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Learn more about the ban on cosmetics testing on animals, which took effect on December 22, 2023. On this page Background About the ban To file a complaint Background Increasing concern for the well-being of animals has driven demand by people in Canada for cruelty-free cosmetics, such as shampoos, soaps and makeup. As the demand for cruelty-free cosmetics has increased, cosmetic manufacturers have been less likely to test on animals. Many were already voluntarily reducing their reliance on animal testing data. Many countries around the world have laws in place that ban or limit the testing of cosmetics on animals, including the European Union (EU) member countries. The EU has banned the sale of cosmetics tested on animals since 2013. Canada joined these many countries in banning the sale of cosmetics as of December 22, 2023. About the ban Health Canada held discussions with the cosmetics industry and key animal advocacy groups before implementing the ban. The ban covers both cosmetics imported into Canada and cosmetics manufactured in Canada. The laws that make up the ban are part of the Food and Drugs Act (act). Any person is banned from testing cosmetics on vertebrate or invertebrate animals in Canada if: it may cause the animal physical or mental pain, suffering or injury and the purpose of the testing is to satisfy cosmetic requirements under the act or cosmetic safety requirements in another country People are also banned from: selling a cosmetic in Canada if safety can't be established without relying on data from animal testing when testing may cause the animal physical or mental pain, suffering or injury, with some exceptions making a claim on a label or in an advertisement that the cosmetic has not been tested on animals unless they can provide evidence of the truth of this claim when asked by the Minister of Health Cosmetic products already on the market in Canada may continue to rely on their existing animal testing data to demonstrate safety. This is consistent with how other countries have put in place their bans on cosmetic animal testing. Over time, the ban will apply to many more cosmetics as new cosmetics are introduced to Canada and existing cosmetics are reformulated. The ban and the cosmetics industry To meet the Canadian requirements, industry must: not test any cosmetics on animals in Canada to establish the cosmetic is safe for the purpose of satisfying cosmetic requirements under the act or another country's cosmetic requirements ensure the safety of any new cosmetic product sold in Canada can be established relying strictly on allowable data data not derived from animal testing data satisfying the relevant exceptions ensure that any claims stating the cosmetic was not tested on animals can be supported by evidence To help industry comply with the requirements, Health Canada has developed the following guidance document: Guidance document: Animal testing ban on cosmetics Enforcing the ban Health Canada will enforce the ban on cosmetic animal testing by responding to complaints and incident reports made by people in Canada. We will review each complaint to determine if it contains enough information for us to take action. We may ask the person who filed the complaint for more information if needed. We will not pursue the complaint if: the evidence provided to support the complaint is not credible the product targeted by the complaint is not subject to the relevant requirement of the ban for example, the product relies on animal testing data and was sold before December 22, 2023, meaning the data may be used We will take appropriate action if we find that industry has violated the ban on cosmetic animal testing. Other animal testing in Canada The ban won't interfere with other legislative regimes in Canada where animal testing is still needed to demonstrate safety until internationally accepted alternative methods become available. Examples include testing of pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Health Canada continues to support the development and use of alternatives to animal testing both within Canada and through our participation on national and international scientific committees. To file a complaint You may file a complaint if you: believe that 1 of the requirements of the ban on cosmetic animal testing has been violated and can provide or point to credible evidence that we can review when processing your complaint Examples of credible evidence include: photographs links to scientific data links to scientific journals documentation from the company or an employee of the company You can help us with our assessment by providing as many details as possible. The following sections outline the steps to take for different scenarios and how to submit a complaint. Use the following form to submit your complaint: Submit a consumer report If you believe cosmetics are being tested on animals in Canada after Dec 22, 2023 Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: where testing took place for example, address of facility period during which the testing is suspected to have taken place for example, between Jan 1, 2024, and March 1, 2024 reason for believing the testing took place for example, witnessed testing link to report describing the testing additional details for example, type of testing and type of animal involved in the testing Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product that was involved in the described incident. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information. If you believe the safety of a cosmetic sold in Canada cannot be established without relying on data from animal testing Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: a detailed description of the safety data you suspect the company relied on for the given product the reasons that led you to believe the company relied on this data a description of how the safety data violates the ban the brand name of the product Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product for which the safety data is in question. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information. If you believe that claims about animal testing made on a label or in an advertisement are false Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: the name and type of cosmetic product for example, shampoo, lotion, lipstick the wording of the claim made on the label or in the advertisement the reason you believe the claim is false include any evidence supporting your conclusion Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product that was involved in the described incident. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information.

