# Donkey population decimated by Chinese medicine demand

(CNN)Donkey populations are under serious threat due to the demand for their hides, which are used in traditional Chinese medicine, according to a new report.

Gelatin produced from donkey hide is a key ingredient of one of China's favorite traditional remedies, known as ejiao, which is used to treat a range of ailments from colds to insomnia.

With just under 5 million skins needed ever year for ejiao production, the industry would need more than half the world's current donkeys over the next five years to meet demand, according to a report from The Donkey Sanctuary.

In the past six years the ejiao industry has grown rapidly due to increased demand and price rises, with annual production increasing from 3,200 tonnes in 2013 to 5,600 tonnes in 2016, according to The Donkey Sanctuary.

To meet demand, Chinese businesses need about 4.8 million donkey hides per year.

Donkey populations in China have collapsed 76% since 1992, so the industry has turned to foreign suppliers, particularly in Africa, Asia and South America, says the organization.

Brazil has seen a 28% reduction in donkey populations since 2007, compared to 37% in Botswana and 53% in Kyrgyzstan.

In response The Donkey Sanctuary is pressing for "an urgent halt to the largely unregulated global trade in donkey skins before donkeys are virtually wiped out in some areas."

The impact of the collapse of the donkey population will be felt most keenly by those 500 million people who rely on the animals in some of the world's poorest communities, according to the organization.

There are also reportedly terrible animal welfare abuses in the supply chain, the report states, as donkeys are often stolen then transported to slaughterhouses in terrible conditions.

An estimated 20% of the animals die in transit.

Given the scale of demand, even pregnant mares and young foals, as well as sick and injured donkeys, are being traded.

The report reveals that the trade also presents biosecurity risks, with unhygienic practices encouraging the spread of diseases such as anthrax, tetanus and equine flu.

"This is suffering on an enormous and unacceptable scale," said Mike Baker, chief executive of The Donkey Sanctuary.

"This suffering is not just confined to donkeys as it also threatens the livelihood of millions of people."

The Donkey Sanctuary is pressing for ejiao manufacturers to switch to artificially-grown donkey-derived collagen, rather than hides.

China should also suspend the import of donkeys, according to the organization.

The Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine (RCHM), which regulates traditional Chinese herbal medicine in the UK, said it condemns the use of substances that endanger animals or subject them to cruel practices.

The organization recognizes the outcry over unethical sourcing of donkey hides, said RCHM council member Martin John in a statement.

"Whilst such gelatin products have their medicinal uses, their use in modern Chinese medicine practice is unnecessary and unethical using current sourcing," said John.

Gelatin from beef, pork or chicken can be used as an alternative, added John, while vegetarians can use certain kinds of seaweeds and herbs.

China's rapid industrialization and move away from traditional agriculture saw the country's donkey population plummet in recent decades.

Traders started to look elsewhere for hides, buying up such large numbers of animals that governments such as Niger and Burkina Faso banned the sale of donkeys to China due to environmental and economic problems.

So far 18 countries have taken action to protect their donkey populations, according to The Donkey Sanctuary.

## Vocabulary

### Diseases

##### Noun

* A disordered or incorrectly functioning organ, part, structure, or system of the body resulting from the effect of genetic or developmental errors, infection, poisons, nutritional deficiency or imbalance, toxicity, or unfavorable environmental factors; illness; sickness; ailment.
* Any abnormal condition in a plant that interferes with its vital physiological processes, caused by pathogenic microorganisms, parasites, unfavorable environmental, genetic, or nutritional factors, etc.
* Any harmful, depraved, or morbid condition, as of the mind or society
* Decomposition of a material under special circumstances

##### Verb (used with object),

* To affect with disease; make ill.

### Hide

##### Verb (used with object),

* To conceal from sight; prevent from being seen or discovered
* To obstruct the view of; cover up
* To conceal from knowledge or exposure; keep secret

##### Verb (used without object),

* To conceal oneself; lie concealed

##### Noun

* British. a place of concealment for hunting or observing wildlife; hunting blind.

##### Verb phrases

* hide out, to go into or remain in hiding

### Products

##### Noun

* A thing produced by labor
* A person or thing produced by or resulting from a process, as a natural, social, or historical one; result
* The totality of goods or services that a company makes available; output
* Chemistry. a substance obtained from another substance through chemical change.
* Mathematics. the result obtained by multiplying two or more quantities together. intersection(def 3a).

