



World Animal Day On October 4th: Making Alternatives To Industrial Animal Production Known

To show our concern for life we will today - on World Animal Day, October 4th - consciously refrain from products that come from industrial livestock and show alternatives.

Why?

“Today’s industrial animal production is agonizing, harmful to the environment and unhealthy!” - Barbara Unmüßig, Heinrich Böll Foundation

Cattle, pigs, chickens and turkeys are fattened in large animal factories, often in record time and under cruel conditions. In many European countries, so many cows, pigs, chickens and turkeys are kept for meat needs that the farmland is insufficient to grow the food they need. Millions of tons of soy - used as concentrated feed for this factory farming - are imported from South America. Especially in the Amazon area, ever larger areas of rainforest and savannah are burned to make way for soybean plantations and cattle pastures.

Since the beginning of the year, more than 70,000 forest fires have been recorded in

Brazil, 83 percent more than in the previous year. The clouds of smoke that have been raging for weeks are eclipsing the sky even in São Paulo 2,700 kilometers away. The fires in the Amazon are not a natural disaster but a direct consequence of the growing global demand for industrially produced beef and soya. (Only 2% of cultivated soy is used for soy milk, tofu and the like, and this is mostly produced in Europe.)

The destruction of the rainforest is a disaster for us all. The trees exhale what we humans and other animals breathe. That’s how close we are to the environment. The Amazon is therefore also called the “lungs of our planet”.

In addition, the pesticides sprayed on the soybean fields contaminate rivers and fish, and make people sick. This industry causes the agony and death of animals and humans and destroys nature and the climate.

The alternative: cooperation with grazing animals for the solution of the climate crisis

We can keep animals in a very different way, in a way that helps to heal the earth. To do this, we need to recognize what natural function large grazing animals have in the biotope, and use that function properly.

Allan Savory, developer of the Holistic Grazing Management method, says, "If every farmer in the United States were to use this system, then in less than 10 years, we would return to the ground all the carbon that has been emitted into the atmosphere since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution."

The large grazing animals are herd animals. In the past, great herds moved across the pastures, dodging hunters and predators and never lingering in one place for too long. Through their short and intensive grazing they ensured that the soils of the pastures were broken up, but not overloaded and destroyed. Fertile biomass was created through the contact of grass and soil, and the soil was able to absorb rainwater and regenerate constantly. But if animals stay too long in a pasture, they compact the soil so that no water can penetrate and the soil substrate dries out and eventually erodes. It is not the animals

themselves who are responsible for the impoverished landscape, but rather the incorrect grazing management practices. Proper pasture management of livestock begins to actively move the animals again. The animals live more healthily and in a way appropriate to their species if we respect their needs. Even the meat of such animals is healthier.

There are plenty of grazing animals here in the Alentejo - sheep, goats, cows and pigs. Even chickens can be kept as grazing animals. Through proper pasture management, they can help re-greening, stopping desertification and creating a better climate. When farmers, landowners, animal lovers and consumers work together again, this is not a fairy tale, but a feasible future!

Join the Political Cafe on Sunday, 5:00 pm in the Cultural Centre of Tamera



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