purposes, such as for medical or pharmaceutical use, and the product is still being sold for cosmetic purposes, it may not be subject to the ban. If it is determined that the industry has violated the cosmetic animal testing ban, Health Canada will take appropriate enforcement actions. These corrective actions could include issuing formal warnings, recalling non-compliant products, imposing fines or penalties, suspending or revoking licenses, or, in more severe cases, pursuing legal action to ensure compliance with the ban and protect public health and safety. Impact on Cosmetic Ingredients Manufactured or Imported into Canada Under the 2023 ban, all cosmetic products and ingredients must comply with safety testing standards that do not involve animal testing. Manufacturers are required to use alternative testing methods to demonstrate the safety of their products. Products tested on animals, whether produced within Canada or imported from other countries, are not permitted for sale in Canada unless they meet the country's requirements for non-animal testing. This means that cosmetics and ingredients tested on animals in other countries cannot be sold in Canada unless they have been re-evaluated using non-animal testing methods. The ban encourages the adoption of alternative testing methods within the industry and aligns with global trends towards cruelty-free practices. It requires manufacturers to find ways to meet safety standards without relying on animal testing. For international producers, this legislation necessitates compliance with Canadian regulations to ensure their products can be sold in the country. Scientific Validity of Animal Testing The reliability of animal testing has long been questioned due to biological differences between humans and animals. Studies indicate that laboratory animals fail to accurately predict human responses 40% to 60% of the time, making their effectiveness inconsistent. In comparison, modern non-animal testing methods—such as computer models and cell cultures—show a 20% to 30% variability in predicting human reactions, demonstrating greater accuracy in many cases. While rodents provide complex organ systems that can be useful for research, advancements in science have significantly reduced the need for their use. Differences in metabolism, immune response, and genetic makeup often mean that results from animal testing do not always translate reliably to human biology. As a result, modern alternatives such as in vitro cell cultures, computer simulations, and predictive toxicology tools now offer safer, more accurate, and ethical ways to assess product safety. These methods allow researchers to study human-specific responses directly, minimizing ethical concerns while improving the reliability of safety evaluations. Current Alternatives to Animal Testing In Canada, and all around the globe, many companies had adopted alternative methods such as reconstructed human skin models and computer-based simulations. These innovative approaches not only ensure product safety but also demonstrate the industry's commitment to cutting-edge, ethical science. However, the ban applies specifically to cosmetic products, leaving gaps in its scope. For instance, it does not cover animal testing for non-cosmetic purposes or testing required by other countries' regulations. Some alternatives include: In-vitro Testing: This involves using human cells or tissues in a lab to test cosmetic products. By growing skin, eye, or other tissue models from human cells, it offers a more accurate and ethical alternative to animal testing, closely simulating real human reactions. Computer Modelling and Simulations: These advanced models can predict how cosmetic ingredients will interact with human cells or tissues. They simulate biological reactions, helping avoid animal testing while delivering faster results. Reconstructed Human Skin Models: Lab-grown human skin models, made from human cells, are used to test things like skin irritation, toxicity, and absorption. This method closely mimics real skin, making it especially helpful for skincare product testing. Human Volunteer Studies: In certain cases, human volunteers can undergo controlled testing, like patch tests, to check for allergic reactions or skin irritation. These studies are done ethically and help replace animal testing. From an accuracy standpoint, these alternative testing methods are proving to be highly effective. In-vitro testing and reconstructed human skin models replicate human skin reactions with greater precision than animal testing, offering more reliable results. Computer modelling and simulations, using advanced algorithms, predict how cosmetic ingredients will interact with human cells or tissues with a higher degree of accuracy, reducing the need for live testing. Human volunteer studies, conducted in controlled, ethical conditions, provide real-world data on skin reactions. Compared to animal testing, these methods offer more accurate, relevant insights into product safety, making them a better choice for ingredient and cosmetic manufacturers. How Brands Adapt to the Animal Testing Bans As global bans on animal testing expand, brands are rethinking their processes to align with ethical practices and consumer demand. This shift requires reformulating products, sourcing ingredients responsibly, investing in alternative testing methods, and obtaining cruelty-free certifications. To comply, companies are leveraging predictive models and human cell-based testing, which offer greater accuracy than traditional animal testing. Responsible ingredient sourcing has also become a priority, ensuring that only pre-approved, cruelty-free ingredients from ethical suppliers are used. Investing in in vitro testing and computer simulations allows brands to maintain safety standards while eliminating the need for animal testing. Additionally, obtaining certifications like Leaping Bunny and PETA's cruelty-free seal reinforces a brand's commitment to ethical practices, providing consumers with transparency and confidence in their products. Future Trends and Predictions