

By Email: elisabethe@asa.org.uk

29 May 2017

Dear Ms Erwin,

Ref: A17-381845/EE/ts: Go Vegan World ad, Sunday Telegraph in February 2017

I write in response to your email of 24 May 2017 in which you advise that the ASA is in receipt of my initial submission. I note that you have clarified that the phrase "Humane milk is a myth" is an issue only insofar as it relates to the statements "The mothers, still bloody from birth" and "their daughters, fresh from their mothers' wombs but separated from them" which the complainants believe misleadingly implies that dairy calves in the UK are separated from their mothers prior to 12 hours or 24 hours.

I am writing to provide further information that specifically relates to these claims and demonstrates that what is stated in the ad does not suggest that offspring are taken prior to the recommended 12 - 24 hours after birth.

## **"Still Bloody From Birth"**

The phrase "still bloody from birth" is simply an indication that the mammal is a new mother. Mammals are bloody from birth for more than two weeks post-delivery. Every woman who has given birth is familiar with this process.

The veterinary term for the red discharge that is normal post-partum in mammals used by the dairy industry is lochia. I attach substantiating papers on which I have highlighted the relevant sections, which are quoted below:

*"Lochia is a discharge that can be seen up to 18 days p.p. It contains necrotized uterine caruncles and sloughs off in a mixture of blood from the ruptured umbilicus as well as foetal fluids with help from the myometrial contractions. It can be discharged either from the uterus (uterine lochia) or from the cervical canal and the vagina (lochia). Uterine lochia is discharged immediately after calving and contains approximately 1400-1600 ml of fluid. It is initially dark red. After 6-8 days p.p the volume has decreased to 500-600 ml and its character is brown-red and gelatinous..... Lochia from the cervical canal and the vagina is initially transparent and thereafter changes character to a more chocolate coloured discharge. Before ceasing at day 16 p.p it has a cherry red colour."*<sup>i</sup>

*"By approximately 2 weeks postpartum you should be able to palpate the entire uterus. A discharge (called "lochia") is normal during this time. It should be odorless, thick, reddish (tomato soup)"*<sup>ii</sup>

*"Fresh cows (cows that have calved recently) can have normal lochia (3-12 days postpartum)."*<sup>iii</sup>

*"This is followed by the normal passing of the lochia, which is made up of any remaining fetal fluid, blood from the umbilical vessels, and the caruncular (maternal) portion of the placenta by 14-21 days postpartum."*<sup>iv</sup>

## **“Their daughters, fresh from their mothers’ wombs but separated from them”**

The phrase “fresh from their mothers’ wombs”, whether the expression applies to a mammal used in the dairy industry or to a human, is commonly understood to be a very young infant or neonate.

Again, I provide highlighted papers and references to substantiate the use of these terms and to demonstrate that they do not imply that the offspring are less than 12 to 24 hours old at separation.

The word “fresh” is commonly used in the dairy industry to refer to calves<sup>v</sup> or cows who are recent mothers<sup>vi</sup>.

The “fresh cow period” lasts for at least two weeks after giving birth and during this period a cow is more at risk of infection and particular steps are recommended to dairy farmers to reduce any negative impact on milk production:

*“During the fresh-cow period there are two broad categories of uterine infections that can impact a modern dairy herd: metritis and endometritis. It is important to note that these two terms should not be used interchangeably, as they denote two different conditions. The easiest way to differentiate between the two conditions is the timeframe for each. Metritis is an inflammation of the uterus that occurs within the first 21 days in milk (DIM), while endometritis is an inflammation of the uterus that occurs when a cow is greater than 21 DIM.”<sup>vii</sup>*

In veterinary contexts, the offspring who are separated from their mothers by the dairy industry are classed as perinates or neonates.

### **“Perinatal**

For most authors, from 270 days of pregnancy to exactly 24 hours of life. However, the term "perinatal" sometimes includes the first 28 days, and even up to six months

### **Neonatal**

From delivery of the calf until 28 days of life. This period can be subclassified into "early neonatal period", which includes the first 24 hours of life, and "late neonatal period" from 2-28 days of life

### **Calf**

From 28 to 90 days of age.”<sup>viii</sup>

A neonate who is more than 24 hours old but less than 28 days old is still “fresh from birth”; the freshness of their birth means that they are vulnerable to many illnesses:

*“The term “neonate” defines calves under 28 days old. During the neonatal period, the calf is at high risk of suffering different diseases, and neonatal morbidity and mortality cause large economic losses. In fact, 75% of the mortality of dairy heifers occurs during the first month of life..... During the neonatal period, the first infectious pathological disease we observe is neonatal septicemia, affecting calves between 2 and 6 days old. Neonatal diarrhea is by far the main infectious problem, followed by pneumonia in older neonatal calves aged 2-28 days old or even older.”<sup>ix</sup>*

Most people would understand the expression “fresh from their mother’s womb” to mean newly born, in the sense of being neonatal and within this higher risk period when they are in particular need of their mother’s care.

