

She leads a change movement in the United States: "We must ask the animals for forgiveness"

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An adjustment movement is on the rise in the United States, where more and more farmers begins to question the prevailing norm on how animals are treated.

At the same time, many see the benefits of switching to plant-based agriculture.

Renee King Sonnen is a leader for the movement that dares to challenge the system and the view of animals in society.

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ANSÖK HÄR!

Renee King Sonnen was a real estate agent when she remarried in 2010 to one fourth generation cattle breeder, Tommy Sonnen, in Texas. To one at first she had no intention of moving to the farm, but still decided to do so the. Something that would change their lives.

- For several years I was confused. As the wife of a cattle breeder, I had mine loyalties. But at the same time, I began to question what we were doing. I remember the first time I saw how the little calves were loaded into the red trailer to be sold at auction. I was not prepared for how awful it felt when the cows desperately roared after their calves, she says.

In 2014, everything changed. It started with a couple of calves having to be bottle-fed. Renee took care of it and had soon taken the calves to heart.

- One calf, Bobo, died, but the other calf became emotionally like my own children.

The calf was christened Rowdy girl and soon began to open up the world to Renee.

- She showed me what cows are like; their kindness, wisdom, tenderness, gentleness and dignity. I became vegan and felt that I no longer wanted to send any animals for slaughter. Rowdy girl gave me insights and I understood things I did not before. I began to question and challenge my husband in our work of giving birth up animals for slaughter.

But some tough years followed and Renee and her husband were close to divorce. To In the end, she managed to buy the cows from her husband, thanks to fundraisers.



Renee King Sonnen is an inspiration for others who are ready to make the transition from traditional animal husbandry. Photo: Private **Awakening** Today she runs Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, a sanctuary for cows and other animals,

together with her husband Tommy. They are now a happy vegan couple who inspires other ranchers to consider their lifestyle. Farmers and their Wives often contact Renee for advice when they begin to question the ethical the dimension of their work.

Renee and her husband are an inspiration to others who are ready to do the transition from traditional animal husbandry.

- I am a very spiritual person and after becoming vegan I know that the true truth is in my heart and soul. We are programmed in our society to normalize violence against animals in agriculture, almost as if it be holy. But that's so wrong. The animals do not sacrifice for us. No, it's murder.

She tells of her awakening through the cow Rowdy girl. She sees it as their education.

- Rowdy girl is a very wise old soul. Cows are the holiest animals of our planet, in contact with our mother, the earth, and should be free. It's a crime how we treat these animals, she says.

Challenges taboo

Renee is convinced that humanity has a very great potential, however that we lost track and instead learned to normalize animal cruelty and animal exploitation. She knows that she challenges a strong tradition and culture in her work as a leader of the movement.

- I meet people where they are and listen to them both as a ranch owner and as an animal rights activist. I always ask how they feel and how it feels to send the animals to auction. What happens every time is that people start to cry. This question is taboo among ranchers, but I can ask them difficult questions because I know exactly how they feel.

How many she has influenced is impossible to answer exactly, according to Renee.

- We have been in the national media and on the national news several times. People from all over contact me daily and I can see our own transition to a vegan lifestyle has had a huge impact on others. The fact that today there is a growing transition movement, from animal husbandry to plant-based, is proof that you never know what your ideas may lead to, she says with one smiling.



A documentary about Renee King Sonnen's work is underway. Photo: Private **Feared for his life**

For three years, they have been working on a large project together with a farm in Arkansas. It's still too early to talk about the project for Renee, then it's in At present, there is a great deal of activity behind the scenes. But she is clear that when Once the transition is complete, it will be big news. She also inspired another farm in Texas recently. Those ranchers today are vegans and that the remaining part of their flock now lives at The Rowdy Girl Sanctuary, which free cows.

- Nobody talked about the possibility of adjustment, before I first started talking about that with leaders in the animal rights movement. Today it has become a major topic and new conversion programs are coming all the time. At first I was afraid to go out with my message that animal husbandry, and the exploitation it entails, completely must cease. I was even afraid of being murdered. But it's me no longer, she says.

Collaborates with the animal rights movement

"Transition", conversion, has become a concept and the founder of ***Farm sanctuary***, Gene Baur, and other market players are working today their own programs. Renee and her husband have also worked together with one of the largest animal rights organizations in the world, ***Mercy for animals***, which has a program called ***Transfarmation***.

It is not only livestock farming that is in focus, but also dairy farmers involved. The vegan company Miyokos creamery leads it development through Dairy farm transition. Instead of animal husbandry is cultivation of Organic vegetables, oats, wheat, fruits, herbs, legumes and other foods in

focus. Through the conversion, Renee also wants to help farmers to be able to keep unmarked

- It would no longer be about growing food for the animals in the industry, as in day, but about growing food for people in our country. It's a concept that will lead to more jobs and less imports, as well as be better for both the climate and the animals.



"Once we have let that knowledge in, there is no turning back. In my soul, I believe we must ask the animals for forgiveness for what we have done to them," said Renee King Sonnen. Photo: Private

"The dying industry"

- The future lies in the plant-based industry. The ideal would be that this was subsidized by our government, which would help farmers do this

shift much easier. But unfortunately that is not the case yet, it is something like us need to continue to push on. Today, the transition takes place instead thanks to non-profits and private foundations. At present, the government only subsidizes meat, the dairy and egg industry, "the dying industry," she says.

Today, about 80 billion live terrestrial land animals are killed annually on earth, too consumption, according to Renee King Sonnen, who believes that all animals exist left on the farms that ask if need to come to "sanctuaries" or similar areas where they can live as freely as possible.

- We need to go from using the animals for our own interests, to instead be good stewards for them. Animals are not meant as our slaves or goods.

The animals are here with us, not for us. It was humanity that made the choice to use the animals and we have kept that programming, she says and continues:

- Now it is high time to instead understand who these animals really are and their true value. Once we have let in that knowledge, there is no turning back. IN my soul, I think we must ask the animals for forgiveness for what we have done to them, and the least we can do is stop eating and exploit them, she says.

Broad work for adjustment

- Renee King Sonnen sits on the board of the Agriculture fairness alliance. They are working on legislation, with high hopes of obtaining future funding for conversion farms in the United States. Rancher advocacy program,

RAP, which Renee founded, was the template for the current legislation Farms (Farm and ranch mobility solutions act) which is a pilot program after RAP model.

- On July 30 this year, the annual RAP summit will take place. A global online event with the goal of moving from animal exploitation activities to instead becoming vegan companies and farms. Various experts, organizations, researchers and experts will be present. Read more about this event, how to support it and how to participate: www.rancheradvocacy.org

- Renee King Sonnen also collaborates with various philanthropists and is involved in projects where they work to ensure that plant-based industries in the US can get distribution contracts with the American farmers who have made the change.

- Later this year or the beginning of 2023, a documentary will be released

Renee King Sonnen and her work to be launched internationally.