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# COMPASSIONATE FRIEND



Journal of Beauty Without Cruelty - India  
An International Educational Charitable Trust for Animal Rights



## In this issue:

Wool

*Choona in paan*

Leather exports

Nutrition and health

Animals in entertainment

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## Editorial

### Skin exports going hell-for-leather

**C**hennai may become a world leather hub. Leather products manufactured in the country include trunks, suitcases and caps. The country also produces leather upholstery items such as sofa and car seat covers.

Leather exports rose about 10 percent in July, according to the Council for Leather Exports. The [indianleatherportal.com](http://indianleatherportal.com) website boasts that 65 million hides and 170 million skins are produced annually. The industry is among the country's top eight export earners and annual exports are poised to touch about 2 billion US dollars; and India is endowed with 10 percent of the world's "raw material."

Even an animal's skin has utility if it is part of a profitable business. Fashionably speaking, the statement necklace may be *de rigueur* in N. America. Handmade brass fish-hooks form the closures of leather lashings, the jewellery equivalent of unisex heritage and nostalgia Americana. The leather may be imported from India, if not the finished product.

Leather is an integral part of the meat business, not a by-product, since the value of skins is taken into account when animals are bought and sold.

Soft leather is being used for halters, shirts, skirts and dresses as well as pants, jackets and coats in the West. Fashion runways in New York and

Europe are sometimes awash in bright skins: Lanvin in lime, DKNY in creams and corals, Hilfiger in red, Givenchy in patchwork and yellow, and Dior in red.

The leathers are sometimes perforated with patterns, sometimes slick and shiny, sometimes metallic. And then there are the specialty skins: python, crocodile, alligator and ostrich. Calfskin is often treated to resemble those skins. The trends have been translated around the world, since we tend to accept western leadership in all things, good or bad.

The recent leather craze may be traced to the Gap's "everybody in leather" ad campaign. The Gap uses leather from India, the largest producer of leather in the world with 300 million cattle, despite cows being sacred, leading to abuse of the animals and a black market.

Gap, which uses Indian leather for 10 per cent of its leather garments, said it expected its vendors to follow laws and treat animals in a humane way after it was targeted by animal rights activists.

The company has prohibited the use of leather from animals from India or China (also criticised for abuse of animals) until further notice, and will require its suppliers in these countries to use imported leathers, according to a spokesman.

But there are other such companies, and wearing leather

is like wearing fur, but there are compassionate alternatives.

In India, it is illegal to kill healthy young cattle, so unscrupulous dealers often maim healthy animals.

Workers may break animals' legs so that they can be declared fit for slaughter. Cattle are tied together with ropes through their nostrils and beaten mercilessly in forced death-marches over hundreds of kilometres in searing heat. India's leather industry may be the world's cruellest.



Courtesy: A. Dasgupta

During these marches, cattle collapse from hunger and exhaustion, but handlers force them along by snapping the bones in their tails and rubbing tobacco or chillies into their eyes.

Cattle are crammed on top of each other into lorries and endure long, hot trips to slaughterhouses in Mumbai, Kerala, and a few other states where their mass slaughter is legal.

They are smuggled to Pakistan and, though the slaughter of cattle is frowned on in our culture, it is estimated that at least 25,000 cows are smuggled into Bangladesh every day from West Bengal. Traffickers truck the cattle to West Bengal from as far as north India, and rustling is lucrative. It may be easier to convert living animals into meat and hides in Islamic nations, where the cow is not sacred, and remains only for Bollywood to produce exciting, romanticized movies complete with latter-day cowboys, Indians and rustlers before Hollywood does.

The leather industry is an example of Martin Heidegger's philosophy, according to which the human race, rather than recognizing its place in the world, its status as one being among all other beings, has turned the world into something that exists for and because of it. Through our arrogance, we have turned the planet, and everything it contains, into an expendable resource. We treat the world and everything in it as something to be consumed. Heidegger said, "One type of being, the human being, believes that all of Being exists for it." The world exists to be used — by us — because we give the world its frame of reference, being what Descartes called "thinking things."



## Animals in entertainment

By Khurshid Bhathena

Animal activists do not patronise circuses with animals and other animal performances, go for joy rides or in processions involving animals. Nor do they attend animal races and fights, knowing that the animals involved are subjected to torture, hunger and fear.

Beauty Without Cruelty got camels on Mumbai's Juhu beach banished, but it was not enough. Horses, ponies and camels give joy-rides on other beaches, in city parks and hill stations. Foreign tourists go sight-seeing on India's elephants and, in Sikkim, ride trails on yaks.

Animals and birds are used as gimmicks for political rallies, protests and other functions. Also as live mascots, and for promotions like elephants carrying advertising banners for soap.

The Indian temple elephant is a tormented creature. A hundred and one decorated temple elephants participate in the *Gajamela* pageant at Thrissur, carrying ceremonial umbrellas. Elephants of the *Ponnet Bhagavathy* temple in Kadavanthra have been made to play cricket.

In Kerala, despite protests, elephants have been intoxicated with alcohol and made to dance on the beach for as long as seven hours, to attract foreign tourists.

Elephants, horses and camels traditionally feature in religious and wedding processions. The bursting of crackers en route scare these animals, who go berserk sometimes. This happened during a religious procession in Pune, causing a horse to kill a five-year-old girl by kicking her in the head.

Animal races involving oxen are illegal, but state governments promote them all the same. Over-driven bulls get injured, as do drivers and spectators who die sometimes. Although a judgement, delivered in 2008, banned bullock- and horse-cart races in Maharashtra, there has been no success in preventing bullock-cart racing because politicians organise them to gain rural support. Held in the name of culture and tradition, these races are mere gambling and publicity stunts.

Similarly, buffalo races called *Kanbalan* are held in muddy Keralan fields.

### Rural Olympics

A "Rural Olympics" is organised in Uttar Pradesh with participants from Haryana, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. It features bullock-cart races and kite-flying.

