
Brooke USA Conversation with Amazon



**CONCERNS SURROUNDING 'EJIAO'
& THE DONKEY SKIN TRADE**

A REQUEST FOR ACTION

Brooke USA

The mission of Brooke USA is to significantly improve the welfare of working horses, donkeys and mules and the people they serve throughout Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Americas and the Caribbean.



The Problem

The international donkey skin trade for the production of 'ejiao' (donkey skin gelatin) is decimating global donkey populations and harming impoverished global communities.

What is Ejiao?

- Ejiao is a gelatin created from the skins of donkeys which is used in traditional Chinese medicine, beauty/cosmetic, and other luxury products.
- Interestingly, the recent reports have stated that the use of ejiao is unnecessary in the production of these products since the gelatins from other meats, fish, or plants may be used instead.

Background and Limited Supply in China:

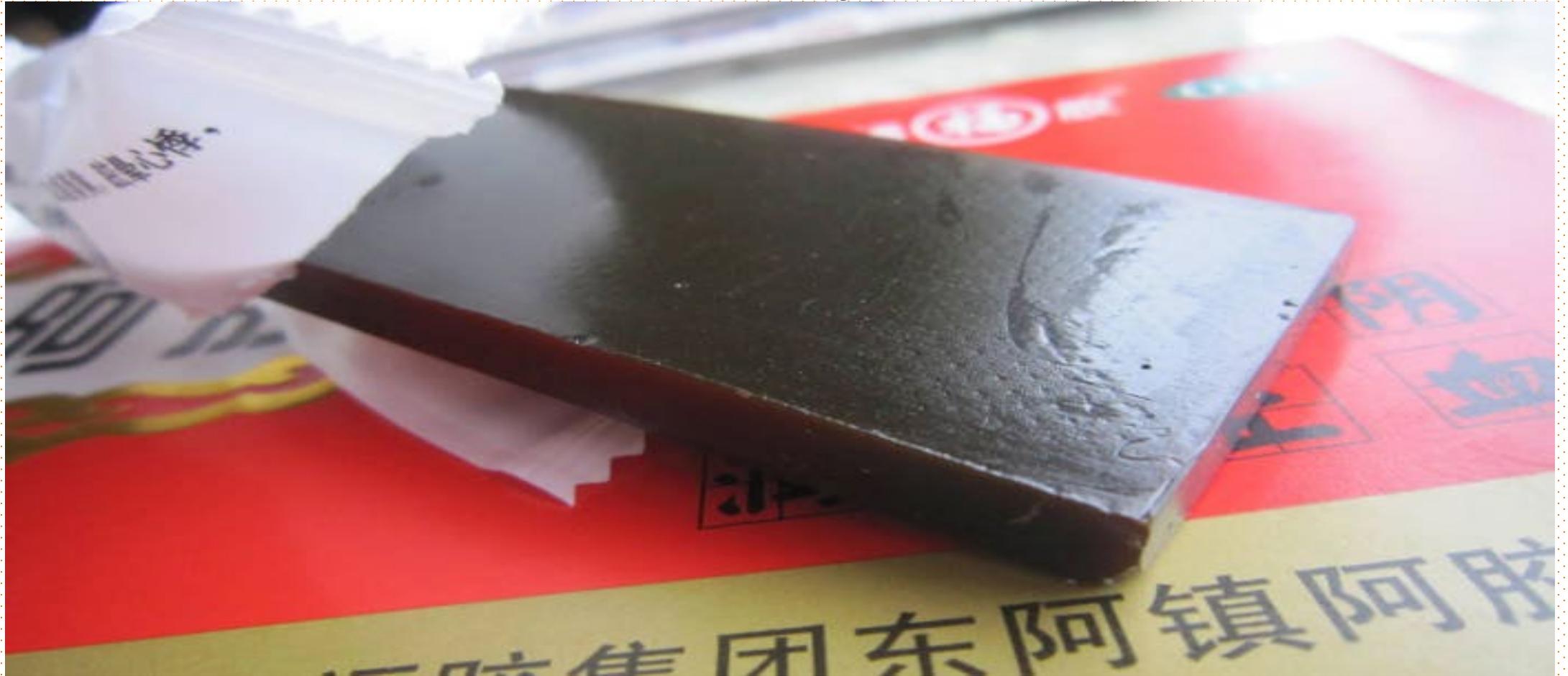
- Millions of donkeys are slaughtered annually for their skins to make Ejiao.
- The domestic Chinese and international demand for donkey skins is approximately 4.8 million skins per year *but the annual supply in China is less than 1.8 million.*
- This demand has led to the slaughter of massive numbers of donkeys across the globe, decimating donkey populations, most notably in Africa and Latin America. A recent report warned that, at the current pace, the global donkey population of 44 million would be cut in half over the next five years.