Countries like Canada, India, and South Korea are leading the charge with new laws and reforms that embrace non-animal testing methods. These changes reflect a global commitment to cruelty-free practices and highlight a shift toward more compassionate, innovative approaches. As scientific advancements like in-vitro testing and computer modelling replace traditional animal testing, the need for animal subjects diminishes, paving the way for more ethical and reliable testing alternatives. Consumer awareness is also on the rise, with nearly half of Americans opposing animal testing, which is fueling the demand for cruelty-free products. Programs like Leaping Bunny are empowering consumers to support ethical brands, giving cruelty-free companies a competitive advantage. At the same time, efforts to harmonize international regulations are making it easier for companies to comply with cruelty-free standards, fostering global cooperation and strengthening commitments to animal welfare. These trends indicate a promising future for a cruelty-free cosmetics industry. Final Remarks Canada's ban on animal testing for cosmetics is a significant victory for both ethics and innovation, reflecting a global movement toward more humane practices. As the cosmetics industry embraces alternative testing methods, the move away from animal testing ensures both the safety of consumers and the welfare of animals. The Canadian legislation, in conjunction with international efforts, marks a shift toward more sustainable and ethical beauty standards, enhancing consumer trust and fostering scientific progress. This ban serves as an important reminder that ethical responsibility and innovation can go hand in hand, paving the way for a more compassionate and scientifically advanced future in the beauty industry. Regulatory Support Curious about Canada's animal testing ban or need expert help with cosmetic labelling compliance? The SNI Regulatory team is here to make your journey seamless! We deliver premium, tailored solutions for businesses of all sizes – from startups to industry leaders. Let us put our expertise to work for you and ensure your cosmetic products successfully enter the Canadian market with ease! Put Your Cosmetic Products to the Ultimate Test with SNI Clinic! Did you know Manitoba is one of the best places to test cosmetic products? With its diverse climate—freezing winters and scorching summers—your formulations face real-world conditions that challenge their performance. At SNI Clinic, we provide expert product testing to help you refine and perfect your formulas, ensuring they're ready for market success. Ready to elevate your brand? Visit SNI Clinic today and take your products to the next level! Compliance is easy with the right support! info@sourcenutra.com Animal testing is a highly controversial topic in Canada, with millions of animals studied and experimented on each year. While there is no federal ban on animal testing, recent laws have been passed to protect animals used for research and prohibit cosmetics testing on animals. The use of animals in research and testing falls under provincial jurisdiction, with Ontario being the only province with specific legislation addressing testing and research. While some provincial animal protection laws reference the use of animals for scientific purposes, Canada relies on the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) to develop guidelines and ensure the welfare of animals used in experiments. However, the CCAC has limited regulatory power, and there are concerns about the lack of transparency and enforcement in private testing labs. As a result, animal welfare organizations and advocates continue to push for stricter laws and regulations to address the suffering of animals in research facilities. Characteristics Values Animal testing laws in Canada No federal regulation of animal testing; regulated by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), a non-profit with no legal authority CCAC characteristics Voluntary body with no regulatory capacity; inspects labs once every 3-5 years with pre-announced visits; can recommend refusal of public funding for non-compliant labs CCAC-certified institutions Must follow the "Three Rs" principle: Replace, Reduce, Refine Provincial laws Some provincial animal protection laws reference the use of animals for scientific purposes and adhere to CCAC standards; Ontario's Animals for Research Act is the only legislation specifically addressing testing and research Cosmetic testing Banned as of December 22, 2023, under the Food and Drugs Act and Budget Implementation Act (Bill C-47); prohibits animal testing, sale of cosmetics relying on new animal testing data, and false labelling Toxicity testing Legislation passed in 2023 to phase out animal use by 2035 Animal testing for cosmetics is banned in Canada Canada joins over 40 other countries that have implemented similar laws to end or limit cosmetics animal testing and sales. The movement towards cruelty-free cosmetics has been driven by increasing concern for animal welfare and has resulted in many cosmetic manufacturers voluntarily reducing their reliance on animal testing.While this ban is a significant step forward, it is important to note that animal testing for other purposes, such as toxicity tests and medical research, is still legal in Canada. This has raised concerns about the welfare of animals used in scientific research. The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is responsible for setting standards and guidelines for animal ethics and care in science. However, the CCAC is a voluntary organisation with no regulatory or enforcement powers, leading to criticism about the lack of protection for animals in private research labs.To address these concerns, some provincial animal protection laws reference the use of animals for scientific purposes and directly refer to CCAC standards. For example, Ontario's Animals for Research Act regulates animal research activities and the operation of research facilities. While these laws provide some level of protection, there is a need for comprehensive federal legislation to ensure the humane treatment of animals used in all forms of testing and research.The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) has no regulatory power Animal testing is a highly controversial topic in Canada, with many Canadians expressing concern over