



Global Effort to End Animal Testing for Health Claims of Foods and Beverages

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Hidden Ingredient in Foods and Beverages: Animal Testing

Food and beverage companies worldwide conduct, fund, and/or commission cruel and deadly tests on countless animals each year in attempts to substantiate human health claims for marketing their products. PETA is leading the global effort to end these experiments using a two-prong corporate and regulatory approach.

Regulatory Requirements for Food and Beverage Health Claims



Require human studies; accept animal tests as part of the totality of evidence only if human data is present. (Details [here](#).)



Ambiguity regarding whether animal tests are required. (Details [here](#) and [here](#).)

Mostly require both human and animal tests. (Details [here](#), in Mandarin.)

Mostly require either human or animal tests. (Details [here](#), in Mandarin.)

Problems With Animal Testing for Foods and Beverages

Cruel & Unpopular: Polls show that consumers increasingly [oppose animal testing](#) and [demand more protections for animals](#), so companies pursuing harmful tests on animals risk negative public relations.

Violates 3Rs: Human tests are available as “alternatives” to animal use since they are legally required in many countries, especially since the food and beverage products are already determined safe for human consumption. Other animal-free methods are also routinely used.

Unscientific: Animal tests are not fit-for-purpose for substantiating human health food claims (details [here](#) and [here](#)), and companies basing these claims on animal testing risk false advertisement. Some common human foods are toxic to other animals, e.g., chocolate is toxic to dogs.

Examples of Human Health Food Claims Using Animal Tests

Anti-Fatigue: Experimenters fed mice a common Chinese herbal-medicine blend and chicken essence, starved them for up to 24 hours, and dropped them into beakers filled with water to observe how long they struggled before they drowned or remained underwater for eight consecutive seconds. If the animals learned to float and conserve energy, experimenters would stir the water to force them to struggle. To speed up the drowning process, experimenters tied lead wires to the mice in order to make it harder for them to swim. ([Source](#), in Mandarin)

Preserve Cognition, Motor & Neuronal Function in Aging:

Experimenters fed rats strawberries or blueberries, forced them to grab wires while suspended and struggle to walk on rods that rotated at an accelerated speed, injected them with a chemical, and killed and dissected them. Five rats were killed before the end of the experiment because of excessive weight loss. ([Source](#))

Anti-Aggression & Depression: Experimenters fed mice dried bonito dashi (Japanese fish broth), cut off their nerves, put stranger mice into their cages to make them fight, forced them to swim, and killed and dissected them. Some mice died because of botched surgeries. ([Source](#))

Maintain Muscle Mass: Experimenters starved rats, electroshocked them to make them jump, caught them after jumping and put them back in the box for 200 times, force-fed them an amino acid mixture similar to whey protein with or without glucose, injected them with an amino acid, took their blood, and killed and dissected them. ([Source](#))

Strategies to Work With Governments to End Animal Tests

- Submit formal inquiries, preferably in the targets’ native languages.
- Submit scientific critiques and mobilize consumers to submit opinions during the public commenting periods for draft regulations.
- Work with government officials who oversee the regulatory agencies.
- Collaborate with local animal protection groups.
- Work with major food and beverage companies that operate in the targeted regions to voice their concerns against animal testing.
- Offer regulatory agencies scientific expertise and other assistance.



Successful Case Studies

Taiwan: Over two decades, food and beverage companies in Taiwan force-fed, electroshocked, drowned, starved, bled, poisoned, dissected and/or killed more than 10,000 animals to make human health claims for product marketing ([source](#), in Mandarin). After discussions with PETA:

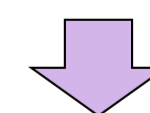
- The Taiwan Food and Drug Administration (TFDA) deleted the forced-swim test and treadmill running test on animals from its [anti-fatigue health claim regulation](#), and now only requires human tests for this.
- The TFDA prioritized internationally-recognized non-animal methods for [health food safety tests](#).
- Standard Foods Group—a licensee of PepsiCo’s Quaker Oats Company and the largest Taiwanese health food company, which conducted and/or funded at least 34 animal experiments between 2000 and 2020 that involved at least 1,963 animals—became [Taiwan’s first major food and beverage company to ban animal tests not required by law](#).

U.S.: Between 2015-2019, more than 2,600 mice, rats, and pigs underwent douching, poisoning, force-feeding, starving, radiating, bleeding, suffocating, beheading, and dissecting for marketing human health claims about blueberries, watermelons, and other common foods. Funding for these tests comes from a portion of the more than \$885 million in annual fees that farmers are required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to pay to agricultural commodity [research and promotion \(R&P\) boards](#). After hearing from PETA:

- The Hass Avocado Board, one of the R&P boards, adopted a new [policy](#) stating that it “does not support, fund, or conduct animal research.”

Strategies to Work With Food Companies to End Animal Tests

- Submit formal inquiries and scientific critiques, and point to policies of competitors that ban animal tests unrequired by law.
- Urge food and beverage companies with policies against animal tests to extend coverage to their suppliers, contractors, and licensees.
- Offer assistance to navigate legal requirements regarding health claim substantiation and negotiate with government regulators.
- Expose food and beverage companies that pursue unrequired animal testing for health claims, and mobilize consumers to protest them.



Major Worldwide Brands End Animal Testing



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139 food and beverage companies have established policies banning animal tests unrequired by law, after discussions with PETA.