Devastating Effects of Slaughter

- Donkey populations in Brazil have declined by 28% since 2007. In Botswana, donkey numbers have declined by 39 percent in the last dozen years.
- A recent report by the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization said that 159,631 donkeys were slaughtered for their skins (8.1% of the population) in 2018.
- Today, up to 1,000 donkeys a day can be slaughtered in Kenya alone, almost 400,000 a year.
- The report goes on to suggest that **donkeys in Kenya could vanish by 2023.**



A Bar of Ejiao



Donkeys Regularly Stolen to Fill Demand

- Donkeys are regularly killed illegally and often slaughtered in the bush or street just outside their owners' property. This has had devastating effects on the families who depend on donkeys for survival.
- Moreover, these donkeys are often stolen from families who depend on them for their livelihoods – *families already struggling and living below the poverty line.*
- Among other things, these donkeys are used for farming, carrying water/goods for miles, and construction. *Moreover, the revenue from these donkeys help alleviate cycles of poverty and gender inequality.*
- Widespread donkey theft in the impoverished communities that rely on them for their livelihoods leaves families bereft.



**WAZIRI MUNYA
OKOA WAKULIMA.
BAN DONKEY SLAUGHTER**

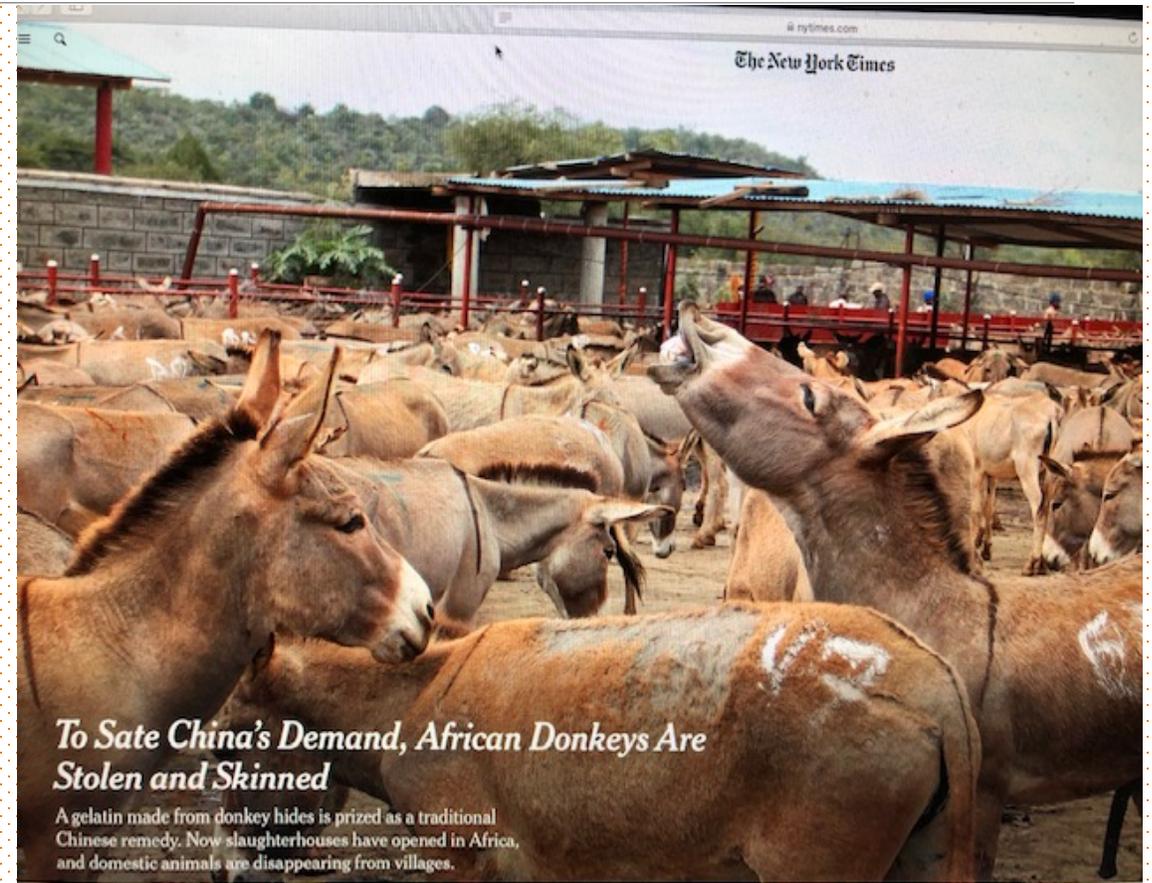
WHEN DONKEYS ARE
KILLED OR STOLEN,
WOMEN ARE
TURNED INTO **DONKEYS**

Demand Far Outpacing Supply

- Demand has exploded over the course of the last decade as the Chinese middle class has expanded.
- Ejiao products are expensive, but more Chinese can now afford them.
- As a result, the donkey population in China has collapsed by 76% since 1992.