In Punjab, around ₹50,000 per month is spent on feeding a bull almonds, fruits, milk, butter and *ghee* (cattle-cannibalism?) which participates in the bullock-cart racing at Kila Raipur. Farmers are attracted by the prize money and the prestige associated with the ownership of a winning bull.

Competitions in which pairs of bulls are made to drag stones weighing up to three and a half tons take place in Andhra Pradesh.

Races involving other animals such as camels, donkeys and elephants are organised at fairs. Possibly the worst of these are the camel races at the annual Pushkar Fair in Rajasthan, where up to a dozen people sit on a camel which is made to race other camels with as many riders.

In 1988, BWC persuaded the Government to prohibit the use of hares, classified as wildlife, for greyhound coursing and racing, but it has not stopped the coursing clubs at Phagwara, Punjab, from organising meets where pairs of greyhounds chase and catch live rabbits to tear them apart.

The Calcutta Racing Pigeon Club is the oldest in India, with the added "distinction" of featuring descendants of pigeons left behind by no less than the British! About 1,200 specially-bred pigeons perform nationally from November to March. Their three months' training involves trial runs of two kms going up to 70 kms. The birds that survive this stress and strain automatically learn to tackle hazards like predators, and are made to participate in long-distance races, for which they are taken to starting points by trains and released to fly home.

Intense cruelties are associated with horse-racing behind the scenes: hundreds suffer from

colic and die prematurely; the preparation they undergo is extremely stressful since their capacities are stretched to their limits; they are often subjected to drug abuse; a fractured leg means a bullet in the head.

Many horses die, or are maimed for life, during equestrian sports' endurance rides. Horses and dogs belonging to the police are made to rehearse over and over for ceremonial performances.

Polo, using horses and even elephants, is played clandestinely in Jaipur and Delhi.

Illegal partridge- and cock-fights are patronised in parts of India including its capital. Razor-sharp knives, three to four inches long, are tied to the birds' feet, and they are taught to fight and kill. The Calcutta *Asil* Club (*asil* means "fighting cock" in Urdu) hosts cock-fight tournaments regularly. In Andhra Pradesh, under the state's political patronage, bets totalling upto ₹50 crores are placed on such fights. Kshatriya men are proud of participating in cock-fights, and a prize cock may fetch ₹40,000.

Bulbul-, cock- and buffalo-fights are organised during *Bhogali Bihu*, Assam's harvest festival. Although banned, buffalo fights are also allowed by the Himachal Pradesh Government at the annual Sair Fair, near Shimla. Buffaloes, bulls, cows and rams are made to fight their own kinds, resulting in lacerated

stomachs and gouged eyes. There is a ban on bullfights in Goa since 1996, in which specially-reared and trained bulls fought and gored each other to death. These bullfights were called *dhirio*.

Animals are always at a disadvantage in their human



The La Martiniere schools at Kolkata and Lucknow were founded, for colonial European children, by one General Claude Martin. It is said that he made his fortune at cock-fighting. The scene above shows this aspect of our "culture" is still alive among certain classes. Photo: Courtesy www.flickr.com

encounters. *Jallikattu* (vaulting the bull) is a bull-fight held in Tamil Nadu. With the blessings of state politicians, intoxicated bulls with sharpened horns, enraged by the chilli powder thrown in their eyes, are let loose in a huge crowd. As at every such event, one or two persons are gored to death and about 100 injured, so the court ruled that the organisers must set ₹2 crores aside as an insurance cover.

### BWC action

BWC got the Government to ban the training and use of tigers, lions, panthers, bears and monkeys in Indian circuses, but our campaign against the use of elephants, dogs, Russian cats, camels, horses and birds

continues. We therefore need to discourage people, particularly children, from visiting them, and to promote circuses without animals.

Magic shows commonly include animals like white pigeons, rabbits, dogs, birds and goldfish, which are housed and trained to perform no differently from circus animals.

India is no longer the land of snake-charmers and dancing bears. Their numbers have decreased considerably because most tourists have stopped patronising them. Snake-and-mongoose fights, also banned, are as bad but it usually takes so long for the wildlife and police personnel to arrive at the scene that the fight gets

over and the group packs up and leaves by that time.

Undoubtedly intimidation, hunger and fear lie behind monkeys performing silly tricks, dogs jumping through rings of fire, and parrots in tiny cages picking up tarot cards.

We must never stop to watch or give money if we want to see an end to roadside performances. Incidentally, the Alpenliebe Sweets' unique role-reversal advertisement, created by McCann-Erickson, featuring a *madari* and a monkey, is delightful, and may make people think.

 *Khurshid Bhatena is BWC's trustee and honorary secretary.*





## Nutrition and health de-mystified

By Parag Chaurasia

A healthy diet is predominantly based on a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains — consumed in their unprocessed, unrefined and natural state. "Whole" foods are foods that are unprocessed and unrefined, or processed and refined as little as possible before consumption.

A healthy diet should limit the intake of refined and processed/packaged foods, and eliminate the intake of animal-based foods: milk, dairy products, eggs, meat and seafood. Fruits and vegetables (like carrots, tomatoes, oranges, green leafy vegetables) offer additional health benefits, as they are rich in antioxidants.

Wash fruits, vegetables and grains thoroughly before consumption. There is no need to restrict your self to three or four meals a day. Consume fruits and vegetables in between, whenever hungry, in their raw form and, as far as possible, without peeling or removing seeds.

One should not favour expensive or imported fruits. Seasonal fruits, locally- and indigenously-grown, are healthy. Oranges, carrots, and tomatoes, guavas, bananas and apples are a few examples of fruits and

vegetables that may easily be carried with us to school or work.

Fresh green coconut water is an ideal health drink. Fresh lime and water (with little or no sugar) is another.

It is a good idea to have small quantities of seeds and nuts, such as sesame seeds, almonds and walnuts.

A whole-foods plant-based diet is the one which includes whole wheat flour (instead of white flour), dark brown rice (instead of polished rice), whole wheat bread (instead of white bread), and fresh tomatoes (instead of tomato sauce).

