



Be Cruelty-Free



Cosmetic Animal Testing: The EU Sales Ban Q&A

Q: What is the 11 March EU sales ban?

A: On 11 March the European Union implements its long-awaited ban on selling newly animal-tested cosmetics. The ban was actually passed into law twenty years ago in the 1993 EU Cosmetics Directive and scheduled to come into force in 1998. However since then its implementation has been repeatedly delayed.

Q: What will the ban do?

A: It is a European Union-wide ban on selling cosmetics products and ingredients that have been newly animal-tested for cosmetics purposes anywhere in the world ie: tested on animals after the date of the ban, 11 March.

Q: Did Humane Society International achieve this ban alone?

A: No, but we have been a leading force in the EU campaign to secure implementation of the ban. HSI's team in Brussels has been dedicated to lobbying policy makers at the highest levels to ensure the ban is enforced on time and in full. We have led a high-profile and celebrity-backed campaign to harness the support of nearly half a million of our supporters who signed our Cruelty-Free 2013 petition which we handed in to the Commission alongside campaign partners Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics and our white rabbit flash-mob. We left EU politicians in no doubt that consumers want an end to animal suffering for beauty products.

We're proud of our EU team and the hundreds of thousands of HSI supporters who helped us reach this important milestone, but it would be arrogant for any single organisation to claim sole responsibility. HSI has been proud to work in partnership with other key campaigning groups such as Eurogroup for Animals and Four Paws, as well as a great many MEPs who have dedicatedly championed this cause for years.

Q: Does this mean all cosmetics that have been animal-tested will now be illegal?

A: No, the ban is not retrospective so old animal-tested products will not be banned. In reality, virtually all cosmetic ingredients will have been animal-tested at some point in time. Even water has been tested on animals. So a retrospective ban would in effect have to ban all existing cosmetics ingredients, even all cruelty-free brands, as well as make the production of future cosmetics almost impossible. A retrospective ban would also have no benefit for animals as it wouldn't stop any new animal testing.

Instead, the ban draws a line in the sand from 11 March and bans the sale of cosmetic products containing ingredients that have been *newly* animal-tested after that date, no matter where in the world that testing takes place.

Q: What impact will the ban have on companies?

A: The EU is the largest cosmetics market in the world so the sales ban sends a very powerful message to the global cosmetics industry that animal testing is unacceptable and that companies need to switch to cruelty-free if they want to continue selling their new products in the EU.

Q: Will this end all cosmetics animal testing?

A: No, the EU ban does not stop companies from animal testing in other countries, but it is a powerful incentive for them to stop animal testing if they want to sell their new products in the EU. The compassionate position taken by the EU – to ban cosmetics animal testing in 2009 and ban the sale of animal-tested cosmetics in 2013 – will hopefully also influence other countries around the world and encourage them to change their laws and regulations.

Q: Will this lead to a global ban on cosmetics animal testing?

A: We hope that the EU bans will be a catalyst for global change, and that's what we're aiming to achieve with *Be Cruelty-Free*, our campaign to end animal testing for cosmetics worldwide. There's no doubt that many governments, regulators and companies are watching the EU situation. HSI – a key player in the EU campaign - is in a unique position to help them on the path to going cruelty-free so we're using our lobbying, scientific and campaign expertise to end cosmetics cruelty in other world regions.

Q: Where is HSI's *Be Cruelty-Free* campaign working?

A: *Be Cruelty-Free* has been launched across the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, India, South Korea, Russia and Taiwan. HSI has offices around the globe and we also work in partnership with some outstanding local organisations in these key regions, as well as cruelty-free companies, national cosmetics regulators and supportive policy-makers. We've created a global *Be Cruelty-Free* network focused on ending animal testing for cosmetics.

We are also building unprecedented partnerships with scientists from universities, private companies and government agencies worldwide to support and push for a totally new “21st century” approach to safety testing that combines ultra-fast cell tests and sophisticated computer models to deliver human-relevant results in hours instead of months or even years for some animal tests.

Q: What about China?

A: Yes we're working in China too. China is one of a few countries that still require new animal testing for cosmetics by law. That means that if a cosmetic company manufactures or sells its products in China, Chinese law may require new animal testing to be conducted by its national agencies, even if safety data generated outside of China already exists. That's why genuinely cruelty-free companies refuse to sell in China, and we applaud their compassionate stance. At the same time, we know how important it is for us to engage with the Chinese authorities in order to harness the interest of China's scientific and business community in the ethical and research advantages of modern, non-animal test methods. We feel confident that HSI will achieve significant benefits for animals in China.

Q: If the EU has banned newly animal-tested cosmetics, what's the value in cruelty-free cosmetics standards now?