- Ejiao companies have set up donkey breeding schemes in China in an attempt to breed the species on a scale sufficient to meet local demand. But due to the long gestation period of donkeys, and the fact that they often only give birth once a year, breeders have not been able to satisfy demand from within China.
- This is why ejiao companies have turned to Africa and Latin America to satisfy demand for this product.

2019 CNN Report & 2018 New York Times expose

“To Sate China’s Demand, African Donkeys Are Stolen and Skinned: A gelatin made from donkey hides is prized as a traditional Chinese remedy. Now slaughterhouses have opened in Africa and domestic animals are disappearing from villages.”



Facts

China Trade Practices – A Chinese government import tariff reduction in 2017, from 5% to 2%, has aided the trade. This lowering of the import tariff by the Chinese has helped the trade grow rapidly.

Effect of Owner Selling Donkeys – Where owners willingly sell their donkeys, they find that within months they are worse off financially than they would have been had they kept their donkeys. As prices constantly rise, it becomes impossible for these owners to go back into the market for a new donkey.

Slaughtering Practices are Inhumane– In many cases up to 20% of those animals transported to slaughter houses arrive dead. Transportation, often over great distances, invariably involves cramped conditions, and no food or water. Slaughter practices often verge on the barbaric. Stunning is used inappropriately, and many donkeys suffer greatly at the abattoir.

National Bans Poorly Enforced – A crisis in donkey populations at the nation level has been met with varied responses from affected countries. Bans in the trade of donkey skins in seven (7) African countries have been poorly enforced.



TUWASHTAKI
WANAOCHINJA
PUNDA WETU.

KUCHINJA
PUNDA
NI
HARAMU.