Control your intake of refined sugar, salt and vegetable oils, both directly and through processed food items such as pastries, cakes, ice-creams, crackers, chips and sweets. Our diet should consist of a broad range of whole fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Having a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes/pulses, mushrooms, seeds and nuts is the key. Together, they provide necessary nutrients and promote good health.

In general, milk, milk-based products (butter, cheese, buttermilk, milk shakes, ice-creams, etc.), meat, eggs and other animal-based foods contain cholesterol, animal protein and high levels of (saturated) fat. Animal-based foods contain no fibre and are poor in antioxidants. Multiple

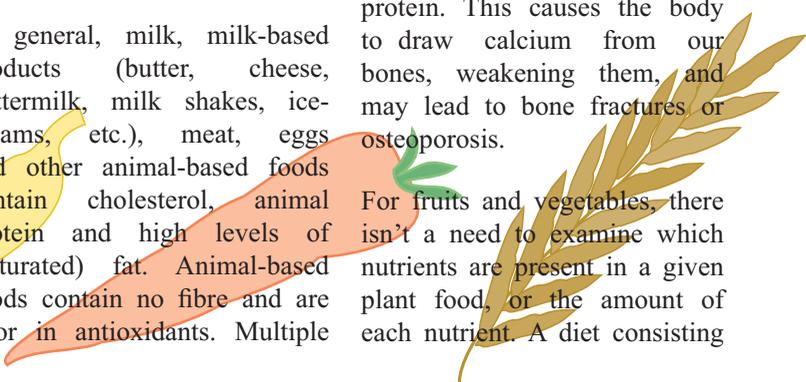
research studies have shown that these foods increase the risk of chronic diseases including various cancers, heart diseases, obesity, diabetes, autoimmune diseases, osteoporosis, kidney stones and more.

On the other hand, plant foods contain no cholesterol or animal protein, and are low in fat. Dietary fibre, vital for good health, is exclusively found in plant-based foods. Antioxidants are almost exclusively found in plants. A whole-foods plant-based diet significantly reduces the occurrence of disease and provides health benefits, whereas even small increases in the consumption of animal-based foods have been shown to be associated with increased disease risk.

There is ample scientific evidence showing that animal protein intake is associated with a wide variety of diseases, whereas proteins from plant foods promote good health. Plant foods such as green leafy vegetables, pulses, soy and whole grains are good sources of protein.

Our metabolic acid increases with high intake of animal protein. This causes the body to draw calcium from our bones, weakening them, and may lead to bone fractures or osteoporosis.

For fruits and vegetables, there isn't a need to examine which nutrients are present in a given plant food, or the amount of each nutrient. A diet consisting





of a variety of whole plant-based foods provides all the nutrients (except vitamins D3 and B12) we need. One does not need to spend time analyzing or measuring nutrient levels. This kind of dietary management is unnecessary, and can lead to confusion, focusing on issues which are not so important to the big picture of health.

In the case of processed and packaged foods, we should read the nutrition facts label and ingredients list to ensure that the amounts of sodium, fat, and refined or added sugars are restricted. They should contain whole grains, good amounts of fibre and no saturated animal or vegetable fats.

To achieve optimum health, one should strive to maximize the intake of whole plant-based foods, minimizing the intake of processed and refined plant foods, and eliminating the intake of animal-based foods.

As mentioned, investigating isolated nutrients may be misleading. More often than not, such micro-analysis is not needed. A diet consisting of a variety of whole plant foods will provide Calcium, just as it will proteins and other vitamins and minerals. Green leafy vegetables, sesame seeds, finger millet, dark molasses, almonds, chick peas, beans and pulses are a few examples of foods rich in Calcium.

Our dietary cholesterol intake should be zero mg/day. It is unhealthy to eat foods which

have above zero mg cholesterol. Higher blood cholesterol levels indicate increased disease risk. Saturated fats, dietary cholesterol and animal protein increase blood cholesterol levels, animal protein being most effective in doing so. Blood cholesterol levels go up as the intake of milk, meat, eggs and fish increases. On the other hand plant foods, besides containing no cholesterol, help reduce the amount of cholesterol made by our bodies.

A superior quality of life means staying at the top of our physical and mental health throughout life. Strict adherence to a whole-foods plant-based diet helps us stay fit and healthy even in the latter part of our life, and enjoy every stage of it.

A whole-foods plant-based diet can be tasty. You can still have custards and ice-creams made at home. Plenty of recipes are available for preparing delicious food items without using animal milk, eggs or their derivatives. But just like any other change, it will take some time for you to get used to this healthy-food habit and lifestyle. There is no reason to think of sacrifice or deprivation. It should be thought of as embracing a new paradigm of life for which our body will thank us every day. The message cannot be simpler than this: eat as many varieties of whole fruits, vegetables and whole grains as you can, and you will receive amazing health benefits.

Besides a healthy diet, the following factors deserve attention:

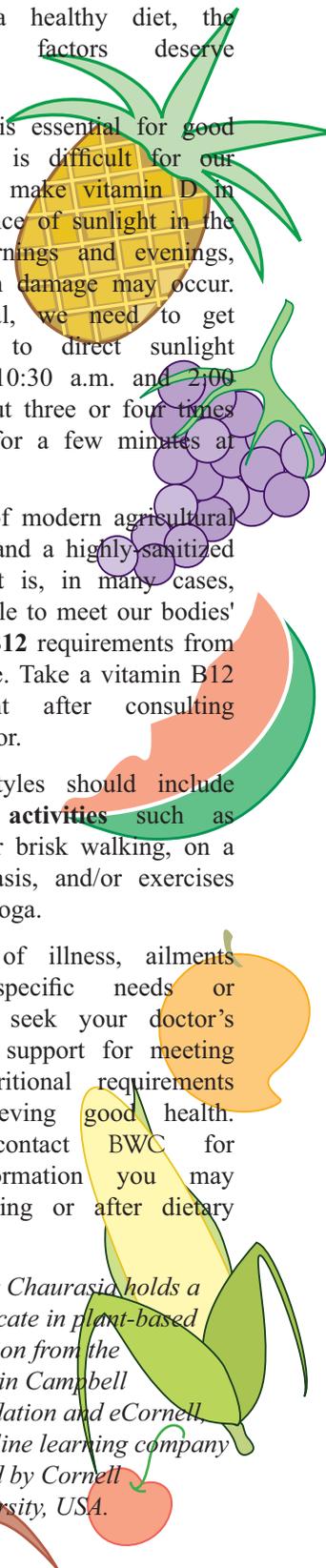
**Sunlight** is essential for good health. It is difficult for our bodies to make vitamin D in the presence of sunlight in the early mornings and evenings, when skin damage may occur. In general, we need to get exposure to direct sunlight between 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., about three or four times a week, for a few minutes at a time.

