

The Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

April 2, 2026

VIA E-MAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: Concerns Regarding Canada’s Importation of Long-Tailed Macaques from Cambodia

We are writing to raise urgent concerns regarding Canada’s continued importation of long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) for biomedical research, particularly in light of new developments involving Charles River Laboratories (CRL).

CRL’s acquisition of a notorious Cambodian breeding facility in December 2025 marks a significant escalation in its control over the global macaque supply chain. By purchasing the source facility outright, CRL has eliminated intermediaries, but not the risks. The well-documented problems associated with Cambodia’s macaque trade—including opaque sourcing and the laundering of wild-caught animals into “captive-bred” pipelines—remain firmly in place.

The long-tailed macaque has been reassessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as **Endangered** twice in recent years due largely to **unsustainable levels of exploitation for trade**. This reflects growing scientific concern about the scale, opacity and illegality of the global supply chain that feeds the trade in macaques. Yet the system governing that trade remains fundamentally limited.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) enforces compliance with permits and declared information, but it **does not independently verify** whether animals labeled as “captive-bred” were, in fact, born in captivity. Even its reviews of breeding capacity and facility inspections depend on data and access controlled by the exporting country itself. Without independent validation, these processes cannot distinguish between accurate reporting and well-documented misrepresentation. This limitation is only amplified where a single commercial entity now controls the source facility, as is now the case with CRL’s USD \$530 million acquisition of the KF facility in Cambodia.

Despite these structural limitations, Canadian authorities continue to rely on **documentation-based assurances**. In a March 2026 response, Environment and Climate Change Canada stated that “tracking tools, such as unique identification numbers referenced on permits, can be used to validate the animals’ origin,” and that inspectors may rely on **visual examination** (i.e. “examining the claws, teeth, fur, and overall health”) to determine whether an animal is wild-caught or

captive-bred (see Schedule A). The same letter concluded that recent imports were deemed compliant because “there was no evidence of non-compliance with CITES permits.” Similarly, in a September 2024 response, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency emphasized that inspections focus on documentation and clinical condition and reported no “non-compliance” in recent shipments (see Schedule B).

However, **the absence of detected non-compliance is not evidence of legality**—particularly when the oversight system is not designed to detect fraud.

A November 2025 Access to Information request seeking all enforcement actions from January 2020 to October 31, 2025, returned **no records**. This lack of enforcement is especially troubling given what occurred during the August 8-10, 2024, shipment of 680 macaques from Cambodia. During this flight—delayed more than 27 hours in Tbilisi because CRL and its carrier, SkyTaxi, lacked proper Canadian landing permits—an adult male macaque was **found dead** upon arrival at Montreal-Mirabel airport. Despite prolonged confinement to tiny wooden crates for **nearly two days**, exposure to extreme temperatures which reportedly reached **48°C**, and limited access to food and water, the CFIA concluded that **no non-compliance had occurred**.

We have engaged directly with ECCC, CFIA, CTA, and others, yet the responses consistently return to the same premise: that paperwork, inspection, and permit compliance are sufficient to ensure legal origin of imported macaques (see Schedule C).

Documentation is only as reliable as the system that produces it. In a supply chain where wild-caught monkeys are laundered through captive-breeding facilities, **paperwork does not provide assurance; it provides cover**. Collars and tattoos do not establish origin; they can be applied to any animal at any point in the pipeline. Visual inspection cannot distinguish a wild-caught monkey from one born in captivity. Beyond documentation and visual inspection, it remains unclear whether Canadian authorities are consistently applying any biological methods—such as stable isotope analysis or genetic approaches—to verify claims that imported macaques are captive-bred. Even these methods have significant limitations: stable isotope analysis, for example, depends on comparison to a well-characterized reference population. In this context, that would require access to verified wild-caught macaques from the same geographic regions. Without a robust, independently validated wild baseline, such analyses cannot reliably distinguish captive-bred animals from those recently taken from the wild and laundered through monkey farms.

Meanwhile, evidence of ongoing trafficking continues to surface. On March 12, 2026, Thai wildlife authorities seized a truckload of macaques at the Thai-Cambodia border in the Sa Kaeo Province—the **fifth such seizure since November 2025**—underscoring the persistent laundering of wild-caught macaques through Cambodian facilities. A five-year undercover investigation by U.S. Fish and Wildlife authorities similarly documented systematic laundering of wild-caught macaques into the “captive-bred” trade.