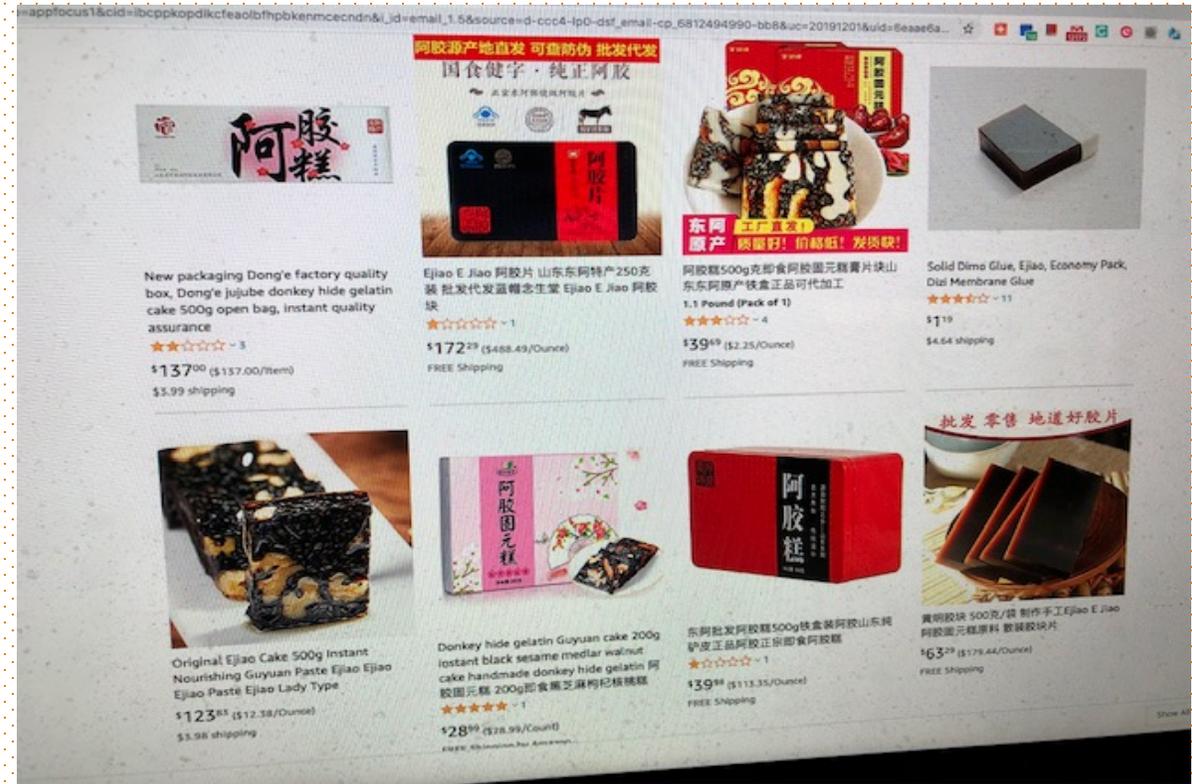
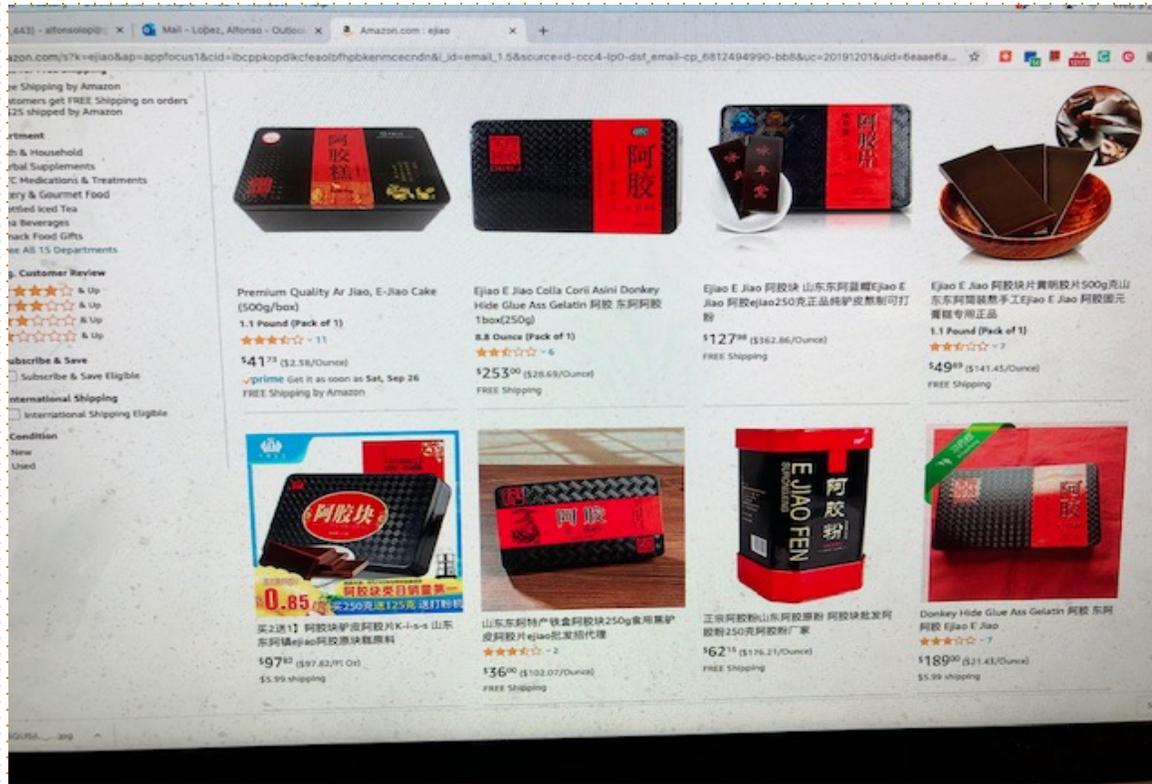
SERIKAL SAIDIA
PUNDA SI NYAMA