Because of modern agricultural practices and a highly-sanitized lifestyle it is, in many cases, not possible to meet our bodies' **vitamin B12** requirements from food alone. Take a vitamin B12 supplement after consulting your doctor.

Our lifestyles should include **physical activities** such as jogging or brisk walking, on a regular basis, and/or exercises such as yoga.

In case of illness, ailments and/or specific needs or concerns, seek your doctor's help and support for meeting your nutritional requirements and achieving good health. Please contact BWC for any information you may need, during or after dietary transition.

 *Parag Chaurasia holds a certificate in plant-based nutrition from the T. Colin Campbell Foundation and eCornell, an online learning company owned by Cornell University, USA.*



## Fact, not fancy

### Lime

By Nirmal Nishchit

The word "lime" has three meanings: it is a sour-tasting fruit; a sticky adhesive used to snare birds; and Calcium Carbonate or CaCO<sub>3</sub>.

Calcium Carbonate can be of mineral or animal origin: limestone and calcite found in rocks, or from fresh water and marine invertebrate organisms' shells such as molluscs, oysters, clams, mussels, snails, cuttlefish, plankton, jellyfish, sponges, coral, pearls and even eggshells.

Calcium Carbonate found in calcite and aragonite can be of marine or non-marine origin, whereas Calcium Carbonate of mineral origin is also found in chalk, marble, vaterite and travertine. Hard water is a result of Calcium Carbonate such as limestone and chalk. Agricultural lime or garden lime, made from pulverized limestone or chalk and other minerals, is used as an additive to reduce soil acidity; and gypsum is used as a source of Calcium for plants.

Heating Calcium Carbonate removes Carbon Dioxide and converts it to Calcium Oxide. Also known as quicklime, burnt lime and pure lime, Calcium Oxide is inedible.

Treating Calcium Oxide with plenty of pure water in a controlled environment is known as the slaking of lime.

It produces Calcium Hydroxide / edible lime / pickling lime or *choona* / *choonam*, commonly used in *paan*. It is also used in the production of the sweetmeat called *petha*.

### Calcium Hydroxide

Combining Calcium Hydroxide with chalk produces a low-cost material for whitewashing walls and disinfecting drains. In fact, Calcium Hydroxide is much more widely used. However, there is a chance of its source being limestone, and therefore mineral in origin.

The tanning industry uses Calcium Hydroxide to treat hides and skins. The food industry uses it for processing water, e.g. soft drinks. The petroleum refining industry uses it as an oil additive. The road construction industry uses it for soil stabilization. The paint industry uses it as a filler in the preparation of dry mixes. The paper industry uses it as a coating pigment.

The pharmaceuticals industry uses Calcium Carbonate as an ingredient in antacids and toothpastes, and as a calcium supplement. Calcium of shell origin – termed organic – is utilised in allopathy, ayurveda, siddha, unani and homeopathic products. (Calcium supplements derived only from algae / seaweed can be vegan.)

The glass industry uses both Calcium Oxide and Calcium Carbonate.

The chemical compound Calcium Carbide is produced

from a lime and coke / coal / carbon mixture. Calcium Carbide (popularly known as *masala*), carbide gas, acetylene, ethephon and ethylene gas are banned by the Government of India for the purpose of ripening fruit artificially.

Acetylene (mentioned above), mainly used for gas welding, is made from Calcium Carbide. Calcium Cyanamide is also made from Calcium Carbide and used as a fertiliser, in steel-making processes and carbide lamps.

Lime mortar consists of lime, sand and water. Where limestone is unavailable, sea-shells are utilised. Coral, poached off the Tuticorin coast, is said to be illegally used as building blocks instead of granite, raw material for the preparation of lime, mortar and cement and for the manufacture of Calcium Carbide.

### Choona in paan



Available at your neighbourhood *paan* shop.  
Photo: Courtesy Rameezraja Tamboli

The heart-shaped betel-leaf / *Piper betel* / *paan* creeper is cultivated and consumed in many parts of South-east Asia. It is also called *paan* when filled with ingredients and, typically, folded into a triangle called *gilouree*,

ready for chewing pleasure, as a stimulant or digestive, be it *saada*, *meetha*, with dry fruit or chocolate.

Betel-leaf mixture / *paan masala*, spiced / scented chewing tobacco / *tambaku*, *gutka*, *mukhwās*, scented areca / betel-nut / *supari* and other *paan* ingredients can contain, or be combined with, lime-paste / *choona* along with other animal-derived substances such as silver foil / *varkh*, musk / *kasturi* or some other animal origin fixative in the scents / *bahar*. And, if rose petal preserve / *gulkhand* is an ingredient it could contain honey, coral / *praval pishti*, pearl / *moti pishti* and *varkh*.

Betel quid: *Paan* leaf smeared with *choona* to which pieces of *supari* and other ingredients such as *kattha* and tobacco leaves are added. The *paan* is then wrapped into a *gilouree*, *varkh* could be applied after which it is chewed.

## *Paan* containing *choona* non-vegetarian

By P. Krishnan

In June 2010, I visited a *choona* or lime factory in Kodungallur, Kerala, and had a discussion with the owner. He told me that the primary source of *choona* (Calcium Carbonate) other than from mining (limestone) was from marine organisms, i.e. sea shells or *kakka* in Malayalam.