What is being presented as regulatory oversight by Canadian authorities is, in practice, a system that accepts paperwork at face value while disregarding credible, repeated evidence of fraud, illegal sourcing, and animal welfare violations.

Canada is now at a crossroads. By continuing to permit primate imports from Cambodia under these conditions—particularly from facilities newly owned and controlled by major industry players—it risks becoming complicit in a system that undermines conservation, facilitates wildlife trafficking, and exposes both animals and the public to unnecessary risk.

We urge your office to take immediate action to:

- Halt imports of long-tailed macaques from Cambodia;
- Reevaluate the reliance on documentation as proof of origin;
- Disclose and subject to independent review any biological methods (including stable isotope or genetic analyses) used to verify the origin of imported macaques, including the source, validation, and maintenance of any reference populations; and
- Align Canada’s policies with the growing global recognition that current primate supply chains cannot be verified or trusted.

By permitting Charles River Laboratories to import monkeys directly from a Cambodian facility it now owns, Canada is not insulating itself from risk—it is assuming responsibility for a supply chain controlled outside its jurisdiction and asking Canadians to accept assurances that cannot be independently verified.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jones-Engel, PhD
Chief Science Advisor, Primate Experimentation
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals



Kira Berkeley, JD
Advocacy Manager
Animal Protection Party of Canada



Pablo Fernandez, PhD
Co-Director
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Michael Schillaci, PhD
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Michelle Drapeau, PhD
Professeure d'anthropologie
Université de Montréal

SCHEDULE A

Minister of the Environment,
Climate Change
and Nature



Ministre de l'Environnement,
du Changement climatique
et de la Nature

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0H3

MAR 19 2026

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C. M.P.
Minister of Jobs and Families and
Minister responsible for the Federal Economic
Development Agency for Northern Ontario
House of Commons
patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your letter of November 12, 2025, written on behalf of your constituents, concerning on the importation of the long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) into Canada for biomedical research. I regret the delay in responding.

Canada has been a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) since its inception in 1975. Through this agreement, 185 nations worldwide work together to ensure that international trade is sustainable and does not threaten wildlife species, by implementing a strict permit system.

In Canada, responsibility for regulating the use of non-human primates for research is shared. Import requirements related to animal health and public health fall within the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's mandate. Environment and Climate Change's CITES Management Authority ensures compliance with international trade obligations and monitors trade to ensure that wildlife imports comply with the relevant acts and regulations, specifically the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* (WAPPRITA).

The long-tailed macaque is listed in Appendix II to CITES, which includes species that are not currently threatened with extinction but could become so unless trade is closely controlled. These species require a CITES export permit issued by the exporting country. Exporting countries are expected to verify the legal origin of exported specimens and ensure that trade poses no detriment to the survival of the species in the wild.

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The Department's Canadian Wildlife Service does not issue permits for the import of Appendix II species such as the long-tailed macaque. Instead, it ensures that imports into Canada are accompanied by the required CITES export permits from the country of origin.

Environment and Climate Change Canada is responsible for verifying compliance with CITES permits and ensuring that the information on export permits matches the specimens arriving in Canada. If a permit does not accurately reflect the true origin of a species (wild or captive-bred), departmental enforcement officers may take measures under section 9(1) of WAPPRITA. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) regulations apply only to the export of live specimens from Canada; therefore, departmental enforcement officers have no jurisdiction under IATA for the import of live specimens into Canada.

With respect to the January 2025 CITES Secretariat recommendation to suspend international trade in long-tailed macaques with Cambodia, it is important to note that the CITES Standing Committee did not adopt this recommendation at its February 2025 meeting. Instead, it requested that the CITES Secretariat conduct a technical assessment to determine how Cambodian CITES authorities ensure that trade and captive-breeding operations comply with CITES requirements.

This assessment was carried out by the CITES Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee in June 2025. Their report included extensive information from Cambodia, including evidence of its capacity to achieve the production levels it reports. The Animals Committee reviewed the report and concluded that reproductive rates in Cambodia's captive breeding facilities were plausible. The Standing Committee considered the report at its November 2025 meeting and agreed to recommend a series of actions to Cambodia to improve its implementation of CITES. A trade suspension was not recommended.