### Slaughterhouses

##### Noun,

* A building or place where animals are butchered for food; abattoir.

### Years

##### Noun

* A period of 365 or 366 days, in the Gregorian calendar, divided into 12 calendar months, now reckoned as beginning Jan. 1 and ending Dec. 31 (calendar year or civil year).Compare common year, leap year.
* A period of approximately the same length in other calendars.
* A space of 12 calendar months calculated from any point
* Astronomy. Also called lunar year. a division of time equal to 12 lunar months.Also called astronomical year, equinoctial year, solar year, tropical year. a division of time equal to about 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds, representing the interval between one vernal equinox and the next.Also called sidereal year. a division of time equal to the equinoctial year plus 20 minutes, representing the time required for the earth to complete one revolution around the sun, measured with relation to the fixed stars.Compare anomalistic year.
* The time in which any planet completes a revolution round the sun
* A full round of the seasons.

### Cloze Questions

##### Fill in the blanks

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ populations \_\_\_\_\_\_ under serious \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ due \_\_\_\_ the demand for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are used in traditional \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ medicine, according to a new report.

-: Gelatin produced \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_\_ ingredient \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ favorite traditional remedies, known as ejiao, which is used to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a range of ailments \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ colds to insomnia.

-: With just under 5 million skins \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ industry \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ need more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ half the world's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkeys over the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ five years \_\_\_\_ meet demand, according to a report from \_\_\_\_\_\_ Donkey Sanctuary.

-: In the past \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ industry has grown \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and price rises, with annual production \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tonnes in 2013 to 5,600 tonnes \_\_\_\_ 2016, according to The Donkey Sanctuary.

-: To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chinese businesses \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about 4.8 million \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hides per year.

-: Donkey populations in China have collapsed 76% since \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suppliers, particularly in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Asia \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ America, says the organization.

-: Brazil \_\_\_\_\_\_ seen a 28% reduction in donkey populations \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2007, compared \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ in Botswana \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ in Kyrgyzstan.

-: In response \_\_\_\_\_\_ Donkey Sanctuary is pressing for "an urgent halt to \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unregulated \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ skins \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkeys are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out in some areas."

-: The impact \_\_\_\_ the collapse \_\_\_\_ the donkey population will be felt most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ those 500 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people who rely \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in some of \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ according to the organization.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ reportedly terrible animal welfare abuses in the supply \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the report states, as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are often \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ then \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to slaughterhouses in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

-: Given \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of demand, even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ mares and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ foals, as well \_\_\_\_ sick and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkeys, \_\_\_\_\_\_ being traded.

-: The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that the trade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ presents biosecurity risks, with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ encouraging \_\_\_\_\_\_ spread of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ such as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tetanus and equine flu.

-: "This \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ scale," \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mike Baker, chief executive of The Donkey Sanctuary.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suffering is not just \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to donkeys as \_\_\_\_ also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the livelihood \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of people."

-: The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sanctuary \_\_\_\_ pressing \_\_\_\_\_\_ ejiao manufacturers to switch to artificially-grown donkey-derived \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ than hides.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ should also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of donkeys, according to \_\_\_\_\_\_ organization.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Register of Chinese Herbal \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (RCHM), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ regulates \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chinese herbal medicine in the UK, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the use \_\_\_\_ substances that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ animals or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ them to cruel practices.

-: The organization recognizes \_\_\_\_\_\_ outcry over unethical sourcing of donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ said RCHM \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ member \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ a statement.

-: "Whilst \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ products \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ uses, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ in modern Chinese medicine \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is unnecessary and unethical using current sourcing," \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John.

-: Gelatin from beef, pork or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can \_\_\_\_ used \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ alternative, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John, while vegetarians can \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kinds of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and herbs.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rapid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ move away \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ traditional agriculture saw \_\_\_\_\_\_ country's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ population plummet in recent decades.

-: Traders started to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ elsewhere for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ buying \_\_\_\_ such large \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ animals that governments such \_\_\_\_ Niger \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Faso banned the sale \_\_\_\_ donkeys \_\_\_\_ China \_\_\_\_\_\_ to environmental and economic problems.

-: So far \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ taken action to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their donkey populations, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to The Donkey Sanctuary.

### Discussion Questions

1: Summarise the article in your own words

2: How do you feel after reading the article?

3: Do you agree with the article's point? Why/why not?

4: Can you come up with an argument against this article's point?

5: After reading the article, is there anything you are wondering about?

6: Does the article relate to something else you read or watched recently?