These living shells or marine animals are mainly collected by women from the seashores and backwaters of Kerala. Collecting *kakka* is a common occupation in the coastal belt

Catechu / *kattha* is the bark of a tree, imparting a red colour to *paan*.

Chewing tobacco / *khaini*: Tobacco and *choona* mixed in the palm of the hand. Ready-mixes (of snuff or *snus*) are flavoured and scented.

*Gutka* / *gutkha*: Preparation of *supari*, powdered tobacco, *choona*, *kattha* and other ingredients.

*Manipuri* tobacco: A mixture of *supari*, *choona* and tobacco to which some other ingredients may be added.

*Mawa*: A mixture of *supari* pieces, tobacco and *choona*.

*Mukhwās* / *variyaali*: Consists of coloured, aromatic, sugar-coated (possibly covered with shellac) fennel / *saunf* / *ajwain*, sesame / *til*, coriander / *dhania*, pumpkin and other seeds, betel nut slivers and candied papaya, to which essential oils such as peppermint

and rose have been added. It is sometimes used as one of the ingredients of *meetha paan*, which may have been smeared with *choona*.

*Naswar* is a mixture of powdered tobacco, *choona* and indigo (plant).

*Paan masala* is a preparation of processed *supari*, betel-leaf dust, *choona*, *kattha* and other ingredients such as menthol, and treated as a mouth freshener.

*Qiwam* is basically nicotine derived from tobacco, which gives the consumer a “kick.” Spices, herbs, saffron, menthol, incense (containing musk and amber), *varkh* etc. are added sometimes.

*Zarda*: Broken tobacco leaves are boiled in water with *choona* and spices, then dried and coloured with vegetable dyes. Usually mixed with *supari* and spices for chewing.

of the Arabian Sea, including places like Kollam, Alappuzha and Ernakulam Districts.

The flesh of the live creatures inside the shells is scooped out and sold in seafood markets, and the shells are sold to regional *choona* factories in huge quantities.



Women sorting shells. Photo: Courtesy Women & Wetlands Research Group

At these factories, the shells are mixed with charcoal and baked in kilns. A foul smell is emitted during baking because the shells have a thin membrane-like coating. Twenty-four hours later, the shells are transformed into *ithil* – the local name for *choona*.

*Choona* is mainly used as edible lime, an ingredient in *paan*; an insecticide, especially in tea estates; a whitewash for walls; a cleaning agent in waste-water treatment systems.

 P. Krishnan is BWC's Ernakulam representative.



## Pulling the wool over our eyes

By Ranjit Konkar

For some people, the mere presence of an animal ingredient seems insufficient evidence of cruelty having taken place. They point to things like wool, milk, and honey as examples of animal-derived substances whose production, they feel, involves no cruelty. While the cruelties involved in the production of these substances may compare favourably to those involved in the production of meat and fur, they are undeniably present. The problem with animal ingredients is that they are always representative of an imposition by humans upon animals. It is only the degree and nature of harm caused that varies from substance to substance.

All members of the animal kingdom possess a pain-causing mechanism that aids their survival instinct by signalling the presence of a harmful organism. It is impossible to obtain any substance from their bodies without causing pain or harming them. They do not wish to part with their physical parts or materials. Animals sense impending intrusions and seek to flee immediately. Therefore, it is unlikely that any substance may be derived from an animal without using force, and without drawing protests from it. To obtain wool, we impose the discomfort of insufficient insulation on the sheep (Nature's intended user of the wool) which has to be

forcibly held down while being sheared. Some may debate the magnitude of the suffering caused, but the point remains that an unsolicited and usually painful intrusion and imposition is made by humans on animals every time we obtain a substance from them.

A separate point, but one of paramount importance, is that of animal consent. We do not take their consent for any of our interactions with them. Their answer to the question of willingness of participation should, however, be obvious from their physical struggles to resist the treatment and their tendency to flee situations where they suspect impending human intrusion. Not even the most artful of persons engaged in any activity dealing with animals would argue that the animal willingly subjects itself to the treatment. If we needed protection from the elements, Nature would have provided us woolly skins — we wouldn't have to cut wool off sheep.

### Specially bred and tortured

Sheep were one of the first animals subjected to cross breeding — and now genetic manipulation — for the production of more wool. In 1977, Raymond Ltd. was the first to introduce Embryo Transfer Technology in India at its sheep breeding farm in Dhule, Maharashtra.

Global wool production is approximately 1.3 million tonnes per year, of which 60 percent goes into apparel. Australia, China and New Zealand supply

54 percent of the world's wool. Australian Merino sheep are specially bred to have wrinkly skin, resulting in extra wool production but often causing the sheep's death due to heat. In order to keep the animals free of flies and infections, lambs' tails are docked and huge strips of flesh removed from their rumps called mulesing. Shearers work very fast, nicking animals often. When wool output decreases, the animals are shipped live to the Middle East for slaughter. In tightly-packed conditions for up to a month, those that survive the nightmare of wallowing in their own wastes suffer injuries, sea-sickness and diseases. Many become blind due to a build-up of ammonia as a result of poor ventilation. Those born *en route* are trampled to death.

### Wool is not a by-product

Sheep in India also contribute to our wool consumption. Sheared regularly, they are sent for slaughter long before their natural life spans are over, when they no longer produce sufficient wool to make economic sense. It is obvious that the meat and wool industries are interdependent. When sheep are sold, the fleece is paid for as well, so wool is not a by-product of the mutton trade.

As it is possible to extract wool from sheep without killing them, the use of wool has been considered with leniency as compared to leather and fur. However, this is not to say that its use is encouraged in any way. It is discouraged by Beauty Without Cruelty, particularly as

the hair that is removed from the raw hides while processing goes into making *kambals* (blankets) and other woollen products — which proves that not all wool is obtained by shearing live sheep.