Over the past several months, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency have examined animals originating from Cambodia. As of mid-June 2025, it was confirmed that these animals had been imported legally, as there was no evidence of non-compliance with CITES permits. The Department has verified that all recent imports of live macaques to Canada—whether from Cambodia or other countries—for use in biomedical research comply with WAPPRITA.

It is possible to determine whether a non-human primate originates from the wild or is captive-bred for research. Tracking tools, such as unique identification numbers referenced on permits, can be used to validate the animals' origin. During inspections, additional techniques, such as examining the claws, teeth, fur, and overall health, may also be employed.

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Please be assured that Environment and Climate Change Canada will continue to follow this issue closely.

I hope that this information is helpful in responding to your constituents, and I extend my best regards.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Julie Dabrusin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, P.C., M.P.

SCHEDULE B



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

September 3, 2024

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

Dear Dr. Jones-Engel,

Thank you for your email received on August 10, 2024, regarding the imported Cambodian-origin macaques and for sharing your concerns.

As you are aware, the CFIA is responsible for regulating the importation of animals into Canada to prevent the introduction and spread of serious diseases that have the potential to negatively affect the health of both humans and animals.

As such, all non-human primates (NHPs), including long-tailed macaques (referred to simply as macaques in the rest of this letter), must be accompanied by a CFIA Import Permit and a Zoosanitary Export Certificate to enter Canada. The animals must meet strict import requirements as detailed in the published import policy [Requirements for Non-Human Primates Imported into Canada - Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#).

The following measures have been put in place for macaques that are imported to Canada for research purposes to prevent the introduction and spread of serious diseases that have the potential to negatively affect the health of both humans and animals:

- The exporting premises must be under veterinary supervision in the country of origin.
- The Canadian laboratory importing the macaques must be currently in good standing with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).
- The macaques must be accompanied by a Zoosanitary Export Certificate. They must be inspected by a veterinarian on the day of shipment from the premises of origin and found to be healthy, free from clinical signs of contagious diseases and fit for transport.
- The macaques must be tested for Tuberculosis, Salmonella, Shigella and Yersinia prior to the export and during the post-import quarantine in Canada.

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Canada 

- Upon arrival in Canada, at the port of entry, the CFIA inspects the macaques and the accompanying documentation to ensure that these animals meet CFIA's import requirements, including [humane transport requirements](#), (as per the *Health of Animals Regulations, Part XII*).
- The macaques are sent to a CFIA approved quarantine facility and are quarantined for a minimum of 30 days or a longer, as necessary to complete the required testing and treatment.
- The macaques imported must not be removed from the premises of destination listed on the import permit even after the animals are released from post-import quarantine unless prior written authorization is obtained from the CFIA.
- All staff exposed to macaques must follow the precautionary measures as outlined in the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), founded as OIE, Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapter 6.12, article 6.12.7.

The CFIA has not found any non-compliance with its requirements on recent shipments of macaques that were imported into Canada and that have completed the required quarantine.

With respect to the landing permit, the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) is responsible for the licensing of non-scheduled international service. With respect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) permits, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is responsible for the verification/issuance of these permits. Questions about the CTA licensing process or CITES permits and any applicable investigation in the event of a non-compliant shipments to either of those requirements should be addressed to CTA or ECCC respectively.

I trust this clarifies the responsibilities of the various departments.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Jane Ireland
CVO & WOAHP Delegate for Canada
Executive Director, Animal Health Directorate

SCHEDULE C



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

July 13, 2023

Lisa Jones-Engel, Ph.D.
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Nedim C Buyukmihci, V.M.D.
Cofounder and Veterinary Advisor, Action for Primates
Emeritus Professor of Veterinary Medicine
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ActionForPrimates.org/

Dear Dr. Jones-Engel and Dr. Buyukmihci,

Thank you for contacting the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) regarding the importation of long-tailed macaques into Canada and for sharing your concerns.

As you are aware, the CFIA is responsible for regulating the importation of animals into Canada in order to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases that have the potential to negatively affect the health of both humans and animals.

As such, all non-human primates (NHPs), including long-tailed macaques, must be accompanied by a CFIA Import Permit and a Zoosanitary Export Certificate in order to enter Canada and must meet strict import requirements detailed in the import policy [Requirements for Non-Human Primates Imported into Canada - Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#).

