

That we should ban the sale of non-food animal products (eg. Bone china, leather, ivory, etc.)

Junior Secondary Program: Round 1

Since ancient times, humans have depended upon non-food animal products such as leather, bone china and ivory to create products used in daily life, such as clothing. However, in the 21st century, concern for animal rights and welfare is gaining increased awareness. As a result, there is growing debate as to whether the sale of non-food animal products should be banned.

Some argue that the sale of non-food animal products such as bone china, leather and ivory should be entirely banned. Advocates suggest that an outright ban on non-animal products would reduce animal exploitation and cruelty; by not selling non-food animal products, the demand for these products is significantly reduced, reducing the likelihood that animals will be harmed in this process. It can also be argued that banning the sale of non-food animal products will force consumers to choose more sustainable alternatives such as vegan leather and biodegradable materials, normalising cruelty-free options.

Others, however, argue that wholeheartedly banning non-food animal products from being sold will negatively affect the industries and businesses that rely on the sale of these products, such as the wool industry. Additionally, those in opposition of a complete ban may argue that less controversial products, such as beeswax, should not have the same restrictions on them as other products that involve much crueller practises, such as tuskling for ivory.

Questions

A couple of key ideas to consider:

- What constitutes a 'non-food' animal product? Might it include products that are less controversial, such as wool or beeswax?
- Why are non-food animal products sold in the first place?
- What alternatives are there to non-food animal products?
- Why should we treat non-food animal products differently from animal products used for food?
- Will a government ban actually stop the selling of non-food animal products in practise? Will people find ways around this ban?

World Wildlife Trade – Illegal Wildlife Trade

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/illegal-wildlife-trade>

ABC – Wool industry fears for jobs, mental health as end to live sheep export approaches

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-07-03/wa-wool-worries-as-federal-govt-to-stop-live-sheep-export/102542376>

EIA – China's conservation image tarnished by tiger bone decision

<https://eia-international.org/blog/chinas-conservation-image-tarnished-tiger-bone-decision/>

SMH - The dark side to 'vegan leather' is far from ethical

<https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/the-dark-side-to-vegan-leather-is-far-from-ethical-20170314-guxkn4.html>