### Carpets

Carpets, tapestries, and other items use large quantities of wool. In India, the natural fibres used in carpets are wool, silk, jute, coir, bamboo, sisal/cord, whereas the synthetic fibres are nylon, polypropylene, polyester and acrylic. Most of the production utilises wool and, in comparison, hardly any non-animal fibres are used. Export statistics from the Carpet Export Promotion Council state

that ₹3,233.27 crores worth of handmade woollen carpets, rugs, druggets, dhurries, etc., including some cotton carpets, were exported during 2007-2008, whereas, during the same period, ₹221.87 crores worth of silk carpets and only ₹69.59 crores worth of staple/synthetic carpets were exported from India.

Bhadohi, Mirzapur and Varanasi support the largest handloom carpet industry in the world, with 2.5 million artisans. Ninety percent of Indian carpets are produced in this region.

It is a pity that a leading organization working for animals sells works of famous artists,

woven into carpets, together with the Fashion Design Council of India.

Child labour is a long-standing issue in the carpet industry, similar to the silk industry, giving rise to another good reason not to buy/use woollen carpets. Four labels or marks address the issue of child labour together with the well-being of carpet workers: Care & Fair, Rugmark, Kaleen and Step.



 *Dr. Ranjit Konkar is an associate senior faculty member at the National Institute of Design as well as a BWC trustee.*

## Wool and woollen fabrics' content



The term **worsted** refers to fabrics that contain wool. Most products that contain new wool carry the **Wool mark** logo, widely recognised as a symbol of 100 percent wool content. **Wool mark blend** and **Wool blend** are other logos used. They are similar to **Wool mark**,

but the wool content is lower. Wool is used in knitwear, garments, headgear, shawls, blankets, wall-hangings, carpets, upholstery, insulation, stuffing for baseballs, covers for tennis balls and pool table baize.

**Alpaca/Llama/Guanaco** wools are of South American camelids. The camelid is a camel-like animal.

**Angora** can be the hair of the Angora goat, called **Mohair**, or the fine light hair of the Angora rabbit blended with wool. This hair/fur taken off the pelts of slaughtered Angora rabbits is used in the making of Angora wool items. Therefore "Angora wool" from rabbits is actually rabbit fur.

**Astrakhan:** Wavy fur made from the wool of young lambs.

**Camel hair in woollen fabrics:** Woollen fabrics manufactured by many well-known companies have been found to be mixed with camel hair.

**Cashmere:** Fine downy wool growing beneath the outer hair of the Kashmir goat. It is similar to *Pashmina* wool.

**Chiengora/dog hair:** The word is a combination of *chien* (French for "dog") and the word *angora* (for wool). Yarn or wool spun from dog hair is furry, soft, and similar in appearance to *angora*.

**Felt:** A fabric made of matted and compressed animal hair, such as wool or animal fur, which could sometimes be mixed with vegetable or non-animal fibres. Felt made without animal hair is also available.

**Flannel:** A soft woven cloth of wool, or a blend of wool and cotton or non-animal fibres.

**Flannelette:** A cotton cloth processed to resemble flannel.

**Gabardine:** A twilled cloth made of wool; it could also contain cotton or rayon.

**Ghongri:** A jute-like fabric woven from goat hair used by local people at hill stations as a blanket-cum-raincoat.

**Pashmina:** Wool from a particular breed of goat, to obtain which the goats could have been killed. Often, Cashmere wool derived from various species of domesticated goats is passed off as *Pashmina*. This is because hardly 100 to 200 grams of fine wool is available per *pashmina/changthang* (of Leh)/*chegu* (of Himachal) goat, when shed during spring or combed by nomads in the Himalayas to supply Kashmiri weavers. The weavers often mix the wool with silk. Genetic manipulation and research under a ₹9.43 crores project funded by the World Bank, to boost production of Kashmir's famous *Pashmina* shawl, involves obtaining an embryo from a high-yielding *pashmina* goat and culturing, then transferring to a recipient animal for cloning.

**Qiviut/qiveut:** Moulded/shed, not sheared, wool of muskox — found in Canada and Alaska.

**Ragg wool** is wool blended with about 15 percent nylon. The yarn is used for making rough items like gloves.

**Shahmina:** Developed to replace *shahtoosh*, this wool is taken off baby cashmere goats.

**Shah-mina:** Shawls made from a mixture of *shahtoosh/chiru* and *pashmina* wools. A new trend.

**Shahtoosh:** This is the wool from the Tibetan wild antelope or *chiru*. The lives of about three *chiru* are taken to produce a shawl weighing 100 grams, which requires 300-400 grams of wool. The trade in *shahtoosh* is banned, but continues on the Indo-Chinese border. Two bags of wool are bartered for one bag of tiger bones. Private dealers and government emporiums openly sell *shahtoosh* shawls and scarves under the "handloom" seal.

**Shalloon:** A lightweight wool or worsted twill fabric used chiefly for coat linings.

**Sheepskin/lambskin:** Sheep pelt with the fleece left on.

**Shoddy wool:** Fibres obtained (for recycling) by shredding woollen garments.

**"Synthetic" wool** is made of acrylic fibre. It is superior to actual wool in all ways — durability, comfort, affordability. Knitting and crochet can be done with wool (animal and acrylic), silk, cotton and other yarns. Synthetic wool for knitting is labelled "100% acrylic fibre." Some of the brand names for this fibre are Cashmillon, Indacryl, Acrylon, Orlon and Supacryl.

**Tweed:** A coarse woollen cloth made in a twill weave, mainly used for suits and coats.

**Vicuña wool** is the most expensive in the world, for which millions of vicuñas have been killed in South America. Vicuñas are South American camelids. Vicuñas products were banned by several countries but the wool is commercially available again now that their population has risen in Peru. Found in exorbitantly expensive suit-lengths woven with other fibres, a vicuña is first sheared by villagers when it is two years old, and every two years thereafter. Each time the animal is sheared it yields 7 to 8 ounces of fine, soft fleece.



