



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY *for* KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

Founder-Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Vegetarianism

HARE KRISHNA MOVEMENT PROMOTES VEGETARIANISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) believe that the Earth's resources, nature, and our own bodies are all sacred gifts from God and should be treated responsibly. The Vaishnava philosophy that the Hare Krishna movement is rooted in the belief that all living beings are interrelated through Sri Krishna, the all-attractive Supreme Person and original source of all life. Krishna devotees respect animals' right to live and practice a diet that seeks to minimize violence and exploitation. Thus they see vegetarianism – with its countless documented ecological, social and health benefits – as most conducive to a compassionate, environmentally friendly and wholesome way of life.

Sometimes referred to as “the kitchen religion,” the Hare Krishna movement actively promotes the benefits of vegetarianism. Worldwide, since its founding in 1966, ISKCON has distributed more than 3 billion delicious sanctified vegetarian meals. The Krishna movement has established more than 110 vegetarian restaurants around the world and ISKCON temples host weekly Sunday open house programs that culminate in a free multi-course feast. In addition, Hare Krishna Food Relief programs provide free food to the disadvantaged through local community programs, schools, and at times of disaster. In India, 1.2 million school children are fed daily by ISKCON's Annamrita Mid-Day Meals project, which operates in partnership with the Indian government. (<http://annamrita.org>)

Krishna devotees also regularly teach vegetarian cooking classes at their temples and local universities, and several ISKCON members are authors of acclaimed cookbooks.

“The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is doing a superb job in letting people know that vegetarian food is healthful, delicious, and pleasing to the eye... they cannot be praised enough for their success in promoting the cause of vegetarianism worldwide.”

Scott Smith, Associate Editor, *Vegetarian Times*

“We are deeply appreciative of the contribution made by this (Annamrita) great movement...every day in India it provides food to over one million children healthy food and the message... of love, compassion, which is inherent in Indian civilization”

Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of India



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Australian-born chef Kurma Dasa's popular "Cooking with Kurma" series has aired on public television stations around the world, and ISKCON member Yamuna Devi broke cultural ground when she won the 1988 International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) Cookbook of the Year Award for her 800 page, "Lord Krishna's Cuisine: The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking." The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust's "Higher Taste" vegetarian cookbook has sold millions of copies.

"It is my view that the vegetarian manner of living, by its purely physical effect on the human temperament, would most beneficially influence the lot of mankind."

Albert Einstein

While some Krishna devotees are vegan, most ISKCON members are lacto vegetarians, avoiding meat, fish, and eggs, but eating dairy products. All Hare Krishna devotees oppose exploitative treatment of animals, especially the cow. Traditional Indian culture favored organic farming and gave distinctive recognition to the cow, who provides nourishing milk, and the bull, who plows fields, calling for these gentle creatures to be protected. This custom continues today at many ISKCON eco-communities, which have made cow protection a primary focus. These communities educate the public, run cruelty-free dairies, and allow well-wishers to help save cows from slaughter through an innovative "Adopt a Cow" sponsorship programs. In keeping with the Krishna conscious ideal of "simple living and high thinking," these communities make it their goal to avoid violence against animals and other selfish excesses, thus providing a model for a conscientious spiritually-centered society.

This material is available online at <http://communications.iskcon.org>

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