STOP
DONKEY THEFT
AND
SLAUGHTER

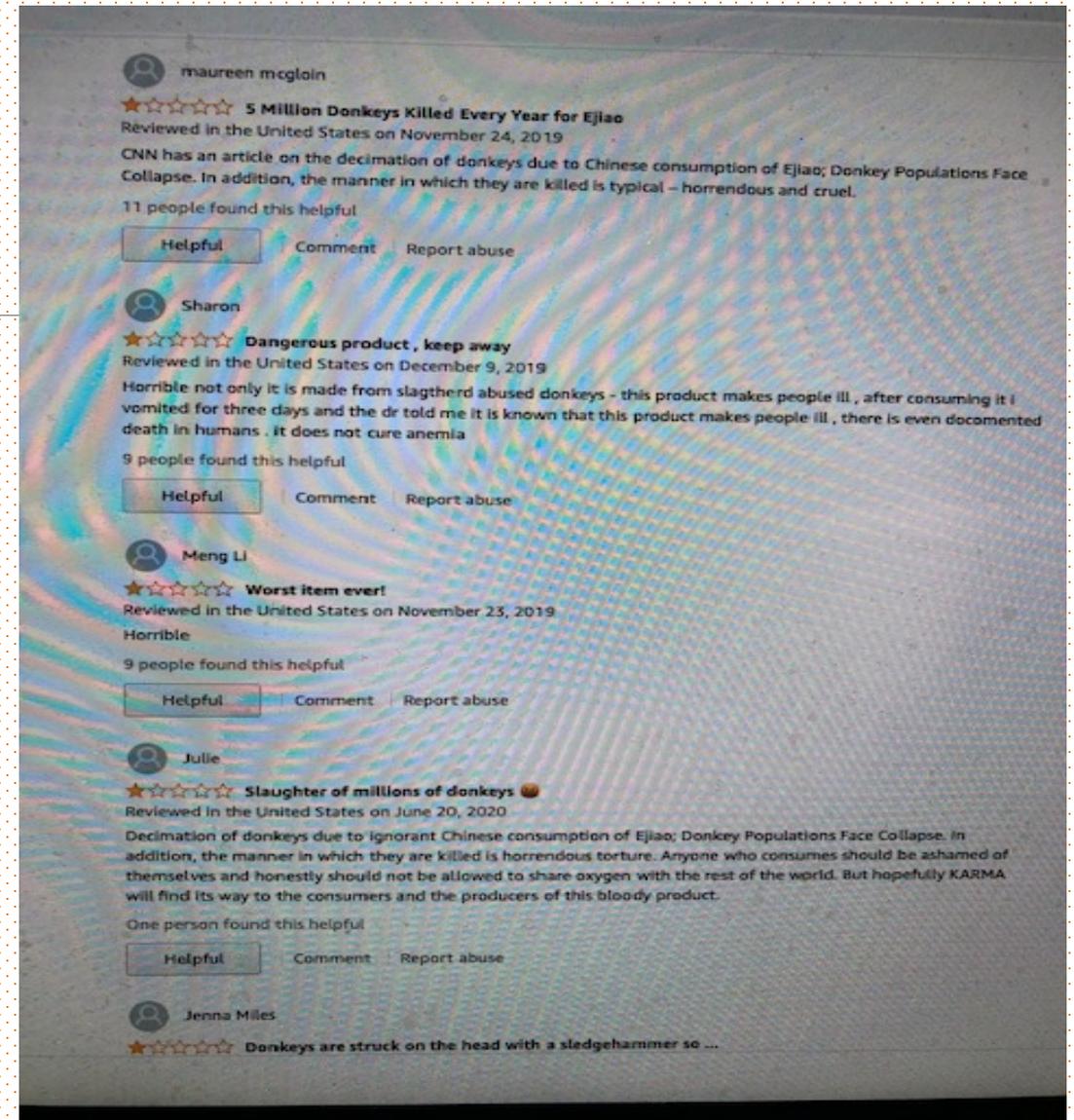
