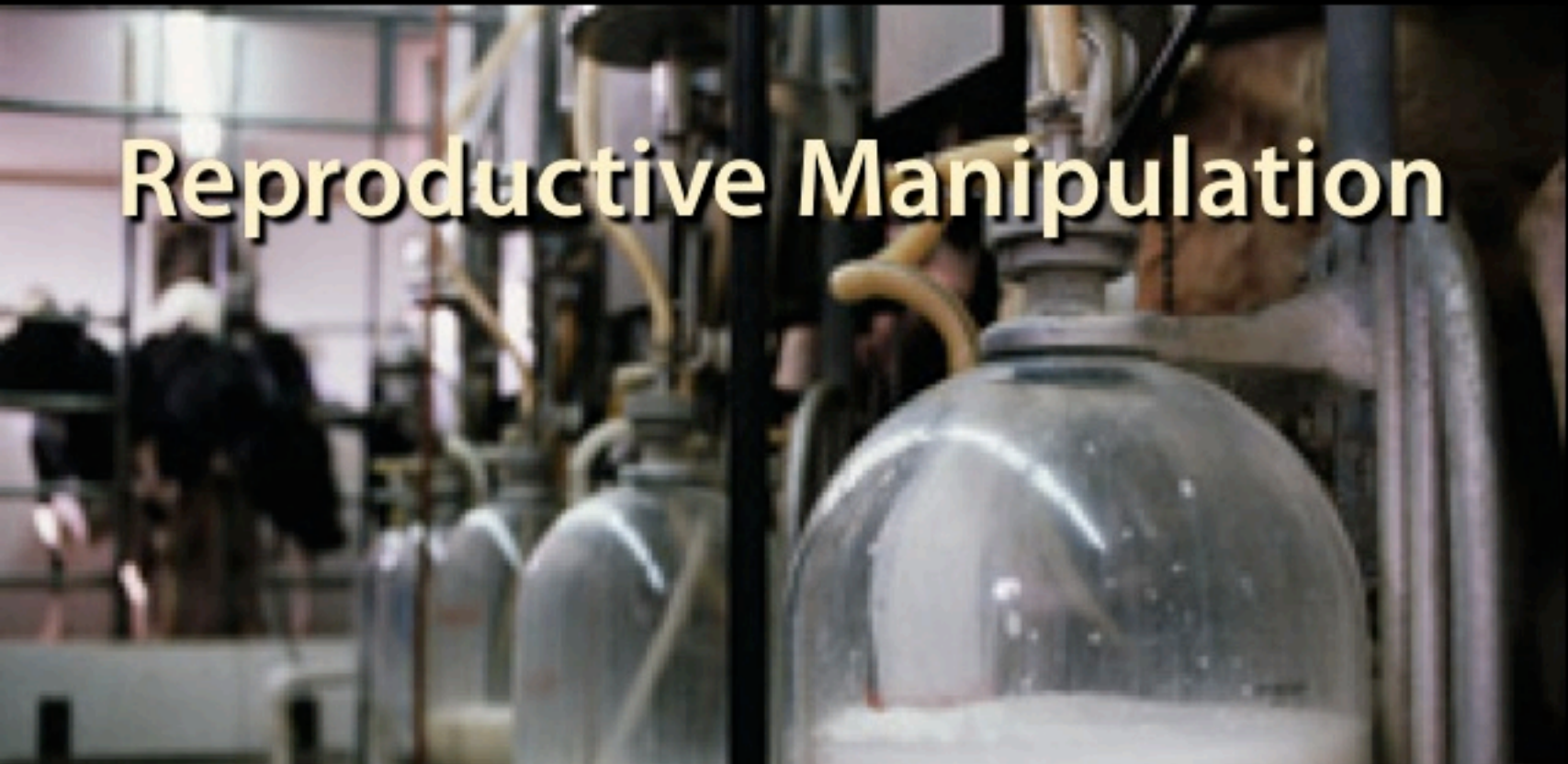
Indeed, consumption of these “humane” dairy and veal products is increasingly described in the media as a form of activism on behalf of the animals, the environment and small-scale farmers.



But is the public being misled?



Let's consider some of the realities of the dairy and veal industry, and look at some of what happens to the cows and their offspring regardless of the style and scale of farming operation — even at “Old MacDonald’s” dairy farm.