For the importation of macaques for research purposes, from premises that are under veterinary supervision, the requirements outlined in the import policy include, but are not limited to:

- The Canadian laboratory importing the macaques must be currently in good standing with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).

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Canada 

- The macaques must be accompanied by a Zoosanitary Export Certificate. They must be inspected by a veterinarian on the day of shipment from the premises of origin and found to be healthy, free from clinical signs of contagious diseases and fit for transport.
- The macaques must be tested for Tuberculosis, Salmonella, Shigella and Yersinia prior to the export and during the post-import quarantine.
- Upon arrival in Canada, the macaques will be quarantined for a minimum of 30 days or a longer period of time as necessary to complete the testing and treatment required.
- The macaques imported must not be removed from the premises of destination listed on the import permit even after the animals have been released from post-import quarantine unless written authorization is obtained from the CFIA.
- All staff exposed to macaques must follow the precautionary measures as outlined in the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), founded as OIE, Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Chapter 6.12, article 6.12.7.

Furthermore, the CFIA requires that the veterinary competent authority of the exporting country, for example Cambodia, certifies on the Zoosanitary Export Certificate that the animals originate from premises under veterinary supervision. As per CFIA's import policy, "premises under veterinary supervision" means:

"Non-human primates that were born or have been kept for at least two (2) years on premises where animals are individually identified and there is complete documentation of the clinical history of each animal (including vaccinations, treatments, tests and pathologies) and the group of origin is available. The premises are under permanent veterinary supervision that is recognized by the authorities of the exporting country."

Also, upon arrival in Canada, the CFIA inspects the NHPs and the accompanying documentation to ensure that these animals meet CFIA's import requirements. Compliance and enforcement actions are taken for any non-compliant shipment. The CFIA has not found any non-compliance with its requirements on recent shipments of long-tailed macaques that were imported into Canada and that have completed the required quarantine.

With respect to your comment about the reclassification of long-tailed macaques as an endangered species, or the verification/issuance of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) permits, since it is not within CFIA's mandate, we suggest that you contact Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) for any further questions.

Thank you for contacting the CFIA. I trust this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Jane Ireland
Chief Veterinary Officer of Canada
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

c.c.: Dr. Natalie Tessier, Senior Import Veterinary Officer, Import-Export of Live Animals and Germplasm Section, Animal Import/Export Division, International Affairs Branch
Dr. Samira Belaissaoui, National Manager, Import-Export of Live Animals and Germplasm Section, Animal Import/Export Division, International Affairs Branch
Dr. Suminder Sawhney, Senior Director, Animal Import/Export Division, International Affairs Branch
Dr Parthiban Muthukumarasamy, Executive Director, International Program Directorate



June 11, 2025

The Honorable Julie Dabrusin
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Mr. Pierre Verreault
Executive Director
Canadian Council on Animal Care

The Honorable Gary Anandasangaree
Minister of Public Safety

The Honorable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Transport and Internal Trade

The Honorable Marjorie Michel
Minister of Health

Paul MacKinnon
President
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Via e-mail: ministre-minister@ec.gc.ca; pverreault@ccac.ca; gary.anand@parl.gc.ca; chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca; marjorie.michel@parl.gc.ca; Paul.MacKinnon@inspection.gc.ca

Dear Minister Dabrusin, Mr. Verreault, Minister Anandasangaree, Minister Freeland, Minister Michel, and Mr. MacKinnon:

We are writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally, including 471,000 in Canada—to raise urgent concerns about the cross-border risks posed by tuberculosis (TB) in nonhuman primates imported by Charles River Laboratories. The company continues to import monkeys into Canada despite being linked to multiple TB outbreaks in the United States. These developments raise serious questions about the adequacy of disease prevention protocols for primate imports, particularly why Charles River continues to import monkeys from suppliers known to have TB-positive animals, and how such risks are being monitored and enforced in both countries. Our colleagues at Animal Protection Party of Canada and Abolición Vivisección share our concerns.

Public records obtained from the USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirm that monkeys infected with multiple strains of tuberculosis, including zoonotic strains, have been imported into the United States. Most infections were detected during Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-mandated quarantine; however, some animals passed quarantine and were transferred between facilities, where additional infections were later detected.

