

**Press Release**

**Monday, 26th July 2021**

**Parmesan Consortium urged to make commitment to end**

**suffering of thousands of cows**

Compassion in World Farming has today (26th July) called on the Parmesan Consortium to make a public commitment to end the tethering of cows and allow them access to pasture.

In 2017, Compassion launched an [investigation](https://www.ciwf.org.uk/media/press-releases-statements/2017/11/the-cruel-truth-behind-parmesan-that-is-hard-to-stomach) into the cruel conditions in which cows were kept on four farms, in the Po Valley region of Italy, that produce milk for Parmesan cheese. It revealed cows kept in shocking conditions, forced to live in barren sheds with no access to pasture. The Parmesan Consortium is a group of farmers and cheese producers who work together to promote Parmesan and protect standards.

Following the campaign, the Consortium opened a dialogue with Compassion, pledging to start monitoring animal welfare in its farms and setting up actions to support the improvement of systemic cruel conditions. However, four years on, cows continue to suffer due to the lack of pasture access, and many of them are likely to be tethered. Around 250,000 cows, all reared in the Po Valley, prop up this booming industry that boasts an annual turnover of more than two billion euros.

Annamaria Pisapia, Head of Compassion's Italian operations, said: *“It’s been four years since we exposed the suffering of cows used to produce Parmesan cheese, yet very little seems to have changed. Thousands of cows are still denied access to pasture and fresh air and many of them are also likely to be tethered – that’s no life worth living.”*

Nick Palmer, Head of Compassion in World Farming UK, added: *“Today we’re calling on the Parmesan Consortium to make a public and binding commitment to end the suffering of these animals. There are no more excuses for not taking immediate action. Parmesan cheese consumers all around the world, including those in the UK, expected the Consortium to put an end to such cruel practices following our campaign and, after four years, the time really is up.*

*“If the Consortium cares about animal welfare, as they claim, the time to act is now. Parmesan cows cannot wait any longer, nor can the consumers. That’s why we’re asking people to email Parmesan urging them to take action now.”*

Find out more about the campaign [here](https://action.ciwf.org.uk/page/86354/action/1).

**~ends~**

**For further information please email** media.team@ciwf.org

**Social media assets, images and footage can be downloaded** [here](https://ciwf.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-ciwf/images/assetbox/ace50462-ff54-4f31-a40f-2ada3f0d83da/assetbox.html)

**Notes to Editors:**

1. For over 50 years, Compassion in World Farming has campaigned for farm animal welfare and sustainable food and farming. With over one million supporters, we have representatives in 11 European countries, the U.S., China and South Africa.
2. According to OCQ data shared by an important Research body called Centre for Animal Production (CRPA), in the area where Parmesan is produced (according to the standard of production cows can be farmed only in a specific area) 28% of the cows are tethered in 58% of the farms. Find out more [here](http://www.crpa.it/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=22049&tt=crpa_www&sp=crpa).
3. Deadline and timescale for action: Compassion is calling on the Consortium to make a public commitment no later than the end of September 2021, to phase-out tethering by the end of 2024 at the latest, and to publish a road map to allow access to pasture for all the cows by the end of 2022.