the suffering of animals in research facilities. While there are some laws in place to protect animals from cruelty, abuse, and neglect, the use of animals in research and testing is not specifically regulated by the federal government.The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is a non-profit organization that develops guidelines for the use of animals in scientific research. However, it is important to note that the CCAC has no regulatory power or legal authority. Participation in the CCAC is not mandatory, and it relies on voluntary compliance from research institutions. While the CCAC can inspect labs, these visits are typically pre-announced and occur infrequently, only once every three to five years. This gives labs ample opportunity to conceal any instances of poor conditions or animal mistreatment.The CCAC's role is limited to providing recommendations and guidelines. For example, the CCAC promotes the Three Rs principle, which stands for Replace, Reduce, and Refine. This principle encourages the replacement of animals with alternative methods, the reduction in the number of animals used, and the refinement of procedures to minimize pain and distress. However, the CCAC has no enforcement capabilities and relies on government funding bodies to take action against labs that fail to meet its guidelines.Provincial laws and regulations play a more direct role in addressing animal welfare in research. For instance, Ontario's Animals for Research Act specifically regulates animal research activities and the operation of research and supply facilities. Additionally, some provincial animal protection laws reference the use of animals for scientific purposes and directly refer to CCAC standards. Nonetheless, the lack of federal regulatory oversight leaves animals in research facilities vulnerable to mistreatment.While the CCAC strives to uphold standards for animal ethics and care in Canadian science, its voluntary nature and lack of enforcement power limit its effectiveness in preventing animal cruelty in research. This highlights the need for stronger legislative mechanisms to protect animals used in scientific experimentation.CCAC-certified institutions must follow the Three Rs principle Animal testing is a highly controversial topic in Canada. While there is no federal legislation regulating or overseeing the use of animals in research and testing, some provincial animal protection laws do reference the use of animals for scientific purposes and refer directly to CCAC standards. CCAC, or the Canadian Council on Animal Care, is a non-profit organisation that develops guidelines for the use of animals in scientific research. CCAC-certified institutions must follow the Three Rs principle when developing any animal-based procedure or experiment.The Three Rs stand for Replace, Reduce, and Refine. Replace refers to avoiding or replacing the use of animals wherever possible. This involves employing alternative methods that do not require animal testing, such as in vitro studies using cells or tissues outside a living organism, computer modelling, organ-on-a-chip technology, and human-derived models. Reduce encourages the use of strategies that minimise the number of animals used while maintaining sound experimental design. This can be achieved through careful planning and statistical analysis to ensure the experiment can be completed with fewer animals. Refine involves modifying husbandry or experimental procedures to minimise pain, distress, and suffering. This includes providing appropriate environments, enrichment, and care to alleviate any negative impacts on the animals' welfare.By adhering to the Three Rs principle, CCAC-certified institutions can work towards reducing the number of animals used in research and improving their welfare. However, it is important to note that the CCAC is a voluntary body with no regulatory capacity, and private testing labs are not required to be CCAC-certified or report animal use unless they choose to do so.In recent years, Canada has made some progress in protecting animals used for research. In 2023, two groundbreaking laws were passed: one aimed at phasing out the use of animals in toxicity tests by 2035, and another banning the testing and sale of cosmetics that have been tested on animals. These laws demonstrate a growing concern for animal welfare and a commitment to reducing animal suffering in Canada.The Animals for Research Act in Ontario Animal testing is a highly controversial topic in Canada, with approximately 3 to 4 million animals being studied for scientific purposes in the country each year. While there is no federal law that specifically prohibits animal testing, there are laws in place that aim to protect animals from cruelty, abuse, and neglect.The Act ensures the welfare and humane treatment of animals being studied and tested by adhering to the "Three Rs" principle: Replace, Reduce, and Refine. This principle includes strategies such as avoiding or replacing the use of animals wherever possible, employing methods that reduce the number of animals used, and modifying procedures to minimise pain and distress.While the Act provides a regulatory framework for animal testing in Ontario, there are still concerns about the secrecy and lack of transparency in private research labs. The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is responsible for setting and maintaining standards for animal ethics and care in science, but it is a voluntary body with no regulatory capacity. This means that private testing labs are not required to report animal use or be CCAC-certified, unless they choose to do so.In conclusion, while The Animals for Research Act in Ontario provides a legal framework for animal testing in the province, there are still ongoing debates and concerns about the ethical treatment of animals in research and the need for stricter regulations. Additionally, recent progress has been made with Canada's ban on cosmetics animal testing and trade, which came into effect in December 2023, as part of a decade-long campaign to end animal suffering in the cosmetics industry.Canada passed laws to phase out animal toxicity tests In 2023, Canada passed two groundbreaking laws to protect animals used for research. One of these laws was aimed at phasing out the use of animals in toxicity tests by 2035. Toxicity tests are used to determine whether chemicals are harmful