

Dog meat could come off Chinese menus

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People gather to watch workers slaughter dogs at a shop selling meat from the creatures. Dog and cat meat - age-old delicacies in China - could be off the menu in the food-loving nation under its first law against animal abuse, state press said Tuesday.

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People who eat either animal, both of which are viewed as promoting bodily warmth, would face fines of up to 5,000 yuan (730 dollars) and up to 15 days in jail if the law is passed, the Chongqing Evening News said.

It said "organisations" involved in the practice would be fined from 10,000 to 500,000 yuan. The report gave no other details.

The law has been at the drafting stage over the past year and the report did not make clear when the legislation was expected to become law.

China's rubber-stamp legislature meets in March but draft legislation can often take years to be approved.

Cruelty to animals and the raising of cat and dog [meat](#) for dinner tables remains widespread in [China](#), despite growing consciousness over animal welfare.

Restaurants touting "fragrant meat," a euphemism for dog, can be seen in cities throughout the country, where the fondness for [dogs](#) as pets co-exists with a taste for canine meat.

Cat meat is most popular in parts of southern China and there are regular reports of animal lovers attempting to block trucks carrying hundreds or even thousands of [cats](#) to meat markets and eventually dinner tables there.

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