Key findings from the enclosed [report](#) include:

- **Multiple Strains of Mycobacteria Among Imported Primates:** From January 2023 to August 2024, monkeys infected with members of the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex (MTBC)—including *M. tuberculosis*, *M. orygis*,

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- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

M. caprae, and *M. bovis*—were identified during and after CDC-mandated quarantine. In addition, two atypical mycobacterial species, *M. avium* and *M. terrae* complex, were also detected. These infections occurred in primates imported from Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Mauritius.

- **CDC Knew Yet Continued to Facilitate Imports:** Despite the detection of *M. orygis*—a strain of TB never before seen in U.S. primates—during CDC-mandated quarantine in a 2023 shipment from Vietnam, the CDC did not halt imports from the implicated supplier. Charles River continued to source monkeys from this supplier throughout 2023, and *M. orygis* infections were still being detected well into 2024. The CDC failed at the first line of defense.
- **Diagnostic Protocols Repeatedly Failed:** Tuberculin skin tests (TSTs) and serological assays repeatedly produced false negatives when applied to newly imported monkeys as well as among monkeys in established colonies. In Michigan, monkeys that cleared CDC-mandated quarantine and over a dozen follow-up TB screening tests were later confirmed via necropsy to have widespread TB infections. Two laboratory workers tested positive after exposure to the infected monkeys.
- **Domestic Movement Spread TB Between U.S. Facilities:** Infected or latently infected monkeys were transferred between facilities, including cross-country shipments from Houston, TX to Frederick, MD and Reno, NV, distributing TB across colonies and amplifying outbreak risks.
- **Importers Withheld Critical Information from Clients:** Charles River failed to disclose in their [2024](#) and [2025](#) NHP Reports that the company had been importing TB-infected monkeys during 2023-2024.
- **Failure to Disclose to Regulators and Shareholders:** Companies have not disclosed these outbreaks or test failures in Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filings, despite their potential to impact operations, liability, and revenue—constituting possible material nondisclosure. These failures may also violate CDC import rules, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinary care standards, and the Animal Welfare Act.

You can view the full report [here](#). A PDF version without exhibits is also attached for your convenience.

[The CDC has acknowledged that TB](#) cases in imported primates are increasing, with some latent infections being missed during quarantine and only detected after the animals were transferred to other facilities. Unfortunately, there is [no centralized system in the United States for reporting TB](#) cases in primates after they have exited CDC-mandated quarantine, raising serious concerns that additional outbreaks may be going unnoticed and unreported.

Given the serious public health and animal welfare implications, we respectfully urge your offices to review all primate imports, especially those linked to Charles River Laboratories, and to coordinate with U.S. regulatory counterparts to mitigate further cross-border risks.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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Dr. Pablo Fernández
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June 26, 2025

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Subject: Tuberculosis in imported non-human primates

Dear Ms. Lisa Jones-Engel, Ms. Jennifer Draiss, Ms. April Mckay, Dr. Pablo Fernández and Ms. Lia Laskaris,

Thank you for contacting the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to raise your concerns about the cross-border risks posed by tuberculosis (TB) in imported non-human primates (NHPs).

As you are aware, the CFIA is responsible for regulating the importation of animals into Canada in order to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases that have the potential to negatively affect the health of both humans and animals.

To enter into Canada, all NHPs must meet strict import requirements detailed in the import policy [Requirements for Non-Human Primates Imported into Canada - Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#). These requirements include pre-import and post import testing for TB in NHPs.

Under the *Health of Animal Act and Regulations and the Reportable diseases Regulations*, bovine TB is a reportable disease in Canada. As such, Subsections 5(1) and (2) of the Act require owners (or anyone caring for, or having control over, animals), veterinarians and/or laboratories to immediately notify a veterinary inspector of the CFIA when the person suspects one of the diseases listed in the *Reportable Diseases*

Regulations is present, or when the person becomes aware of any fact indicating the presence of disease.

It is important to note that the NHPs imported into Canada for research purposes are kept in a controlled/restricted environment with high biosecurity standards, as per the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) guidelines. People working with NHPs are also required to wear adequate protective personal equipment (PPE) and follow the precautionary measures outlined in the World Organization for Animal Health's (WOAH) Terrestrial Animal Health Code, specifically Chapter 6.12, article 6.12.7.

In addition, the imported NHPs must not be removed from the premises of destination listed on the import permit even after the animals have been released from post-entry quarantine unless written authorization is obtained from the CFIA.