to human health or the environment, and they often fall into the most cruel and painful category of animal research.The phasing out of animal toxicity tests in Canada is a significant development in the ongoing global progress toward ensuring animals do not suffer in the name of cosmetic testing. This issue has earned cross-party support in Canada, with consumers, companies, regulators, and advocates uniting to achieve a common goal.While the federal government does not regulate or oversee the use of animals in research and testing, Canada has relied on the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) to develop guidelines for animal use in scientific research. However, the CCAC is a non-profit organization with no legal authority and limited enforcement tools. It is dominated by animal experimenters and only inspects labs once every three to five years, giving labs ample time to conceal poor conditions.CCAC-certified institutions are supposed to follow the "Three Rs" principle when creating animal-based procedures or experiments: Replace, Reduce, and Refine. This principle aims to avoid or replace animal use, employ strategies to reduce the number of animals used, and modify procedures to minimize pain and distress.Some provincial animal protection laws in Canada reference the use of animals for scientific purposes and directly refer to CCAC standards. For example, Ontario's Animals for Research Act regulates animal research activities and the operation of research and supply facilities.Frequently asked questions No, animal testing is not banned in Canada. However, there are some laws in place that aim to protect animals from cruelty, abuse, and neglect. These include the Criminal Code of Canada (sections 444 to 447) and the Health of Animals Act (1990). Additionally, in 2023, Canada passed laws to ban the testing of cosmetics on animals and the sale of cosmetics that have been tested on animals. Yes, there are some efforts to reduce animal testing in Canada. The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is a non-profit organization that develops guidelines for the use of animals in scientific research. CCAC-certified institutions must follow the "Three Rs" principle: Replace, Reduce, and Refine. However, the CCAC has been criticized for its lack of regulatory capacity and enforcement tools. Yes, there are alternatives to animal testing in Canada, such as in vitro studies, computer modelling, organ-on-a-chip technology, and human-derived models. However, researchers may be reluctant to adopt these new methods, and funding bodies may not provide incentives to seek alternative approaches. Canada has moved to ban the testing of cosmetics on animals, joining a number of other countries and American states to outlaw the practice. The Canadian government announced the decision in a Tuesday news release. Bill C-47 amends the Food and Drugs Act to ban both the testing of cosmetic products on animals and the sale of products relying on animal testing data, according to the news release. The news release noted animal testing for cosmetics was "rarely conducted in Canada." Canada will join the ranks of the European Union, Australia, the United Kingdom, and South Korea, which have all moved to ban cosmetic testing on animals, according to the release. A total of 44 countries have passed laws banning cosmetic animal testing, according to the Humane Society International. Additionally, 10 states in the US have banned the practice: New York, Virginia, California, Louisiana, New Jersey, Maine, Hawaii, Nevada, Illinois, and Maryland. "Protecting animals, now and in the future, is something that many Canadians have been calling for, and something we can all celebrate," said Canadian Minister of Health Jean-Yves Duclos in the release. "We are proud to move forward with this measure, and to assure Canadians that the products they buy are cruelty-free. We will keep working with experts and international partners to explore safe, cruelty-free alternatives so no more animals suffer and die due to cosmetic testing." The release added Health Canada is also working to identify "effective alternatives to animal testing" outside the cosmetic world. The amendment banning cosmetic testing on animals in one of a package of amendments included in the measure. The text of the bill stipulates "No person shall sell a cosmetic unless the person can establish the safety of the cosmetic without relying on data derived from a test conducted on an animal that could cause pain, suffering or injury, whether physical or mental, to the animal" and that "No person shall conduct a test on an animal that could cause pain, suffering or injury, whether physical or mental, to the animal." The bill was first read in the House of Commons in April and received royal assent on June 22. Cosmetic testing has historically included "toxicity tests" in which animals are focused to consume or inhale certain chemicals, or have the chemicals applied to their skin or eyes, according to the Humane Society International's Animal-Free Safety Assessment Collaboration. In addition to being unnecessarily cruel, animal tests are also less effective compared to newer forms of assessment like computer modeling or tests using human cells, said the Humane Society International. In back-to-back landmark victories for animal welfare in the spring of 2023, the Government of Canada has amended the Food and Drugs Act to ban cosmetic testing on animals and amended the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) to start phasing out toxicity testing on animals. The Food and Drugs Act amendment, which became law on June 22, 2023 prohibits: Testing cosmetics on animals; Selling cosmetics if the manufacturer, importer or seller relies on data derived from animal testing to demonstrate the safety of the cosmetic product (i.e., satisfy regulatory requirements in respect of cosmetics under the Food and Drugs Act and the Cosmetic Regulations); Making claims that a cosmetic has not been tested on animals unless evidence that validates that claim can be provided to the Minister upon request. The Act allows the sale of cosmetics that rely on data derived from animal testing when the data satisfies any of the following four conditions: The animal testing was done prior to the coming-into-force of the prohibition on sale; The animal testing data was published by the Government of Canada