## Around the world

### Seal import ban ends sporran tradition

The European ban on Canadian seal products imports has become effective in Scotland, marking the end of an era for Scottish kiltmakers. They are looking for alternative materials for sporrans, the purse-like pouches that have adorned their unisex national skirts for generations. They say synthetic fur substitutes or skins from muskrats, horses and rabbits lack the same appearance, to say nothing of the texture, and don't lend themselves to the blend of colours which match tartans. Kilt-making businessmen opine the missing sealskin sporran is taking away from traditional Highland dresses, and the Kilt Makers Association of Scotland has been one of the leading petitioners and critics of the European Parliament's seal products ban.



Sporran made of seal fur and leather with a woollen kilt in the background. Photo: Courtesy [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk)

Several suppliers have, however, enough seal fur stockpiled to last several months, which may be used till they run out, according to the new regulations.

Industry members hope to motivate politicians to overturn the ban, though Robert Burns, another Scottish icon, may have reminded them, "A man's a man for a' that." Sporrans are used to carry food, money and other possessions because kilts have no pockets.

Animal rights activists are pressing kilt makers to forgo all animal-based materials in sporran production, in a campaign modelled on the battle to ban imports of Canadian black bear furs for manufacturing the "bearskin" hats used by some British military units. Which side will meet its Bannockburn remains to be seen.

### The sun also sets — on bullfighting

The Parliament of Catalonia, Spain, has banned bullfighting, making Catalonia the first major region of Spain to outlaw the old Spanish "tradition," effective January 1, 2012.

Bullfighting has been "a part of Spanish culture" for centuries — at the cost of hundreds of thousands of bulls' lives each year. Outraged by the continuation of this tradition, animal groups fought to stop the cruelties that go with the "sport." Although some Catalonians are upset to see an end to this part of their culture, many around the world see it as a significant victory that may lead to more bans in the future.

Bullfighting took a historic hit, Spanish lawmakers voting 68 to 55, with nine abstaining, to ban the "sport" from the Catalonia region. The industry has been dying on its own as a result of the economic downturn, along with added help from international pressure from animal rights activists.

The WSPA joined forces with a local Catalonian group PROU, which presented over 180,000 signatures triggering Catalonia's Parliament to vote on the matter last year. This year, they brought a letter with 165,000 signatures from 120 countries in support of the ban to Ernest Benach, president of the Catalonian Parliament before the vote. Our chairperson signed, on behalf of all BWC India members, a Care2.com petition which gathered 35,000 other signatures in support of the ban.

Some see the ban as a political move, and a way for Catalonia to stand apart from the rest of the country. Others say it's a matter of ethics and animal cruelty.

"This is not an attack against Spain but evidence that we, Catalans, support and share more advanced values with the rest of Europe," said Josep Rull, a lawmaker from Convergence and Union, a Catalan party. "We can be proud to have demonstrated today that Catalonia has a more dignified and respectful society that believes in eliminating the torture and suffering of animals."



## Vegan recipe

### *Alu chi patal bhaji*

(Serves 4)

#### **Ingredients:**

- 12 washed and chopped colocasia/taro/*alu* leaves
- 1 cup chopped white radish
- ¼ cup peanuts, soaked overnight
- ¼ cup split chickpea dal
- ¼ cup cashew nuts
- ¼ cup dry coconut
- 4 tablespoons chickpea flour
- 6 tablespoons oil
- ½ teaspoon mustard seeds
- 4 green slit chillies
- 1 teaspoon chilli powder
- ¼ teaspoon asafoetida
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- ½ teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- ¾ cup tamarind-jaggery water
- ¼ cup wet coconut
- 2 tablespoons chopped coriander leaves
- Salt to taste

#### **Preparation:**

Chop fine stems of colocasia leaves and, together with leaves, radish, peanuts, chickpea dal, cashew nuts, dry coconut and 4 cups of water, pressure-cook till soft.

Whisk the colocasia mixture after removing excess water. Add chickpea flour to the water making a smooth paste.

Heat oil, add mustard seeds, chillies, chilli powder, asafoetida, turmeric, coriander seeds and curry leaves. On spluttering, add colocasia mixture, tamarind-jaggery water, salt and boil. Add chickpea paste and stir for 2 minutes.

Garnish with wet grated coconut, coriander and lime.

Serve with *bhakri* or rice.

## FYI

### WEEP FOR SHEEP

**M**eat from sheep is called mutton, whereas lamb is the flesh of a sheep that is less than a year old.

Research is carried out on sheep to study disease and perfect surgical techniques. They are also used in stem cell research. Their blood is used for bacteria culture and to produce pharmaceuticals. Sheep are specially raised for bleeding. Dolly, the sheep was the first mammal to be cloned. Cross-species experiments involve sheep and mice, and so-called scientists plan on using sheep as potential organ donors for humans.

Sheep intestines are not only made into sutures, but also musical instrument strings.

Lanolin, also called anhydrous wool fat, wax or grease is a yellow substance secreted from the sebaceous glands of wool-bearing animals and extracted from freshly-shorn wool by squeezing it between rollers prior to processing. The wool from one Merino sheep produces about 250-300 ml of wool grease. It is an emollient and emulsifier with waterproofing properties used in pharmaceutical ointments, cosmetics, toiletries, shoe polishes, softeners, lubricants, textiles, rust-preventive coatings and for cleaning percussion instrument drumheads. Cupuacu butter is the non-animal alternative to lanolin.

## BWC News & Views

### Railway tracks cut across elephant trails

**O**n 22 September 2010, Elephant Appreciation Day, seven elephants were mowed down by a speeding train in Jalpaiguri, North Bengal. BWC had sent some suggestions to the Union Minister of Environment & Forests in June, about elephants being hit by trains frequently. He forwarded them to the Indian Railways whose mascot happens to be Bholu, an elephant.

Measures such as patrolling, electric fencing, signage, hoardings, levelling steep embankments to improve visibility, and the education of drivers and staff, have reduced the number of elephants hit by trains in Assam and eliminated collisions in Uttarakhand. However, BWC feels the Railways need to forget about building under-passes and over-bridges as elephant crossings and, instead, install radar sensors, automatic speed-governing devices, scintillating light headlamps, water cannons, and high-powered binoculars in trains, and ensure that trains slow down while passing through forest areas.

