China's Role in Supplying Monkeys to U.S. Laboratories



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Each year, tens of thousands of monkeys are imported into laboratories in the United States from overseas breeding operations. To obtain these animals, the U.S. has outsourced a critical component of the biomedical research importation pipeline to foreign monkey suppliers controlled by China, Cambodia, and other foreign actors operating largely beyond direct American oversight.

American dependence on Chinese-owned companies creates significant national security vulnerabilities. It exposes the U.S. to biosecurity and public health risks associated with the movement of animals carrying infectious diseases.



Many of the countries that dominate the commercial monkey trade score poorly on internationally recognized measures of corruption and transparency. Cambodia, for example, received a score of just 20 out of 100 on Transparency International's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index.

Nevertheless, U.S. importers, regulators, and research institutions determine the legitimacy of imported monkeys on the permits, breeding records, and export documentation generated by the suppliers and officials in these countries. As a result, the U.S. research enterprise has become embedded within opaque international supply chains in which biosecurity risks, wildlife trafficking, corruption, document fraud, and other forms of criminal activity frequently converge.

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CHINA'S INFLUENCE EXTENDS BEYOND DIRECT EXPORTS

Although monkey imports directly from China ceased after 2020, companies linked to China and Hong Kong remain deeply involved in breeding and export networks in Cambodia and Vietnam that continue to supply U.S. laboratories. The U.S. has not escaped the smuggling and disease risks associated with China's monkey trade. Those risks still exist in the trade routes from Cambodia and Vietnam through many of the same networks, business relationships, and suppliers that previously supported exports from China.

FOREIGN MONKEY SUPPLIERS LINKED TO SMUGGLING AND LAUNDERING



VIETNAM

Two Vietnamese monkey exporters supplying U.S. laboratories have corporate ties to companies in China and Hong Kong.

- **Nafovanny** was established as a joint venture between a Hong Kong company and the government of Vietnam.[1] A Cambodian operation linked to the same Hong Kong company was implicated in a federal monkey smuggling and laundering case.
- **Thanhcong-Jingang** operates in partnership with a Chinese monkey-breeding company[2] and has been linked to a monkey-smuggling scheme. In 2018, Chinese court records described the alleged smuggling of 3,251 macaques from Vietnam into China. Individuals involved were also implicated in other wildlife trafficking activity.[3]

CAMBODIA

In Cambodia, the two major exporters supplying U.S. laboratories were founded by Chinese nationals.



- **Vanny Bio Research Cambodia** is part of a Hong Kong–based network. The company became the subject of a five-year U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service investigation that culminated in multiple federal indictments alleging widespread monkey smuggling and laundering. The defendants included Cambodian government officials as well as company owners and employees.[4]
- **K.F. (Cambodia) Ltd.** reportedly has a history of involvement in the illegal capture of long-tailed macaques.[5]

These cases highlight the risks of relying on foreign documentation to verify that the origins of monkeys imported into the U.S. meet legal requirements.

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KEY CORPORATE CONNECTIONS

VANNY GROUP (HONG KONG)

The Hong Kong–based Vanny Group operates monkey breeding and export businesses through Vanny Bio Research in Cambodia[6] and Nafovanny (Vietnam Monkey Breeding and Development Joint Venture) in Vietnam.[1]

HAINAN JINGANG BIOTECH (CHINA)

Hainan Jingang Biotech is the Chinese company that operates in partnership with Thanhcong-Jingang Biological Technology in Vietnam.[2]

CHARLES RIVER LABORATORIES: K.F. CAMBODIA AND HAINAN NEW SOURCE

Charles River Laboratories now controls monkey-breeding operations in Cambodia and China that were historically connected through the same businessman. Zheng Xinguo founded K.F. (Cambodia) Ltd., formerly known as Golden China and one of Cambodia's largest exporters of monkeys to U.S. laboratories,[7] and also owned Hainan New Source Biotechnology in China. Charles River acquired an 80% stake in Hainan New Source in 2019 and later assumed full ownership.[8,9] In 2026, Charles River Laboratories acquired K.F. Cambodia's monkey operations.[10]

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