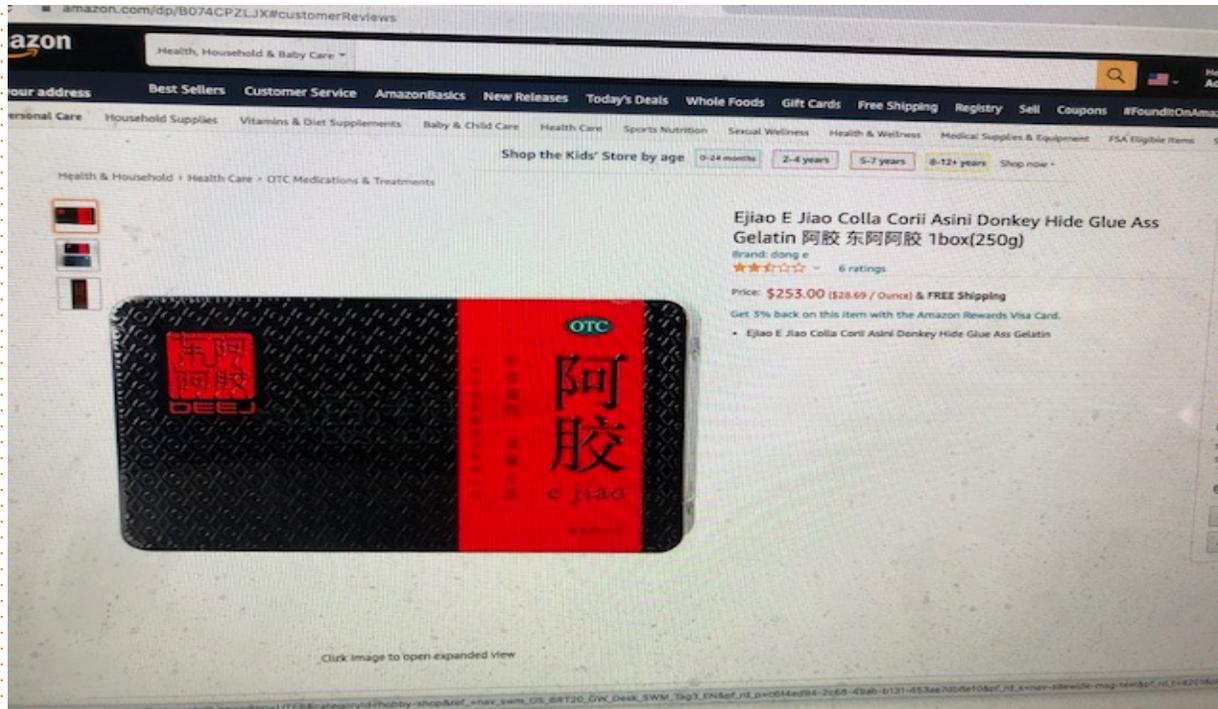
The Sale of Ejiao in the U.S.

