

# Chinese eating less wild animals

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A poll finds that China's people are far less likely to eat wild animals than they were a few years ago.

The survey was conducted by the China Wildlife Conservation Association and WildAid, a U.S. conservation group, in December and January -- the peak season for consumption of wild game -- Shenzhen Daily reports.

More than half of those who have given up consuming wild animals gave health risks as a reason. The habit of eating wild animals was blamed for the SARS epidemic and, more recently, wild birds have been implicated in the spread of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza.

Thirty-two percent of those who still eat wild animals gave nutrition as a reason, closely followed by curiosity and taste.

At least 71 percent of those polled said they had not eaten wild animals during the year, compared to 51 percent in 1999.

Another reason some people may be giving up the wild animal habit is increasing publicity about endangered species and the penalties for taking them.

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