on its website or in a scientific journal (e.g., referenced in a published Chemicals Management Plan assessment); The animal testing data was publicly available and the animal testing was not conducted by, or on behalf of, the manufacturer, importer or seller, nor was it sponsored by the manufacturer, importer or seller; or The animal testing was necessary to meet either a legislative requirement in Canada other than the cosmetic requirements under the Food and Drugs Act or requirements unrelated to cosmetics under another country's legislation (e.g., pharmaceutical drugs), and the ingredient has a valid non-cosmetic use. The Canadian Environment Protection Act amendment, which became law on June 13, 2023, sets out the goal of eliminating animal toxicity testing and establishes substantive requirements to achieve progress toward that goal, including: Requirements to only use alternatives to animal-based methods for testing and strategies for replacing, reducing and refining the use of vertebrate animals; A detailed roadmap for promoting and adopting alternatives to animal-based testing methods, with accountability measures, such as requirements to publish, consult, regularly review and report on the plan to Parliament; and, A duty to encourage and promote the development and timely uptake of alternatives to animal-based testing methods. "Toxicity testing is among the most harmful and painful uses of animals in scientific research, and shifting to non-animal alternatives will save hundreds of thousands of animals each year from severe pain, extreme distress and even death", says Dr. Sara Dubois, the BC SPCA's Chief Scientific Officer. "There are an increasing number of non-animal testing alternatives that are more ethical, more predictive and relevant to human outcomes, more efficient and more cost-effective than animal tests". The Canadian Centre for Alternatives to Animal Methods (CCAAM) at the University of Windsor was founded in 2017 with the goal to develop, validate and promote non-animal, human biology-based platforms in biomedical research, education and chemical safety testing. Unfortunately, CCAAM closed in 2024 due to lack of funding. The BC SPCA has a long-standing position against the use of live animals and their tissues for the testing of inessential substances, such as cosmetics, household cleaning products, cigarettes and alcoholic beverages. The BC SPCA and its dedicated supporters, along with Humane Canada and other animal welfare organizations, businesses and individuals, lobbied the federal government for almost a decade to eliminate cruel and unnecessary animal testing. Canada finally joined more than 40 other countries that have limited or banned cosmetic testing on animals, including every country in the European Union, Australia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Switzerland, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Advocacy Timeline: June 2023 – The federal government adopted legislation to ban cosmetic testing and start to phase our toxicity testing on animals. April 2023 – Almost 4,000 BC SPCA supporters pledged to be cruelty-free in support of the proposed amendments to the Food and Drugs Act and Canadian Environmental Protection Act (Bills C-47 and S-5, respectively). September 2022 – The BC SPCA submitted feedback on the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Principles for the Ethical Use of Animals in Science, communicating opposition to any procedure that causes pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm. December 2021 – The BC SPCA applauded the Prime Minister's Mandate Letter to the federal Minister of Health included a statement to "introduce legislation to end testing on animals". Fall/Winter 2021 – AnimalSense magazine included a story on The Humane Household: a guide to ensuring your go-to products aren't tested on animals. November 2019 – National polling commissioned by Cruelty Free International indicated that 88% of respondents support a federal law that would prohibit testing for cosmetics in Canada, 82% feel that Canada should take a global leadership role to help achieve a worldwide end to animal testing in cosmetics, and 84% believe corporate organizations should ensure that they do not test their products on animals. September 2019 – Bill S-214 received First Reading in the House of Commons but was not adopted before the dissolution of the 42nd Parliament. This sparked a national conversation with tens of thousands of Canadians consistently asking the government to ban the cruel practice. June 2018 – Bill S-214 was passed by the Senate after more than 6,000 people wrote to the Senate Committee. May 2018 – More than 630,000 Canadians signed a petition demanding an end to cosmetics testing on animals. October 2017 – The BC SPCA participated in a national campaign to ban cosmetic testing with Humane Canada and partners. December 2015 – Bill S-214, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (cruelty-free cosmetics), was introduced in the Senate. The BC SPCA asked supporters to write to their federal representatives and urge them to pass Bill S-214. September 2015 – The BC SPCA published Position Statement on Animals Used in Testing. A: A cruelty-free cosmetics company is one that has eliminated animal testing at all levels of production as of a "fixed cut-off date." This must apply not only to the finished products that consumers purchase, but also to each and every raw ingredient. In order to meet its commitment to cruelty-free, a company must not sell its products in countries that require animal testing; it must not use new ingredients that would lead to new animal testing; and it must ensure that all of its ingredient suppliers commit to a policy of "no new cosmetics animal testing." Q: Is animal testing for cosmetics a legal requirement in Canada? A: No. Canada's Food and Drugs Act prohibits the sale of any cosmetic containing harmful ingredients or contaminants, but does not require that animal testing be conducted to demonstrate safety. Q: Have any countries banned animal testing for cosmetics? A: Yes. Animal testing for cosmetics has been banned throughout the 27 member countries of the European Union since 2009, and the sale of cosmetic products or ingredients subject to new animal testing after March 2013 is also illegal. Israel imposed similar bans in 2007 and 2013. Similar policy change is also under consideration