

June 27, 2010

60 Yaks!

Please note that this newsletter also appears in the [“Disaster Relief”](#) section of this website along with several previous letters concerning the April 14, 2010 earthquake in Kyegundo (Yushu). There, you will find a full description, links, and photos about the earthquake and the Kilung Foundation’s relief effort.

We are so pleased to announce that in the final moments of our fundraising drive for earthquake relief, **the yak herd grew to 60 milking dri (females)!** We didn’t quite make the goal of 100, but 60 is a real herd and exceeded our expectations. And, we will be able to supply dairy to a significant number of Kyegundo families for the next two to three years. These families will receive two deliveries per year of cheese and butter, supplemented by yogurt and milk.



As previously mentioned, these dri will all be tagged as “never to be slaughtered,” part of the ancient practice of life saving that is done all over the world by Buddhists and especially practiced in Tibet with domestic animals. This herd will stay in Dzachuka, tended by Kilung families. When the earthquake milk deliveries are finished in 2012 or 2013, the herd will remain with Kilung community, either filling out herds that were devastated by the snow

disaster of 2008, or they will go to the Kilung Monastery-community “life release farms.” You can read more about this on [the animal release page](#) .

This concludes the fundraising drive for this yak herd, and we’ve been asked: Why a deadline in this case? Answer: The first milk delivery will happen at the end of July, and the second delivery in September. This is normal for this part of the world where winters are acutely frigid, slowing milk production down to nil. Therefore the butter and cheese that is produced each summer is stored and consumed throughout the winter and into spring. Right now this herd is still incorporating the newest members, who are getting used to each other, not to mention their herder-milkers. Cheese and butter is being produced from the twice-daily milkings, and stored for delivery. So, creating a new herd from scratch needed as much time as possible to stabilize, in order to make that first delivery—in just a few weeks.

From the bottom of everyone’s hearts in Kyegundo, and also in Kilung community, grateful thanks have gone to all of you who gave so generously and spontaneously.