**Improving the quality of milk in Pakistan**

**[Ahmed Ijaz](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/ahmed-ijaz)**

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The 4th largest milk producing country in the world is Pakistan. It is estimated that dairy products add 11.2 percent in the GDP of Pakistan. Milk is our basic need and in every home it is present. People in our country spend heavily on milk-related products. The quality of milk is not up to international standards however, even though it is the fourth largest milk producing country. As a result, milk cannot be exported to international markets. There are certain reports which claim about the presence of harmful chemicals in milk, added by owners in order to increase the quantity. The average yield per cow is around 6 litres per day and if we compare this to the rest of the world, then this is lower by more than twice. This industry is one of the biggest industries in Pakistan but still needs to improve. There is a lot of potential for the milk quality to be increased. One major step for this could be through government officials who can help dairy owners learn about modern production processes.

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There are large numbers of milk-producing dairy farms in our country. It is estimated that 49.8 million tonnes of milk was produced during the year 2018-19. People spend about 21 percent of their salary budget on milk-related products. There are certain reports which tell about the harmful diseases caused by chemicals added into milk for quantity increasing purposes. Researchers claim that one of the most commonly used injections, Oxytocin which is used for increasing milk, has adverse effects on animals as well as human beings. It is quite surprising that this injection, banned worldwide, is commonly used in our country and the government is not addressing this. This is injected when the milk has to be extracted. It would increase the quantity but in the longer run, the animal’s age would decrease. Researchers also point out that the hormonal imbalance of humans is due to drinking such milk. Children are the ones who are majorly affected, their growth is affected and they are not as strong as they should be. One of the most common issues which children face are weak eyesight and immune system. The only reason to use this injection is to earn profit in the fastest possible way, no matter what others would suffer through.

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I strongly believe that they do not know the value of a human life as it is just for their personal interest. The sale of this injection is banned by the Supreme Court but reports claim that they are still massively used. One main reason is that 65 percent of the total milk is produced from rural areas and it is very challenging for the authorities to go everywhere and take action. One more reason for low quality milk is the water added by salesmen to increase quantity and sale to households. It gets difficult for the consumer to know about the purity of milk and they consume it nonetheless. A report in the past indicated that 70 percent of loose milk being sold contains chemicals and bacteria. 601 samples of loose milk were collected and 422 were deemed unfit for consumption. After testing, the names of chemicals were revealed which are formaldehyde, ammonium sulphate, urea and even surf as well, which is used as a detergent. Even the water added in milk is often not pure. This dirty water adds bacteria to the milk.

[China declares ‘complete victory’ over absolute poverty](https://nation.com.pk/26-Feb-2021/china-declares-complete-victory-over-absolute-poverty)

About 28,857 litres of impure milk were disposed across the province by Punjab Food Authority recently when there was a crackdown against the milk adulteration mafia. Talking about packaged milk, government research says that Pakistan’s milk industry produces 54 billion litres every year and only 10 percent is sold in packaged form. Tests were conducted on 16 brands of packaged milk which were given Ultra-High Temperature and pasteurisation treatment; PCSIR found that only six are safe for consumption.

The livestock of Pakistan is growing at a rate of 3.9 percent annually and it is said that the demand for milk could increase at an even faster rate as people are well aware of the nutrients in milk. One of the biggest concerns in this industry is quality due to the fact that people’s lives depend on it. It is extremely important for the government to make strict laws and take proper action against those who are making money by playing with the lives of people. If this can be done then our milk industry can turn into a formal one. This would be a boost to our economy and the GDP could also increase. If the milk quality goes up to international standards then there is a possibility for our country to earn over $30 billion from exports of dairy products. In the international market Pakistan has an edge over Brazil to export its milk at a much lower price. Quality is the only issue.

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In order to compete in this world, we need to improve the quality of milk. The government must take actions against people using injections and also who are adding water. Teams should be set up to conduct tests on a weekly basis to put pressure on such people. Heavy fines should be imposed to make them realise their mistake. Turkey made pasteurization of milk compulsory in 1995 and banned the sale of loose milk in 2008; to support this enforcement, investments were made in the public sector which resulted in 90 percent increase in Turkey’s milk and product exports. Our government should also take measures and invest in this industry in order to save our lives and boost the economy.

Millions of dollars are paid to foreign countries for the import of dairy products as we lack the very basic necessity of pure standard milk in our country. But if we play smartly and stop the adulteration mafia, we could stop the suffering of generations.