- *The sale and trade of ejiao is completely unsustainable and hugely damaging to poor communities in the Global South.*
- The United States is the third largest importer of ejiao products from mainland China, after Hong Kong and Japan.
- The vast majority of ejiao products are sold in the U.S. via online services – and a sizable portion is sold via Amazon.

Just Sixteen (16) of the Approximately Two Hundred Ejiao Products on Amazon U.S. Platforms



Just one Ejiao product – and a sampling of the negative comments on Amazon...



Request of Amazon

- Amazon has the power to take a stand and highlight the ethical problems inherent in selling ejiao.
- *With this in mind, it is our hope that Amazon will use its influence as a force for change in the world and remove all ejiao products from its platforms in the United States.*

Net-Positive Impact on Amazon

- **Not a Large Financial Loss** – The leading importers in the world for ejiao are China and Hong Kong. The United States accounts for only \$12 million in annual imports each year.
- **An Immense Potential Press/Branding Benefit for Amazon** – Without much of an impact on Amazon's bottom line, banning the sale of ejiao products would have a very positive effect on limiting the sale of ejiao in the U.S.
- *At the same time, the positive press/branding that would result from the company's efforts to address animal welfare and sustainable communities in impoverished areas could be substantial.*

This Action Would Help Amazon Further Align With the UN Sustainable Development Goals

*Amazon is already
working in multiple ways
to align your
sustainability work with
the United Nation's
Sustainable Development
Goals (SDG).*

Donkeys and the UN Sustainable Development Goals



Working donkeys are a critical asset to their owners because they both directly and indirectly support income generation in agriculture, construction, extractive industries, tourism, and transport.



Donkeys play a central role in agriculture and food production, including in soil tillage, producing manure fertilizers, and the transporting of feed and water for livestock, households, and goods to market.



Women across the world depend on working donkeys to support them with time consuming tasks such as fetching water. Income from working animals helps women pay for household essentials and can be a factor in gender empowerment.

Donkeys and the UN Sustainable Development Goals



Working donkeys are critical to providing access to water for communities and to all food producing animals. Without their help, people – especially women and girls – often have to walk for hours to fetch water from remote sources.