The ad has not stated or implied that separation occurs prior to the recommended 12-24 hours. In fact, the timing of the separation is irrelevant to the ad which comments on the injustice of separating mother and child. The exact timing of the separation is not the issue; in fact, as my previous submission demonstrated, late separation causes more distress to cow and calf.

Therefore, there is no likelihood that the general population will imagine the phrase “fresh from their mothers’ wombs but separated from them” to mean separated prior to the recommended 12-24 hours, rather than separated at a very early stage in the mother-child relationship. In fact, it is irrelevant because to most people separation at 25 hours is as unjust as separation at 24 hours.

I trust that this evidence demonstrates that the ad cannot be construed as giving the misleading impression that separation of mother and infant in the dairy industry generally occurs prior to the 12 to 24 hour period after birth.

The aim of the ad is simply to convey facts and I am confident that the wording reflects the intent. However, in the interests of avoiding any distraction from the core message of the ad, I propose that in future I include in this ad that offspring are generally separated after 12 -24 hours in order to clarify this point. I trust that this will enable the complaint to be resolved without further procedure. Please don’t hesitate to let me know if I can be of further assistance in resolving the issue.

Yours sincerely,

*Sandra Higgins*

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Campaign Director  
Go Vegan World

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<sup>i</sup> Källero, EE (2010) Uterine Physiology and Pathology in the Post Partum Period in Ethiopian Cattle. Institutionen för kliniska vetenskaper Examensarbete inom veterinärprogrammet, Uppsala 2010 Fakulteten för Veterinärmedicin och husdjursvetenskap Institutionen för kliniska vetenskaper Kurskod: EX0239, Nivå X, 30hp, at page 7 as highlighted.

<sup>ii</sup> Bovine Post-Partum Problems [http://therio.vetmed.lsu.edu/bovine\\_post\\_partum.htm](http://therio.vetmed.lsu.edu/bovine_post_partum.htm) Page 1 as highlighted

<sup>iii</sup> Rectal Examination <http://cal.vet.upenn.edu/projects/fieldservice/Dairy/DairyPE/cwPE11.htm> at age 1 as highlighted.

<sup>iv</sup> MANAGING ENDOMETRITIS IN THE DAIRY HERD, *Bohlen, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, and C. L. Widener, Dairy Science Masters Student, Department of Animal and Dairy Science By J. F. Bohlen, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, and C. L. Widener, Dairy Science*

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*Masters Student, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, Bulletin 1450 November 2015, extension.uga.edu/publications, at page 3 as highlighted*

<sup>v</sup> Image attached below. <https://www.donedeal.ie/beefcattle-for-sale/fresh-calves-available-direct-off-farms/14898630>

<sup>vi</sup> How to identify, treat and prevent seven fresh cow illnesses. [www.progressivedairy.com](http://www.progressivedairy.com)

<sup>vii</sup> MANAGING ENDOMETRITIS IN THE DAIRY HERD, *Bohlen, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, and C. L. Widener, Dairy Science Masters Student, Department of Animal and Dairy Science. By J. F. Bohlen, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, and C. L. Widener, Dairy Science Masters Student, Department of Animal and Dairy Science, Bulletin 1450 November 2015, extension.uga.edu/publications, at page 2 as highlighted*

<sup>viii</sup> ANIMAL AND PLANT PRODUCTIVITY – Bovine Neonatology - Susana Astiz, Antonio Gonzalez-Bulnes, Laura Elvira-Partida, Natividad Perez-Villalobos, Manuel Cerviño-Lopez and Juan Vicente Gonzalez-Martin, at point 1 as highlighted, “Table 1. Different stages of a calf’s life, including the fetal period” at page 3 as highlighted

<sup>ix</sup> ANIMAL AND PLANT PRODUCTIVITY – Bovine Neonatology - Susana Astiz, Antonio Gonzalez-Bulnes, Laura Elvira-Partida, Natividad Perez-Villalobos, Manuel Cerviño-Lopez and Juan Vicente Gonzalez-Martin, at “Summary” at page 2 as highlighted.



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KEY INFO

