

NATURE

press information

25 YEARS



PBS



THERE'S MOOO...RE TO THE COW THAN BIG BROWN EYES AND UDDERS, AS THIRTEEN WNET NEW YORK'S *NATURE* REVEALS IN *HOLY COW*, AIRING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3 ON PBS

Made possible by



This is the story of how we've changed the cow and how the cow has changed us, forever. The natural history of this creature is not usually on our minds, and yet they have altered human life, human biology and the geography of the world.

Get to know this surprisingly successful animal when Thirteen/WNET New York's Emmy and Peabody Award-winning *NATURE* series presents an encore presentation of *Holy Cow* on Sunday, December 3 at 8 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Actor Edward Herrmann narrates.

"There's no animal more important to us and yet so taken for granted," said Fred Kaufman, executive producer of *NATURE*. "They provide just about all of our basic needs, from milk and meat to muscle."

No matter which way you look at it, these amazing animals come in all sorts of weird and wonderful shapes and sizes. As a species, their combined weight is twice that of all humans on the planet. They are worshipped by 750,000,000 Hindus.

About 8,000 years ago, the relationship between cows and man began with the revolutionary advent of domestication in Mesopotamia, the Indus River Valley and Africa. There were any number of possible candidates for the job but only the cow fit the specific criteria humankind needed: not too flighty, breeds well in captivity, grows at a good pace, not aggressive, requires a low maintenance diet. In fact the cow has a miraculous stomach that can

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turn just about any substance, including garbage, cardboard and newspaper, into milk and meat.

Today there are about 1.5 billion cows in the world. The film offers viewers a glimpse into the close relationships between some of these cows and people in different countries. For example, English dairy farmer Mark Evans spends all of his waking time with his cows, milking, feeding and otherwise nurturing them. The African Masai tribe believes that all cattle were given to them from the great god N'gai at the beginning of time – a belief which today remains at the heart of their culture. India is home to a quarter of the world's cow population, with 200,000,000 head of cattle. One major reason for this is that India's majority Hindu community worships cows, considering them to be "second mothers."

The film points out that \$75 billion is spent in the U.S. alone each year on dairy products, and explores the issues surrounding industrialized agriculture in America including the use of antibiotics on cattle. Ranchers in Colorado represent a new trend in cattle ranching, by recreating natural conditions as a response to what they feel is an over-industrialized approach. It is the latest evolution in man's relationship to cattle.

Holy Cow is a co-production of Icon Films and Thirteen/ WNET New York, and Devillier Donegan Enterprises. Harry Marshall is writer and director.

Now in its 25th anniversary season, *NATURE* has won more than 360 honors from the television industry, parent groups, the international wildlife film community, and environmental organizations, including eight Emmys, two Peabodys and the first award given to a television program by the Sierra Club. Most recently, *The Queen of Trees* (2006) won a Peabody and, at the Banff World Television Festival, the NHK President's Prize, which recognizes excellence in high-definition programming.

NATURE is produced by Thirteen/WNET New York for PBS. Fred Kaufman is executive producer; William Grant is executive-in-charge.

Major corporate support for *NATURE* is provided by Canon U.S.A., Inc., and Ford. Additional support is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the nation's public television stations.

The series is closed-captioned for the hearing-impaired and distributed with Descriptive Video Service (DVS) for the sight-impaired. For more information, visit www.thirteen.org or www.pbs.org. This Web companion to the weekly series contains in-depth information and colorful graphics for each program

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Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, *NOW With David Brancaccio*, and *Cyberchase* – as well as the work of Bill Moyers – to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as The Ethnic Heritage Specials, The Thirteen Walking Tours, *New York Voices*, and *Reel New York*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions through educational and community outreach projects – including the Celebration of Teaching and Learning – as well as Web sites and other digital media platforms. More information can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

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Press Contacts:

Kathleen Kaan
212.560.3026
kaank@thirteen.org

Donald Lee
212.560.3005
leed@thirteen.org

Heather DiRubba
212.560.3134
dirubbah@thirteen.org