in India and South Korea. In most other countries, cosmetics animal testing is neither expressly required nor prohibited, and therefore continues to take place at the discretion of cosmetics companies and ingredient suppliers. In a few countries, including China, cosmetics animal testing may still be a legal requirement for some ingredients and finished products. Q: How can companies ensure safety without animal testing? A: Safe existing ingredients are the key. Hundreds of companies—including LUSH, JASÔN and Kiss My Face—have sworn off animal testing, yet still produce new, safe and fabulous beauty products. They do so by choosing from among nearly 20,000 widely available raw ingredients that have been tested in the past, instead of purchasing newly developed chemicals that will also have been newly animal-tested. The safety of new product formulations made up from well known existing cosmetic ingredients can be assured using available non-animal testing methods. Q: Why do companies still test cosmetics on animals if it's not legally required? A: Some companies believe that "innovation" requires the creation or use of new chemistries, which are invariably subject to new animal testing, either by or on behalf of the cosmetic manufacturer, or more commonly, by the specialty chemical producer itself. And multinational companies that sell cosmetics in countries such as China may be required to conduct new animal testing to meet the requirements of national authorities. Q: What animal tests are carried out on cosmetics? A: Newly-developed raw ingredients may be subject to the same sorts of animal tests as any other chemicals. This can include skin and eye irritation tests where chemicals are rubbed onto the shaved skin or dripped into the eyes of rabbits; repeated oral force-feeding studies lasting weeks or months to look for signs of general illness or specific health hazards, such as cancer or birth defects; and even widely condemned "lethal dose" tests, in which animals are forced to swallow massive amounts of a test chemical to determine the dose that causes death. At the end of a test the animals are killed, normally by asphyxiation, neck-breaking or decapitation. Pain relief is not provided. Q: Besides animal welfare, are there other arguments against testing on animals? A: Yes, animal tests also have scientific limitations because different species can respond differently when exposed to the same chemicals. Consequently, results from animal tests may not be relevant to humans, under- or over-estimating real-world hazards to people. In addition, results from animal tests can be quite variable and difficult to interpret. Unreliable and non-predictive animal tests mean consumer safety cannot be guaranteed. Q: What are the alternatives to animal testing? A: Cosmetics companies can stop animal testing immediately and still produce new, safe and exciting beauty products, by manufacturing the cruelty-free way. Firstly, companies can use ingredients that are already known to be safe, of which there are thousands. These ingredients have been tested in the past and don't require new testing. This is how so many socially conscious companies have been able to swear off animal testing. Secondly, companies can use non-animal tests where new data need to be generated. More than 40 non-animal tests have been validated for use, and these modern alternatives can offer results that are more relevant to people, often more cheaply and efficiently too. Advanced non-animal tests represent the very latest techniques that science has to offer, replacing outdated animal tests that have been around for many decades and haven't stood the test of time. For example, there are a number of skin tests available that use human reconstructed skin, such as EpiDerm, as wells as the "3T3 NRU" test for sunlight-induced "phototoxicity", and the Bovine Cornea Opacity and Permeability test for eye corrosion. Q: What's being done to end cosmetics animal testing in Canada? A: Animal Alliance of Canada has teamed up with Humane Society International/ Canada to launch the Canadian arm of Be Cruelty-Free—the largest global campaign to end cosmetics animal cruelty. Together we're working to: Change Canadian law to ban animal testing for cosmetic products and ingredients. Promote modern science, championing the development of new non-animal tests and training regulators and companies in their use. Educate consumers, raising awareness about animal testing and how to shop cruelty-free. Work with companies to help them move away from animal testing, and partnering with cruelty-free companies to lobby for change. Build an unstoppable national campaign backed by the public, top companies, politicians and our celebrity friends Paul McCartney, Ricky Gervais, Ke$ha and more. Q: How can I help? A: Get involved with these easy actions and help Animal Alliance and HSI/Canada put an end to cosmetics animal cruelty: Sign the Be Cruelty-Free pledge to show your support for Canadian ban on animal testing for cosmetic products and ingredients. Donate to help Animal Allance end animal testing for cosmetics in Canada. Shop cruelty-free—buy only from companies that say no to animal testing and to newly developed and animal-tested ingredients. Find cruelty-free products with the handy Leaping Bunny shopping guide, or download the iTunes app for your smart phone. Contact your favourite brands and urge them to make the leap to cruelty-free. Ask whether the company 1) animal tests its products or ingredients, 2) purchases newly developed ingredients that have been animal tested by the supplier, or 3) sells its products to countries like China that may require new animal testing. If the answer to any of these questions is yes, put the product back on the shelf. Make some noise—follow us on Twitter @Animal_Alliance and tweet about the campaign using hashtag #BeCrueltyFree. Learn more about the ban on cosmetics testing on animals, which took effect on December 22, 2023. On this page Background About the ban To file a complaint Background Increasing concern for the well-being of animals has driven demand by people in Canada for cruelty-free cosmetics, such as shampoos, soaps and makeup. As the demand for cruelty-free cosmetics has increased, cosmetic manufacturers have been less likely to test on animals. Many were already voluntarily reducing their reliance on animal testing data. Many countries