

Don't Support Animal Gift Schemes

**Animal farming can cause
poverty and environmental
destruction**



Paying for farmed animals to be given to destitute communities in Africa and other hard-pressed regions might seem like the perfect gift but...

All farmed animals require proper nourishment, large quantities of water, shelter from extremes of weather and veterinary care. Such resources are in critically short supply in much of Africa. If animals are not fed, watered and cared for properly, they suffer and die.

And there are major additional welfare problems involved in providing animals to, for instance, the Horn of Africa, which in recent years has seen vast numbers of cattle perish as a result of droughts and subsequent flooding.

Animal gift schemes are, in the words of the respected conservation charity the World Land Trust, 'environmentally unsound and economically disastrous'.

Desertification and further human impoverishment follow the introduction of goats into already degraded areas. And while goats can be environmentally disastrous, cows are burdensome economically. A lactating animal needs up to 90 litres of water a day, a lot of food and veterinary treatment to cover endemic problems such as diarrhoea, mastitis and lameness.

The average British dairy farm receives thousands of pounds each year from the taxpayer, without which it would be deep in debt. If such feather-bedding is needed in the rich West, how can we expect the poorest

people on earth to cope with their animal 'gifts'? Experts report that it is many times more efficient to use available agricultural resources – land, labour, water – to feed people directly, rather than devoting such resources to fattening animals.

Some aid charities try to confront the inefficiencies of animal farming by setting up 'zero-grazing' regimes, in which the animals are permanently confined in sheds. But they still need water and food – and, in such cruel and deprived environments, can suffer high levels of disease, early infertility and premature death.

Animal Aid supporters have paid for irrigation and tree planting projects linked to a vegetarian orphanage in Kenya's Rift Valley province. Please support other such initiatives, run by agencies (listed below) that help people, animals and the environment.



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Animal Aid exposes and campaigns peacefully against all animal abuse, and promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle

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