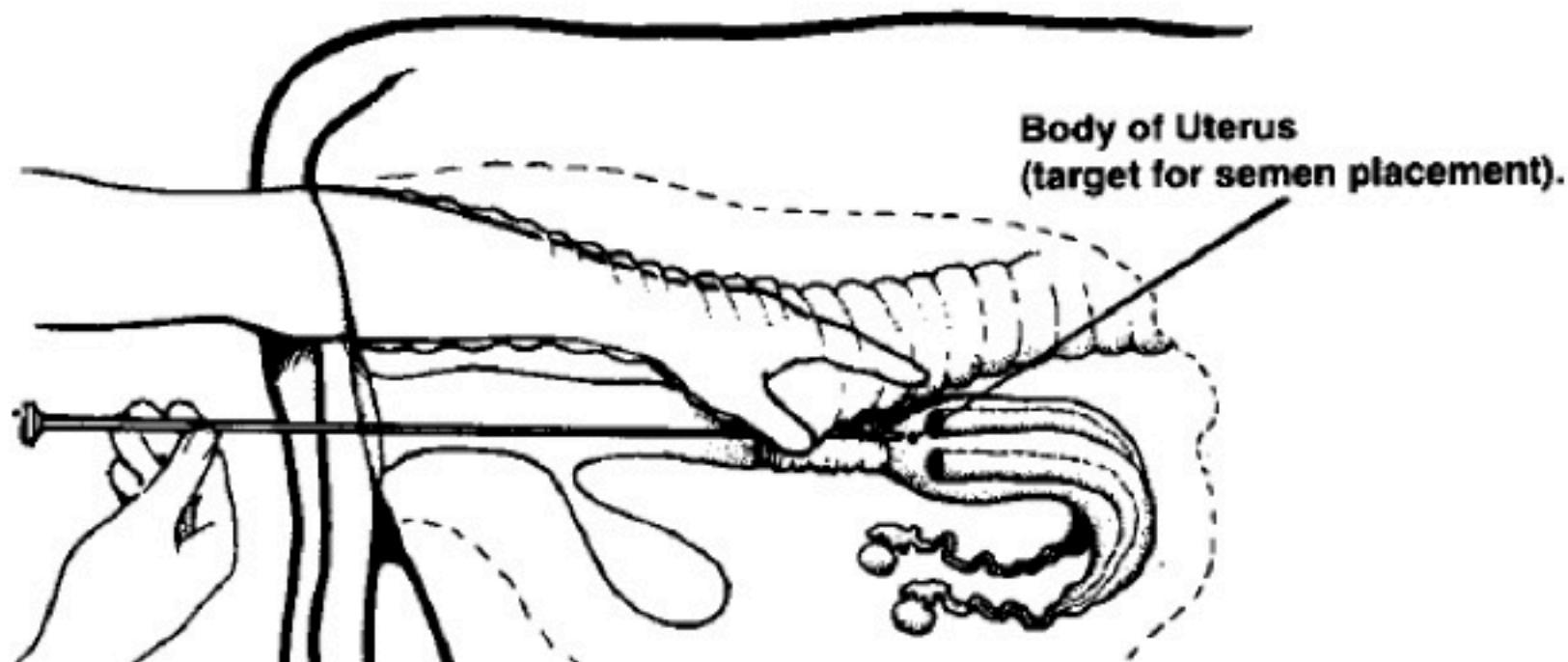


Reproductive Manipulation

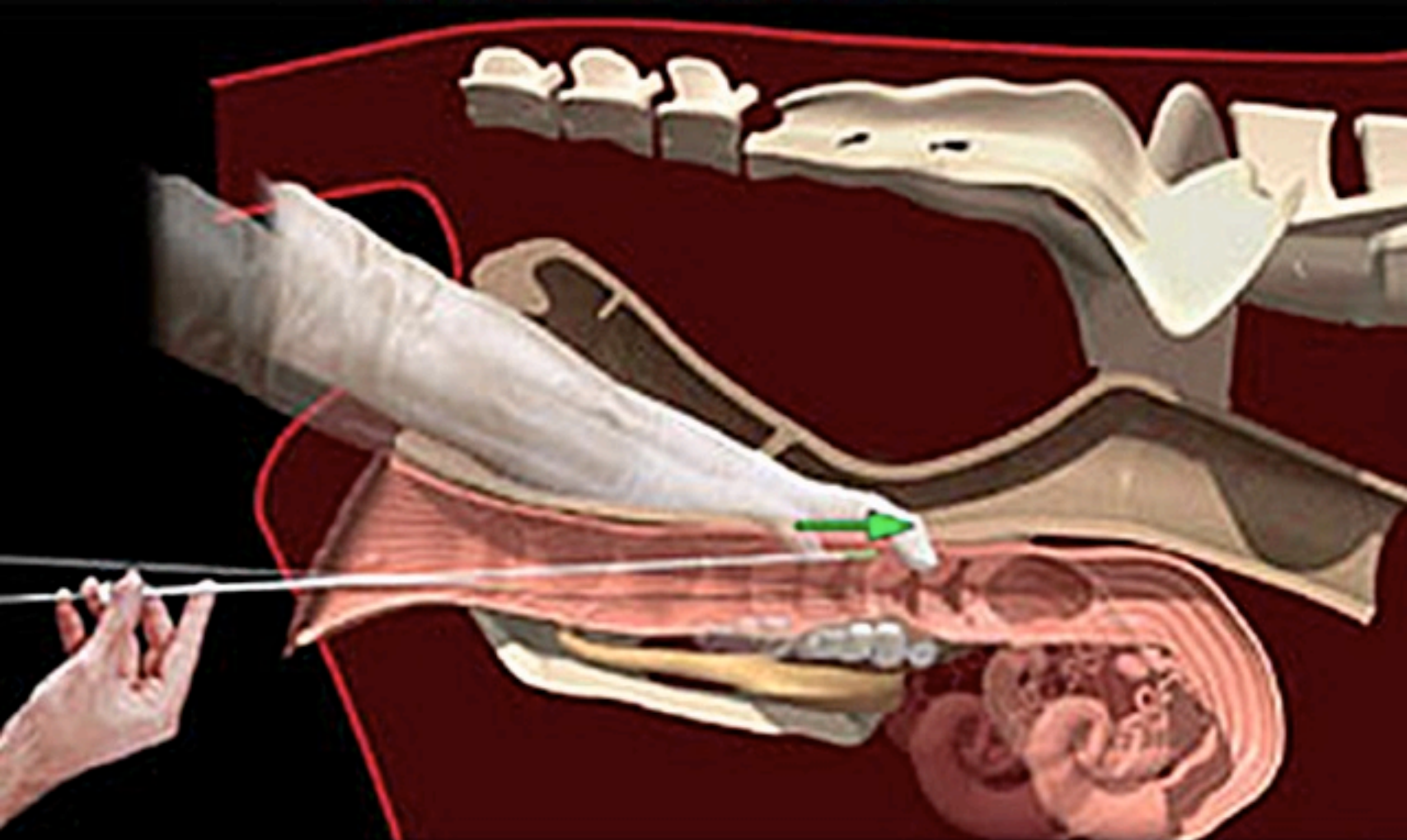
In order to maintain uninterrupted milk production, all forms of dairy farming require that cows become pregnant and give birth to a calf every year.

Reliably inducing pregnancy in each animal each year requires the use of artificial insemination.





No matter what style or scale of dairy operation, the insemination process involves a person forcibly inserting one arm far into the cow's rectum in order to position the cow's uterus...



...and then pushing an instrument into the cow's vagina in order to insert the semen.



The restraining apparatus used for the procedure is commonly referred to within the industry as a "rape rack."

The bulls who produce the semen are usually housed in closed buildings and rarely go outside.





The semen is typically collected with use of castrated males as “stand ins” for females, because the musco-skeletal structure of females cannot handle the stress of being mounted over and over by the bull for the collection procedure.



These are the kind of things that go on at dairy farms, whether they are large or small-scale operations, whether they are organic or traditional.

Abuse and Killing of Calves

A black and white cow calf is the central focus of the image, looking down with a somber expression. It is in a barn setting with other cows visible in the background. The lighting is somewhat dim, and the overall tone is somber.

Approximately half of all calves born are male, for which dairy operations have no use. Males produce no milk and are not economical to raise for beef production.

A large percentage of male calves and excess female calves are sent to auction immediately after birth, and then slaughtered with their umbilical cords still attached.



The rest are
separated from
their mothers
and sent to
veal-producing
operations.





The process of separating mother cows from their calves produces extreme distress for the animals, who typically make plaintive cries to each other as they are separated.



In addition to the trauma of being separated from their mothers shortly after birth, male calves used in all forms of veal production are castrated in order to produce more tender flesh.

One common type of veal operation confines calves in crates and feeds them an artificial diet for four months prior to slaughtering them in order to produce a pale, white flesh.



A “new and improved” approach involves confining groups of calves in pens for four months and feeding them an artificial diet prior to slaughtering them in order to produce a pale rose-colored flesh.





Some producers of this "uncrated" veal claim to keep the calves with a "surrogate mother," a "spent" dairy cow who is placed in their enclosure for some period of time.

