

Dog and Cat Meat Banned for Consumption in Taiwan



Summary: Taiwan made a big step by outlawing the consumption and sale of dog and cat meat.

If you were hoping to visit Taiwan to try some fancy dog or cat meat, well time has run out. Central News Agency is reporting that the country has banned the consumption of dog and cat meat in an amendment to its animal protection laws.

Wendy Higgins of Humane Society International said, "Taiwan's progressive ban is part of a growing trend across Asia to end the brutal dog meat trade." The new law places a fine of \$1,640 to \$8,200 on those caught eating or trading dog or cat meat.

Founder and CEO of Animals Asia Foundation, Jill Robinson, added, "Previously, the Animal Protection Act only covered the slaughter and sale of dog and cat meat, but this amendment specifically prohibiting the actual consumption of dog meat today is welcome."

Other factors to the law include the ban of "walking" pets on a leash pulled by a motorcycle or car, escalating the penalty to the status of animal cruelty. The maximum prison sentence for animal cruelty has doubled in Taiwan to two years and up to a fine of \$65,000 now. Animal cruelty is defined by any deliberate act that harms animals, resulting in mangled limbs, organ failure or death. Taiwan has also decided to publicly expose those found guilty of animal cruelty by posting their name, photo, and type of crime.

A big reason for the change may be from the support of the recently elected President Tsai Ing-Wen. She was seen frequently during her campaign in photos with her two cats and has adopted three retired guide dogs.

Another factor fueling the changes to animal treatment in the country was some shocking cases that have happened in the past year. A video emerged showing military personnel beating, strangling, and then tossing the body of a dog into the ocean. The country's minister of defense apologized for the incident.

Higgins hopes that the changes in Taiwan will put pressure on China and South Korea where the dog meat market is still strong, killing millions of dogs in a brutal manner each year. You can still get dog meat in China, Korea, Indonesia, and the Philippines. There is even a yearly dog meat festival held in Yulin, China that you can take advantage of. The festival is highly criticized where 10,000 dogs are slaughtered to be served as meals.

Adam Parascandola, director of animal protection and crisis response for HSI said, "Taiwan's legislature has taken a monumental step in ending the dog meat trade. This legislation is going to send a message to the Chinese mainland, Nagaland state in India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other Asian countries where dog meat consumption is still legal that ending the brutal dog meat trade is the positive trend across Asia and a step in the public's long-term interest. Most people in Asian countries do not eat dog and cat, and most find the cruel and often crime-fueled trade appalling. The animal protection movement is growing rapidly across Asia and the calls for an end to dog meat cruelty are getting louder and louder."

Who knows how long the festival will continue though, with growing opposition to the practice of killing dogs for meat. A survey done two years ago by Animals Asia found that roughly half of the 3,221 people asked thought killing dogs and cats for meat was wrong and should be illegal. Robinson said, "The public too are becoming increasingly sympathetic with the plight of dogs, recognizing the criminality behind the industry, the enormous benefits that dogs bring to society and the comfort they give to the families they belong to." China has over 100 million registered pets, of which dogs and cats make up the majority.

HSI is working to rescue dogs from dog meat farms, where they are often kept in cruel and dirty conditions. They want to help dog meat farmers' transition into humane trades like blueberry or chili farming. Roughly 30 million dogs are killed for meat every year.

Do you think dog meat should be banned or should it be acceptable for some places to continue the practice? Tell us in the comments below.

To learn more about animal cruelty, read these articles:

- [Supply & Demand: Lucrative Black Market for Dog Meat in Vietnam Perpetuates Pet Trafficking](#)
- [Man Blows Up Dog but Won't be Charged for Animal Cruelty](#)

- Animal Cruelty Now Felony According to FBI

Photo: flickr.com

www.jdjournal.com