around the world have laws in place that ban or limit the testing of cosmetics on animals, including the European Union (EU) member countries. The EU has banned the sale of cosmetics tested on animals since 2013. Canada joined these many countries in banning the sale of cosmetics as of December 22, 2023. About the ban Health Canada held discussions with the cosmetics industry and key animal advocacy groups before implementing the ban. The ban covers both cosmetics imported into Canada and cosmetics manufactured in Canada. The laws that make up the ban are part of the Food and Drugs Act (act). Any person is banned from testing cosmetics on vertebrate or invertebrate animals in Canada if: it may cause the animal physical or mental pain, suffering or injury and the purpose of the testing is to satisfy cosmetic requirements under the act or cosmetic safety requirements in another country People are also banned from: selling a cosmetic in Canada if safety can't be established without relying on data from animal testing when testing may cause the animal physical or mental pain, suffering or injury, with some exceptions making a claim on a label or in an advertisement that the cosmetic has not been tested on animals unless they can provide evidence of the truth of this claim when asked by the Minister of Health Cosmetic products already on the market in Canada may continue to rely on their existing animal testing data to demonstrate safety. This is consistent with how other countries have put in place their bans on cosmetic animal testing. Over time, the ban will apply to many more cosmetics as new cosmetics are introduced to Canada and existing cosmetics are reformulated. The ban and the cosmetics industry To meet the Canadian requirements, industry must: not test any cosmetics on animals in Canada to establish the cosmetic is safe for the purpose of satisfying cosmetic requirements under the act or another country's cosmetic requirements ensure the safety of any new cosmetic product sold in Canada can be established relying strictly on allowable data data not derived from animal testing data satisfying the relevant exceptions ensure that any claims stating the cosmetic was not tested on animals can be supported by evidence To help industry comply with the requirements, Health Canada has developed the following guidance document: Guidance document: Animal testing ban on cosmetics Enforcing the ban Health Canada will enforce the ban on cosmetic animal testing by responding to complaints and incident reports made by people in Canada. We will review each complaint to determine if it contains enough information for us to take action. We may ask the person who filed the complaint for more information if needed. We will not pursue the complaint if: the evidence provided to support the complaint is not credible the product targeted by the complaint is not subject to the relevant requirement of the ban for example, the product relies on animal testing data and was sold before December 22, 2023, meaning the data may be used We will take appropriate action if we find that industry has violated the ban on cosmetic animal testing. Other animal testing in Canada The ban won't interfere with other legislative regimes in Canada where animal testing is still needed to demonstrate safety until internationally accepted alternative methods become available. Examples include testing of pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Health Canada continues to support the development and use of alternatives to animal testing both within Canada and through our participation on national and international scientific committees. To file a complaint You may file a complaint if you: believe that 1 of the requirements of the ban on cosmetic animal testing has been violated and can provide or point to credible evidence that we can review when processing your complaint Examples of credible evidence include: photographs links to scientific data links to scientific journals documentation from the company or an employee of the company You can help us with our assessment by providing as many details as possible. The following sections outline the steps to take for different scenarios and how to submit a complaint. Use the following form to submit your complaint: Submit a consumer report If you believe cosmetics are being tested on animals in Canada after Dec 22, 2023 Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: where testing took place for example, address of facility period during which the testing is suspected to have taken place for example, between Jan 1, 2024, and March 1, 2024 reason for believing the testing took place for example, witnessed testing link to report describing the testing additional details for example, type of testing and type of animal involved in the testing Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product that was involved in the described incident. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information. If you believe the safety of a cosmetic sold in Canada cannot be established without relying on data from animal testing Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: a detailed description of the safety data you suspect the company relied on for the given product the reasons that led you to believe the company relied on this data a description of how the safety data violates the ban the brand name of the product Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product for which the safety data is in question. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information. If you believe that claims about animal testing made on a label or in an advertisement are false Under the first tab "Tell us what happened," include the following information: the name and type of cosmetic product for example, shampoo, lotion, lipstick the wording of the claim made on the label or in the advertisement the reason you believe the claim is false include any evidence supporting your conclusion Under the second tab "Tell us about the product," include as much information as possible about the product that was involved in the described incident. Upload any photos, documentation or other information. Complete the final 2 tabs. Be sure to give us your contact information. Learn more about the ban on cosmetics testing on animals, which took effect on December 22, 2023. 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