On the day it was announced the elephant was to be our National Heritage Animal, the Ministry of Environment & Forests cleared an Odisha irrigation project. On being informed it would submerge a route used by Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary elephants, the state government replied it could build an over-pass for them!

## Peacock feathers

In our last issue, we were almost certain of a ban on the trade in peacock feathers. We are now told that won't come to pass because the Ministry of Environment & Forests sought comments from the state governments of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. They objected to the ban. Traffic - India and the Bombay Natural History Society were also against the ban. BWC feels that, at least, the dancers at the Commonwealth Games 2010 opening ceremony should not have adorned themselves with hundreds of peacock feathers.

## Veg Shopper's Guide discontinued

Animals are tortured, and slaughtered brutally, for various productions including meat, clothing and accessories. The so-called "by-products" of their slaughter, often worth more than the meat, are used for innumerable cosmetic and household products. Animals are also tortured ruthlessly, and finally killed, for experiments and research. Animals do not volunteer for such agony, torture or death. Few people are aware of these cruelties.

Not all products are made by torturing and killing animals. From Day One, BWC put in continuous efforts to contact companies whose products are not made by killing or torturing animals.

BWC's Veg Shopper's Guide consisted of products — cosmetics, toilet preparations and

even packaged foods — which were believed, in good faith, to be free of animal ingredients and animal testing. We had hoped the guide would make it easy for our members and consumers to adopt a vegetarian life style.

However, BWC is sorry to say we had no option but to withdraw the Veg Shopper's Guide. We do not wish to endorse products that we are no longer sure of being vegetarian, leave alone vegan.

Moreover, there was no point in BWC approaching food manufacturers to fill questionnaires up, because the Government of India had made it mandatory for all packaged foods to carry the veg/non-veg symbol.

BWC has stopped approaching cosmetic companies because it turned out to be frustrating. The majority did not co-operate in providing necessary, accurate information regarding ingredients and testing on animals. For example, a couple of VLCC outlets told us over the telephone that their products were tested on animals, whereas they had stated to BWC, in writing, that they were not. Despite three e-mails sent, they did not reply in writing.

BWC now leaves it to consumers to decide whether to eat/use products marked with the green symbol (square with dot) which is self-regulatory on the part of the manufacturer.

Those who correspond with manufacturers directly are advised to read between the lines of replies, which may be evasive or ambiguous.

Caution needs to be taken with regard to items labelled as follows:

### **Animal-friendly:**

Ambiguous wording.

### **Care for Nature:**

Ambiguous wording.

### **Cruelty-free:**

May be oblivious to the fact that killing is cruel.

### **Natural:**

Indicates not synthetic or lab-produced, but can be of animal origin.

### **No Animal Fat:**

Can contain other animal substances.

### **Organic:**

Can contain plant and animal substances.

### **Eco- and environmentally-friendly:**

Users of slaughterhouse "by-products" present themselves as such for the waste prevented — for a profit.

### **Green:**

Can contain plant and animal substances.

### **Herbal:**

Indicates the presence of herbs, but not the absence of animal-origin ingredients.

None of the above addresses the issue of testing on animals.

### **Against Animal Testing:**

Policy statement but does not indicate the product has not been tested on animals.

Marks such as the Agmark and Ecomark, and certifications such as those by ISO, ISI (BIS), AIOF, and GI have very specialised, esoteric meanings dealing in semantics. None of them concern themselves with animals or animal ingredients.



[www.bwcindia.org](http://www.bwcindia.org)

## Bike and car stickers

### बाइक व कार स्टिकर्स



Beauty Without Cruelty

has designed new bike and car stickers and

will be happy to post them to members in India.

Please quote your membership number when asking for them.

ब्यूटी विदाउट क्रुएल्टी ने

बाइक व कार के नये स्टिकर बनाये हैं व

प्रसन्नता पूर्वक सदस्यों को भेजेगी।

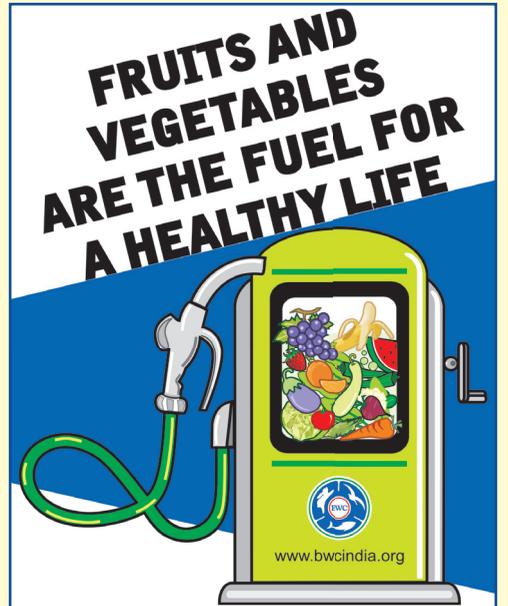
कृपया आवेदन के साथ अपनी सदस्य संख्या लिखें।

A man can live and be healthy  
without killing animals for food;  
therefore, if he eats meat,  
he participates in taking animal life  
merely for the sake of his appetite.

And to act so is immoral.

— LEO TOLSTOY

एक मनुष्य जीवित रह सकता है व स्वस्थ रह सकता है  
अपने भोजन के लिये पशुओं की हत्या किए बगैर;  
इसलिये यदि वह मांस भक्षण करता है  
तो वह पशु हत्या में भागीदार बनता है  
केवल अपनी क्षुधा पूर्ती के लिये।  
और ऐसा करना अनैतिक है। — लियो टॉल्स्टॉय



Beauty Without Cruelty is a way of life which causes  
no creature of land, sea or air terror, torture or death

Beauty Without Cruelty

(An international educational charitable trust for Animal Rights)

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