

China plans to phase out mandatory cosmetics animal testing

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Singapore: China's Food and Drug Administration plans to remove its mandatory animal test requirements for domestically manufactured cosmetic products from June 14.

Chinese companies producing "non-special use cosmetics" such as shampoo or perfume will have the option to substantiate product safety using existing safety data for raw ingredients, or European Union-validated non-animal tests instead of having to submit product samples to the government for testing on rabbits, mice and rats.

Humane Society International (HSI) estimates that as many as 300,000 rabbits, mice and other animals may be subject to cosmetics chemical testing each year in China alone.

CFDA's announcement comes less than five months after the successful launch of HSI's groundbreaking Be Cruelty-Free China campaign. Based in Beijing, HSI's team has been working diligently with Chinese policymakers and regulators to advance the acceptance of non-animal tests and accelerate a move away from animal testing. This culminated in the first-ever review of China's cosmetics law in 20 years, with Be Cruelty-Free China submitting a detailed technical proposal outlining cosmetics safety testing without animals.

Troy Seidle, HSI's Be Cruelty-Free director, said, "This news from China marks a major milestone in our campaign and could constitute a significant watershed moment in our global effort to end cosmetics animal testing worldwide. HSI's team has prioritised efforts to transform the future for animals in laboratories in China.

Initially the new rules will only apply to cosmetics manufactured in China. However, CFDA has stated that once the new

system has been established, it may be expanded to include imported products and certain "special use" cosmetics as well. This would be a major step towards removing trade barriers between China and the EU, enabling cruelty-free companies worldwide to sell their products on the Chinese mainland without compromising their 'no animal testing' policies.