Until recently, a concerted public education campaign carried out by the animal advocacy movement inspired the public to boycott veal.

**BOYCOTT
VEAL**

Are you for veal?

FREE-RANGE MEAT COULD WIN OVER CRITICS

By TERESA J. FARNEY THE GAZETTE

YOU can't call them vegetarians, because they eat chicken, pork, beef — even a hot dog now and then.

But even some of the most ardent carnivores have a real beef with veal and won't get near it. Their reasons have nothing to do with diet or nutritional issues, and everything to do with how veal is produced: from baby calves torn from their mothers a few days after birth, fed an inadequate diet and confined to a cramped crate to keep their muscles underused and tender.

It's inhumane, say a number of animal rights organizations, including the Humane Society of the United States, Farm Sanctuary, and they've long urged consumers to avoid buying veal at stores and restaurants.

Jon Cordonier of Peyton is hoping they'll reconsider veal — his veal, that is. Through his company, Great Weights Co., he's marketing Highland cattle veal calves raised in what he says is a much more humane way. There are no crates, no hormones or antibiotics, no confinement or skimpy diets.

Gene Bauston, cofounder and president of Farm Sanctuary, sponsor of a nationwide "Say No To Veal" campaign, sees Cordonier on the cutting edge of what appears to be "a mini revolution in farming in general to raise animals more humanely."

New York City

71 Clinton Fres

Alva

Artisanal

Asia de Cuba

Astra

Aureole

Azafran

Babbo

Beacon

Beppe

Blue Hill

Cafe Luxembourg

CamaJe

Cinet

But now some animal organizations describe producers of "uncrated veal" as being part of a "revolution," and publish lists of restaurants serving it.



Some large animal charities are even collaborating with the animal-using industry to create high-profile media initiatives and labeling schemes that give this “new and improved” veal a positive image.

The changes in the industry have had a measurable impact on sales. D'Agostino, the 20-store supermarket chain in New York, said that its sales of veal have jumped 35 percent since it began carrying "certified humane" veal only. New York Times, April 2007



Now that both the dairy and veal industry and some large animal charities are promoting this new "kinder, gentler" form of veal production, sales are going up.

It seems these animal advocacy organizations have called off the boycott against veal.

**BOYCOTT
OVER**

Transport

When their output declines, typically within two to six years, nearly all cows used for dairy production are transported to auction.



Often suffering from painful udder infections (mastitis) and osteoporosis, "spent" cows suffer greatly during transport to slaughterhouses. Many are not even capable of walking upon arrival.





Disoriented and weakened, calves are also prone to collapse.




At the auction, cows and calves are driven into a bidding ring using sticks or canes and electric prods.



The noise, violence, and over-stimulation of this process is traumatic for these peaceful animals, who become highly stressed when separated from their herd.

Premature Death

A white industrial air gun, commonly used in slaughterhouses for stunning livestock. It has a cylindrical body with a handle and a nozzle at the front. A blue hose is attached to the top. The device is shown against a black background.

At slaughter, most cows and veal calves are stunned by having a metal bolt shot into their skulls. Next, they are raised up by shackles attached to a rear leg, and then their throats are slit while their hearts are still beating in order to push out the blood.

Because the stunning process is designed to make sure that the animal's heart remains beating, it is not uncommon for cows and calves to still be conscious while their throats are cut open.



**Can any of this be fairly
considered respectful,
compassionate or humane?**

The truth of the matter

is that each purchase of dairy products or veal directly contributes to more individuals being brought into existence who will endure confinement, social deprivation, mutilation, reproductive manipulation, indignity and premature death.



The truth of the matter


is that a recent United Nations report identified animal agribusiness as the number one cause of greenhouse gas impact--more than all cars, trucks, buses, trains, ships and planes combined.

**This is the inescapable reality
of the dairy and veal industry.**

We can do better.



Permitted to exist free of exploitation and slaughter, cows can live 25 years or more.

A photograph of a brown cow and a brown calf in a green field. The cow is on the left, and the calf is on the right. They are facing each other with their noses touching. The cow has a yellow tag in its ear. The text "They have strong familial bonds, just like other animals." is overlaid on the top right of the image.