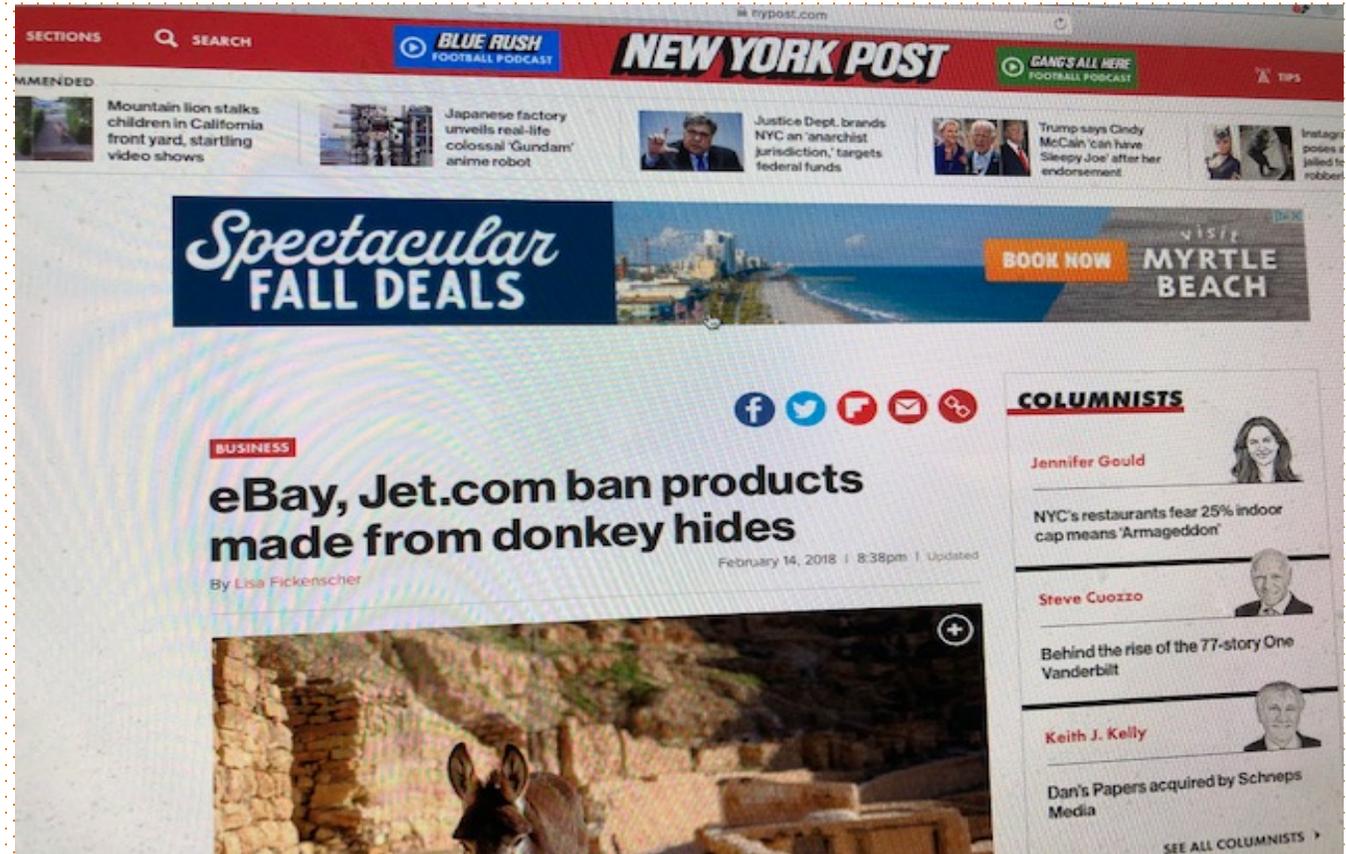
Donkeys boost community resilience in the face of disasters and climate shocks. They enable communities to collect water or food from long distances, helping families to relocate when needed, and even to rebuild infrastructure.



Millions of people depend on the labor and income their working animals provide. The increasing demand for donkey hide products puts the long-term income of millions of families at risk. The slaughter of donkeys is a growing biodiversity threat that harms the ecosystem in which they exist.

Other U.S.-based Companies Have Pledged to Remove All Products Containing Ejiao

- eBay
- Jet.com (Walmart-owned online retailer)
- Acupuncture Atlanta
- Fresh Bites Basket
- Grocery Grove
- Magical Chefs
- Maxnature
- Stocked Farm
- Chef Masterpiece
- C. A. I. Corporation
- Acu-Market
- Good Price Appliances
- VitaminLife
- HerbalShop



Brooke USA Support for Amazon's efforts to remove Ejiao from the Marketplace and Ways to Work Together

Support for Amazon's Efforts

- Commitment to assist in marketing/branding Amazon as a global leader in integrating sustainability practices into its everyday operations – goal-setting, metrics, and quarterly business reviews.
- Public Recognition through Brooke USA Outreach Efforts.
- Testimonial Support for Amazon's overall sustainability development work.
- Media campaign touting Amazon's efforts.

Working Together

- Potential support for our efforts before Congress and the Administration.



BROOKE USA
2333 Alexandria Drive
Lexington, KY 40504
www.BrookeUSA.org

Emily J. Dulin
Chief Executive Officer
(305) 505-6170
Emily.Dulin@BrookeUSA.org

Alfonso Lopez
(571) 243-8717
AHLopez@Beckerlawyers.com

*Thank You for your time
and consideration of our request!!*