The CFIA has controls in place to address risks associated with TB in imported NHPs.

Thank you for raising this important issue with CFIA and I hope this response addresses your concerns,

Sincerely,

Dr Parthi Muthukumarasamy
Executive Director
International Programs Directorate
International Affairs Branch
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

August 8, 2025

Dr. Parthi Muthukumarasamy
Executive Director
International Programs Directorate
International Affairs Branch
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Via e-mail: parthiban.muthukumarasamy@inspection.gc.ca

Dear Dr. Muthukumarasamy:

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) June 26, 2025 response to our concerns about tuberculosis (TB) in imported non-human primates (NHPs) is dangerously inadequate. By deflecting to existing policies and claiming "controls are in place," CFIA has failed to address the systemic breakdowns that allow zoonotic TB strains to continue entering Canada through the primate trade. PETA, alongside organizations including the Animal Protection Party of Canada, and Abolición Vivisección is compelled to respond.

Our [2025 Tuberculosis Report](#) presents irrefutable evidence that the current screening, quarantine, and containment protocols for imported NHPs are insufficient. In the United States, multiple strains of zoonotic TB have repeatedly breached these defenses, spreading within primate research colonies and exposing workers and the public. The same source countries, the same inadequate testing regimens, and the same commercial supply chains implicated in these U.S. outbreaks are being used to funnel monkeys into Canada.

Public records and diagnostic data reveal a troubling reality: CFIA's policies are not preventing disease introduction—they are masking it. Without urgent reforms, Canada remains vulnerable to the same biosecurity failures that have plagued the U.S. primate research pipeline.

CFIA's reliance on outdated and unreliable diagnostic methods—specifically the tuberculin skin test (TST)—is a critical flaw.¹ TB infections in monkeys can remain latent for months or even years, easily evading detection during routine screenings.² Despite decades of evidence exposing the TST's limitations, CFIA continues to require only two negative skin tests, spaced two weeks apart, using mammalian old tuberculin (MOT)—a method that has repeatedly failed to catch infected animals before they enter research colonies.

¹ Yee JL, Prongay K, Van Rompay KKA, et al. Tuberculosis detection in nonhuman primates is enhanced by the use of testing algorithms that include an interferon- γ release assay. *Am J Vet Res.* 2022;83(1):15-22. doi:10.2460/ajvr.21.08.0124

² Panarella M, Hursh S (2022) A retrospective analysis of the tuberculin skin test reactions of a single source population of Mauritian *Macaca fascicularis* held in quarantine during 2017. *PLoS ONE* 17(4): e0265942. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0265942>

The consequences of this negligence are not hypothetical. In the United States, monkeys who “cleared” quarantine later developed active TB, triggering outbreaks that endangered laboratory staff, compromised research data, and forced costly containment efforts.³ Canada’s import protocols mirror these same failures, making a future outbreak not a possibility—but a certainty.

Canada Received Monkeys from Countries with Known TB Outbreaks That Went Undetected in the U.S.

Between January 2023 and August 2024, 94 monkeys infected with members of the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex (MTBC)—including *M. tuberculosis*, *M. orygis*, *M. caprae*, and *M. bovis*—were identified during and after CDC-mandated quarantine in the U.S. In addition, two atypical mycobacterial species, *M. avium* and *M. terrae complex*, were also detected. These infections occurred in monkeys imported from Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Mauritius. During this same time period, Canada imported 7,193 macaques from Vietnam, Cambodia, Mauritius, and the U.S. It appears that many of the monkeys entering Canada came from the same facilities where TB has clearly been festering, putting Canadian public health at grave risk.

Mauritius

Canada continues to import wild-caught monkeys from Mauritius through the U.S., despite multiple documented outbreaks occurring in the country. In early 2023, four wild-caught, Mauritius-origin long-tailed macaques had cleared all U.S. CDC-mandated entry requirements, which included not only screening before export, but also three consecutive negative tuberculin skin tests (TSTs) during the 31-day federal quarantine period. Over the next year and a half, they then tested negative on six additional TSTs, interferon gamma release assays (IFN- γ), two independent serology assays, and thoracic radiographs. Seven months after the last TST, one macaque developed signs of active disease, including lethargy and respiratory distress, while three others tested positive despite being asymptomatic. After euthanasia and necropsy, PCR confirmed *M. tuberculosis complex* DNA in three of the four monkeys—demonstrating the failure of TB testing protocols and the inability of these tests to detect latent infections that become active during transport, social disruption, or assignment to a study protocol.⁴