**They have strong familial
bonds, just like other
animals.**

**These vulnerable creatures
deserve our respect, and
our protection.**

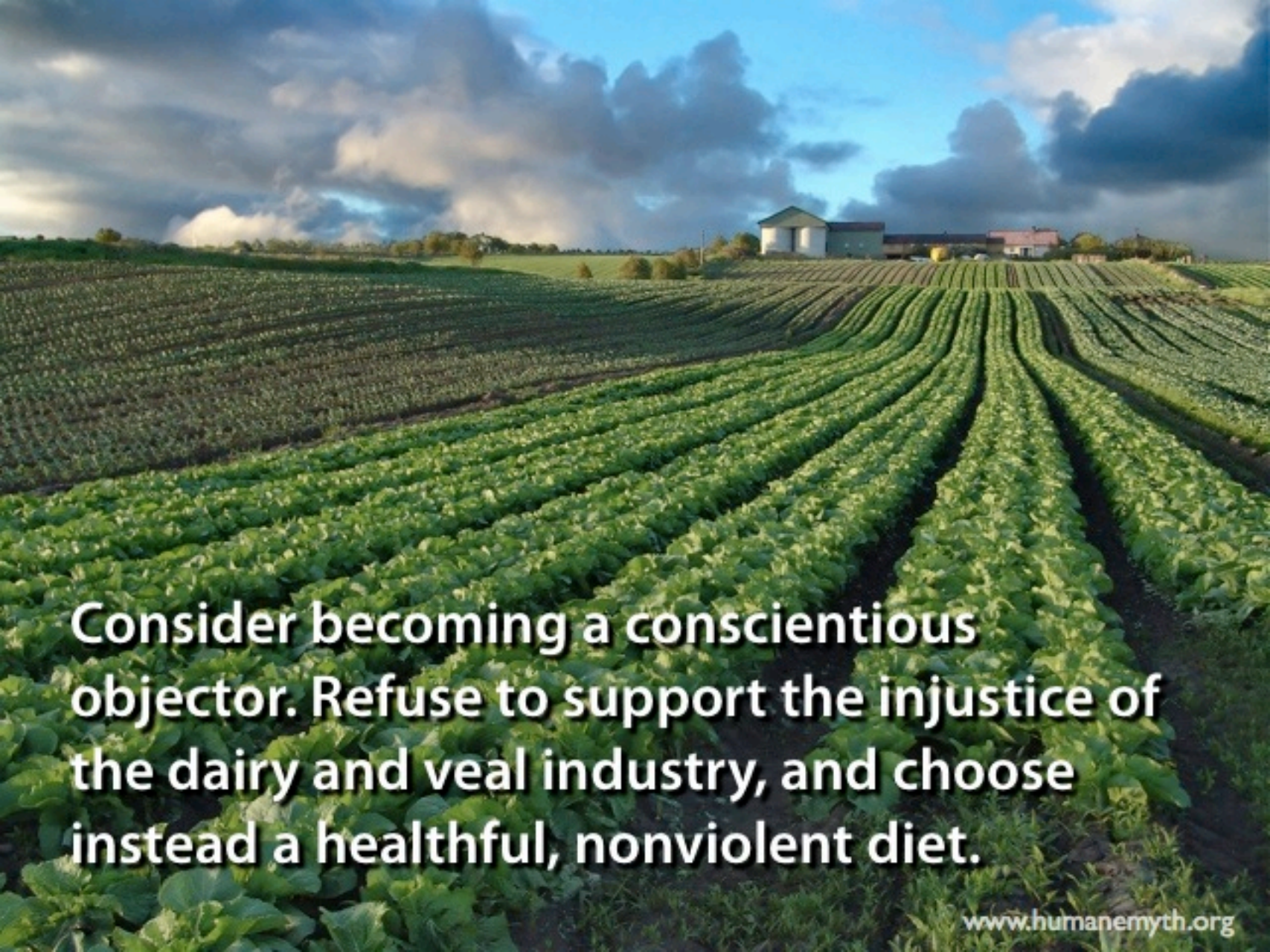


By eliminating dairy and other animal products from our diet, we can play a very real part in creating a more peaceful world.





**Today, there
are so many
high quality,
healthy
alternatives.**

A wide-angle photograph of a vast agricultural field. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by neat, parallel rows of green leafy crops, likely lettuce or similar vegetables, stretching towards the horizon. The rows are separated by dark, tilled soil. In the background, a large, multi-story farm building with a white facade and a dark roof is visible, situated on a slight rise. The sky is filled with large, dramatic, grey and white clouds, with patches of blue sky visible. The overall scene conveys a sense of organized, large-scale farming.

Consider becoming a conscientious objector. Refuse to support the injustice of the dairy and veal industry, and choose instead a healthful, nonviolent diet.

Don't buy into the humane myth!

www.HumaneMyth.org

Special thanks to:

**Harold Brown
FarmKind
www.farmkind.org**

**Cayce Mell
Patty Mark**

www.HumaneMyth.org