A: The EU ban only controls the sale of newly animal-tested cosmetics within its own borders. Cosmetics animal testing still continues elsewhere around the world so global consumers should still rely on cruelty-free listings like the Leaping Bunny. Cruelty-free companies still need the support of consumers – they have made the commitment never to test their products or ingredients on animals, to refuse purchasing ingredients from their suppliers that have been animal-tested and to shun global markets like China until such times as animal testing is no longer legally mandated. That compassionate commitment sets them apart and as ethical consumers, we demonstrate our appreciation by choosing to buy their products.

Q: Why do some companies still test cosmetics on animals even if it's not required?

A: The law requires that safety data is provided for cosmetics products before they can go on sale for human use. Cruelty-free companies provide this safety data by using available non-animal tests and myriad combinations of the thousands of existing cosmetic ingredients with long-established safety data. But some companies choose to develop and/or use new, untested ingredients in their cosmetic products, ingredients for which there is no existing safety data so new testing has to take place. Although there are a great many non-animal test methods available, there are not yet non-animal tests to cover *all* of the areas for which safety data is required by law. Therefore the use of these 'new' ingredients can trigger new animal testing.

Q: What animal tests are carried out on cosmetics?

A: Newly developed raw ingredients may be subject to the same sorts of 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 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: 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 EPISKIN, EpiDerm and SkinEthic, as well as the 3T3 neutral red uptake test for sunlight-induced "phototoxicity", and the Bovine Cornea Opacity and Permeability test for eye corrosion.

Q: How can I help?

A: We urgently need your help to end cosmetics animal suffering:

- Please [sign HSI's Be Cruelty-Free pledge](#) to show that you care about the thousands of rabbits, guinea pigs, mice and other animals still suffering in cosmetics tests in laboratories around the world.
- Support HSI's work by becoming a [Lab Animal Defender](#) with our monthly donor programme, or make a one-time donation to help us expand our *Be Cruelty-Free* campaign and save more animals.
- Shop cruelty-free, it can make a big difference to animals. By purchasing only cosmetic, personal care and household products from companies that do not test on animals, you'll be standing up for animals one product at a time. Download your own *Leaping Bunny Global Shopping Guide* [here](#).
- Tell your friends about *Be Cruelty-Free* by sending them an email, liking us on Facebook or tweeting about us on Twitter using hashtag #BeCrueltyFree—you can also get all the latest campaign updates by following us at @HSIGlobal.

[Cruelty-Free History](#)

1993 – PASSED:

The 6th Amendment to the EU Cosmetics Directive, containing a ban on the sale of cosmetics animal-tested outside the EU.

1998 – DELAYED:

The EU sales ban is scheduled to come into force, but is delayed for the first time. A new implementation date of 2000 is set.

2000 – DELAYED:

The EU sales ban is scheduled to come into force, but is delayed for the second time. A new implementation date of 2002 is set.

2003 – PASSED:

The 7th Amendment to the Cosmetics Directive, containing a phased-in ban on animal testing for cosmetics

- **DELAYED:**

- The EU sales ban is delayed for the third time and a phase-in timetable is established. A new final implementation date of 2013 is set.

2004 – BANNED:

The ban on animal testing of finished cosmetic products (not ingredients) is implemented.

- **BANNED:**

The sale of cosmetic ingredients tested on animals outside the EU using test methods that have been replaced within the EU.

2009 – BANNED:

The ban on animal testing of cosmetic ingredients within the EU is implemented.

- **BANNED:**

The sale of cosmetic products containing newly animal-tested ingredients but with three animal tests made exempt. These are animal tests for repeat dose toxicity, reproductive toxicity and toxicokinetics.

2011 – LAUNCHED:

HSI launches our Cruelty-Free 2013 campaign to see the EU sales ban implemented in full and on time. Ricky Gervais, Leona Lewis and Melanie C help us launch with a spectacular “End Animal Testing” tattoo photo campaign.

2012 – LAUNCHED:

On World Day for Animals in Laboratories, HSI launches *Be Cruelty-Free* - the global campaign to end animal testing for cosmetics worldwide. We partner with cruelty-free trailblazers LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics and *Be Cruelty-Free* pledge sheets run in LUSH stores around the world. Together, we collect nearly half a million petition signatures to save the EU sales ban.

- **CONFIRMED:**

EU Health Commissioner Dalli resigns and his successor, Tonio Borg, confirms his commitment to seeing the EU sales ban implemented in full.

2013 – REINFORCED:

HSI and other animal groups meet Commissioner Borg to hear him reinforce his commitment to the EU sales ban

- **BANNED:**

In January Israel becomes the first region in the world to ban the sale of animal-tested cosmetics, followed by the EU in March as the final phase of the EU sales ban comes into force – the EU sales ban finally applies to the last three animal tests.

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