# 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

### China

##### Noun

* A translucent ceramic material, biscuit-fired at a high temperature, its glaze fired at a low temperature.
* Any porcelain ware.
* Plates, cups, saucers, etc., collectively.
* Figurines made of porcelain or ceramic material, collectively

##### Adjective

* Made of china.
* Indicating the twentieth event of a series, as a wedding anniversary.

### Demand

##### Verb (used with object)

* To ask for with proper authority; claim as a right
* To ask for peremptorily or urgently

##### Verb (used without object)

* To make a demand; inquire; ask.

##### Noun

* The act of demanding.
* Something that is demanded.
* An urgent or pressing requirement

### Enormous

##### Adjective

* Greatly exceeding the common size, extent, etc.; huge; immense
* Outrageous or atrocious

### Executive

##### Noun

* A person or group of persons having administrative or supervisory authority in an organization.
* The person or persons in whom the supreme executive power of a government is vested.
* The executive branch of a government.

##### Adjective

* Of, relating to, or suited for carrying out plans, duties, etc.
* Pertaining to or charged with the execution of laws and policies or the administration of public affairs
* Designed for, used by, or suitable for executives

### Member

##### Noun

* A person, animal, plant, group, etc., that is part of a society, party, community, taxon, or other body.
* Government. a member of Congress, especially of the House of Representatives. a member of the British Parliament, especially of the House of Commons. any member of a legislative body.
* A part or organ of an animal body; a limb, as a leg, arm, or wing.
* Botany. a structural entity of a plant body.
* The penis.

##### Adjective

* Being a member of or having membership in an association, organization, etc.

### Modern

##### Adjective

* Of or relating to present and recent time; not ancient or remote
* Characteristic of present and recent time; contemporary; not antiquated or obsolete
* Of or relating to the historical period following the Middle Ages
* Of, relating to, or characteristic of contemporary styles of art, literature, music, etc., that reject traditionally accepted or sanctioned forms and emphasize individual experimentation and sensibility.

##### Noun

* A person of modern times.
* A person whose views and tastes are modern.

### Practices

##### Noun

* Habitual or customary performance; operation
* Habit; custom

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

* To perform or do habitually or usually
* To follow or observe habitually or customarily

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

* To do something habitually or as a practice.
* To pursue a profession, especially law or medicine.

### Terrible

##### Adjective

* Distressing; severe
* Extremely bad; horrible
* Exciting terror, awe, or great fear; dreadful; awful.
* Formidably great

### Threat

##### Noun

* A declaration of an intention or determination to inflict punishment, injury, etc., in retaliation for, or conditionally upon, some action or course; menace
* An indication or warning of probable trouble
* A person or thing that threatens.

##### Verb (used with or without object)

* Archaic. to threaten.

### Cloze Questions

##### Fill in the blanks

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

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ produced from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hide \_\_\_\_ a key ingredient of one of China's favorite \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ remedies, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as ejiao, which is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a range \_\_\_\_ ailments from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to insomnia.

-: With just under 5 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ needed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ production, the industry would need more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ half \_\_\_\_\_\_ world's current donkeys \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_ meet demand, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to a report from The Donkey Sanctuary.

-: \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ six \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ ejiao industry \_\_\_\_\_\_ grown \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ due to increased demand \_\_\_\_\_\_ price rises, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ annual production increasing from 3,200 tonnes in 2013 \_\_\_\_ 5,600 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ 2016, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to The Donkey Sanctuary.

-: To meet demand, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ businesses need about \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkey hides \_\_\_\_\_\_ year.

-: Donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have collapsed 76% \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1992, so the industry has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to foreign suppliers, particularly \_\_\_\_ Africa, Asia and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ organization.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ seen a 28% reduction in donkey populations \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2007, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to 37% in Botswana and 53% \_\_\_\_ Kyrgyzstan.

-: In response \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sanctuary is pressing \_\_\_\_\_\_ "an urgent halt \_\_\_\_ the largely unregulated global trade \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ skins before donkeys are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ areas."

-: The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_ donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be felt most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 500 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people who rely on the animals in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ world's poorest communities, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the organization.

-: There \_\_\_\_\_\_ also reportedly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ animal welfare \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_ supply chain, the report states, \_\_\_\_ donkeys are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to slaughterhouses in terrible conditions.

-: Given the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of demand, even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ young \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as well as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and injured donkeys, are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ traded.

-: The report reveals \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the trade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ presents biosecurity risks, with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ practices encouraging \_\_\_\_\_\_ spread \_\_\_\_ diseases \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ anthrax, tetanus \_\_\_\_\_\_ equine flu.

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

-: "This suffering \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ just confined \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as it also threatens \_\_\_\_\_\_ livelihood of millions \_\_\_\_ people."

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for ejiao \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to switch to artificially-grown donkey-derived collagen, rather \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hides.

-: China \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suspend \_\_\_\_\_\_ import \_\_\_\_ donkeys, according to the organization.

-: The Register \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Herbal \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (RCHM), which regulates \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Chinese herbal medicine in the UK, said \_\_\_\_ condemns the use of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ endanger animals or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ them \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ practices.

-: The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ recognizes the outcry over unethical \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of donkey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ council member \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John in a statement.

-: "Whilst such \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ products have their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ uses, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ in modern \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ medicine practice \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and unethical \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ current sourcing," said John.

-: Gelatin from beef, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ chicken can be used \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John, while \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can use certain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of seaweeds and herbs.

-: China's rapid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from traditional \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ saw the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ donkey population \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in recent decades.

-: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ started to look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ hides, buying up such \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ animals that governments such as Niger \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Faso banned \_\_\_\_\_\_ sale of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to China due to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and economic problems.

-: So far \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ action to protect their donkey populations, according \_\_\_\_ The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 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?