Vietnam

From February to May 2023, an outbreak of *M. orygis*—a TB strain never seen in macaques in the United States or Canada—was detected in a shipment of 540 long-tailed macaques originating from Southeast Asia. Thirty-two macaques in this shipment elicited a positive TST reaction and were euthanized. Additional testing showed that 26 were positive for TB via culture, including animals who had been negative on TST. The remaining macaques in this shipment underwent an extended quarantine period that included additional TSTs before being released from quarantine on August 8, 2023.³ The macaques involved in this outbreak originated from Vietnam’s Thanh Cong Biological Creature Company (Thanh Cong) and were imported by Charles River Laboratories (CRL). Furthermore, records

³ Swisher SD, Taetzsch SJ, Laughlin ME, et al. Outbreak of *Mycobacterium orygis* in a Shipment of *Cynomolgus* Macaques Imported from Southeast Asia — United States, February–May 2023. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2024;73(7):145-148. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7307a2

⁴ Gerras A, Bolin S, Mani R, Sledge D. 2023 Disseminated Tuberculosis In A Group Of *Cynomolgus* Macaques. Pg 27. ⁴ https://acvp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023_accepted_abstracts.pdf

Thanh Cong provided to CITES indicate that the facility had 646 monkey deaths at their facility in 2023. Mortality on this scale is consistent with disease outbreaks.⁵

Canada continued to receive Vietnam-origin monkeys before, during, and after these outbreaks occurred in the U.S. and despite those confirmed TB cases, CRL continued to import macaques from Thanh Cong throughout 2023, 2024, and 2025. *M. orygis* was still detected in CRL colonies a year and a half later, indicating that the outbreak strain persisted and may still be circulating.

Re-Exports from the United States

CRL is the main importer of monkeys into Canada. Many of these monkeys have first been exported into the U.S. and then re-exported to Canada. Some of these re-exported monkeys originated from Florida and Texas, two of the states that we identified as the center of an ongoing TB outbreak. Additionally, CRL failed to disclose in its [2024](#) and [2025](#) Nonhuman Primate Reports that it had been importing TB-infected monkeys during 2023-2024.

Despite the number of TB cases detected after U.S. CDC quarantine, CFIA guidelines state that “Animals imported from the United States are exempt from the tuberculosis testing requirements provided that the unconditional release from quarantine in the United States can be documented.” Furthermore, animals may be re-exported to Canada without undergoing a residency period in the United States.⁶ Given this requirement and the importation of monkeys by a company with multiple known TB outbreaks, it is likely that monkeys with undetected, latent strains of TB are currently in facilities across Canada.

Canadian Agencies Have Refused to Respond to Documented TB Risks, Putting Public Health at Risk

PETA, Abolición Vivisección and the Animal Protection Party of Canada have repeatedly submitted detailed documentation to Canadian authorities outlining the disease risks linked to imported macaques. These warnings have been met with either silence or generic acknowledgments that restate Canada’s quarantine protocols—protocols that have already proven inadequate to contain disease.

At the same time, Animal Alliance of Canada’s Access to Information requests regarding these biosecurity lapses have been met with excessive delays, extensive redactions and entire documents being withheld. Requests that once took only a few months to process are now languishing for nearly a year, obstructing public access to vital information and shielding regulatory failures from scrutiny.

Has Canada implemented modern TB testing algorithms to address these ongoing outbreaks? Or is it deliberately turning a blind eye, hoping to dodge responsibility while the risk of a public health disaster

⁵ CITES presentation from Viet Nam concerning trade in *Macaca fascicularis* in response to Resolution conf 17.7 on review of animal specimens reported as produced in Captivity, February 3-8, 2025. Pg 7, Facility 3. <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/documents/E-SC78-Inf-14.pdf>

⁶ Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Requirements for Non-Human Primates Imported into Canada. Government of Canada; 2009. Accessed July 15, 2025. <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/imports/import-policies/live-animals/2009-1>

escalates? The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) must stop stalling and immediately coordinate with U.S. agencies to close enforcement gaps before this threat crosses more borders.

Will you please contact us at your earliest convenience so that we can discuss this critical matter? Thank you for your prompt attention.

Respectfully,



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