



November 17, 2022

Christopher Braden, M.D.
Deputy Director
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Sent via e-mail: crb5@cdc.gov

Dear Dr. Braden:

On behalf of PETA, I am writing to urge you to suspend immediately all imports of monkeys from Cambodia.

Yesterday, the U.S. Department of Justice [indicted](#) several Cambodian nationals, as well as the owner and staff from one of the major Cambodian monkey farms for their roles in facilitating the acquisition of wild-caught long-tailed macaques and then falsely labelling them as captive bred to facilitate export to their U.S. customers that supply the laboratory industry. The Cambodian individuals named in the indictment include officials in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

The indictment also mentions two “unindicted co-conspirators” in the U.S., one in Alice, Texas and the other in the state of Florida. These are likely the large commercial primate importers and breeders. They go on to sell the monkeys they import to laboratories around the country. PETA can provide documentation that monkey importers in Alice, Texas and Florida, which have reportedly imported long-tailed macaques from Cambodia, have sold long-tailed macaques to the following laboratories since 2018, warranting investigation:

National Institutes of Health (Poolesville, MD)
Albert Einstein College of Medicine (Bronx, NY)
Allergan (Irvine, CA)
Altasciences Preclinical Seattle (Everett, WA)
Bioanalytical Systems Inc. (Mt. Vernon, IN)
Batelle Memorial Institute (West Jefferson, OH)
Bioqual (Rockville, MD)
BTS Research (San Diego, CA)
Calvert Laboratories (Scott Township, PA)
Charles River Laboratories (Ashland, OH)
Charles River Laboratories (LaBelle, FL)
Charles River Laboratories (Mattawan, MI)
Charles River Laboratories (Reno, NV)
Charles River Laboratories (Shrewsbury, MA)
Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, PA)
Citoxlab (Stillwell, KS)
Covance (Denver, PA)
Covance (Greenfield, IN)

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

Covance (Madison, WI)
CS Primates (Kaiser, MO)
Envigo (East Millstone, NJ)
Inotiv (Mount Vernon, IN)
MRI Global (Kansas City, MO)
Northern Biomedical Research Inc. (Spring Lake, MI)
Primera Science Center (Lehigh Acres, FL)
Rocky Mountain Laboratories (Hamilton, MT)
Sinclair Research Center (Auxvasse, MO)
SNBL USA (Everett, WA)
Southern Research Institute (Birmingham, AL)
USAMRIID (Fort Detrick, MD)
Washington University at St. Louis (St. Louis, MO)

The indictment is likely the “tip of the iceberg” given the apparent willingness at the highest levels of government to falsify documents. Given the voracious appetite that U.S. experimenters have demonstrated, especially during the pandemic, it is unlikely that Vanny Bio Research (Cambodia) Corporation Ltd (VBRC) is the only facility willing to engage in whatever it deems necessary to supply long-tailed macaques to the U.S. experimentation industry.

In July, PETA [contacted you](#) providing information regarding the public health risks inherent in the importation of primates and alerted you to the investigation of several CDC-registered primate importers including Inotiv, Laboratory Corporation of America, Envigo, Covance, and Orient BioResource Center. We told you that these importers were subpoenaed by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida for documents related to their primate procurement and importation activities. All of these CDC-registered, AAALAC-accredited commercial primate importers have direct ties to the long-tailed macaque trade originating in Cambodia. We now know the likely reason for the subpoenas.

Also in our July letter to you, we alerted you to monkey laundering issues:

In the past decade—and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic—scientists in habitat countries have noted a rise in the capture of primates in their natural homes for biomedical research, and countries have begun reinstating quotas for such captures in response to increasing demand and financial opportunity. Breeding centers exporting captive-bred primates may launder wild-caught animals as captive-bred and regularly capture primates in nature for upkeep.

This untenable demand for monkeys is being fueled by a false narrative. Over the past three years, the Directors of several of the National Primate Research Centers in the U.S. have gone on record claiming there is a monkey shortage for U.S. experimenters. When leaders of multimillion-dollar laboratories are plastering this message across major news outlets, it is not surprising that the result would be an increase in illegal activities that jeopardize animal and human health. In fact, in 2020, at the height of the so-called “monkey shortage,” the indictment alleges that VBRC bought 14,323 wild caught long-tailed macaques from black market suppliers. Since China shut down monkey exports at that time, the U.S. saw a dramatic increase in monkey imports from Cambodia—15,664 in FY 2020 according to CDC documents.

We urge the CDC, as a first step, to end all importation of monkeys from Cambodia, effective immediately. This should be followed by a ban on all importation of monkeys for laboratory use. Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'LJE', is positioned above the typed name.

Lisa Jones-Engel, Ph.D.
Senior Science Advisor, Primate Experimentation
Laboratory Investigations Department, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
LisaJE@peta.org