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Athletes must show caution due to contaminated meat

Due to continuing concerns over contaminated meat in certain parts of the world, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has re-emphasized the need for athletes to exercise extreme caution with regards to eating meat when traveling to competitions in China and Mexico.

It has been shown that Mexico and China have a serious problem with meat contaminated with the prohibited substance clenbuterol, and WADA's message to athletes competing in these countries remains the same: eat only in restaurants and cafeterias that have been approved by your federation and/or event organizer.

Furthermore, when eating outside these designated cafeteria and restaurants, always try to eat in large numbers.

"We have collected sufficient evidence to demonstrate that in some countries there is a risk of eating meat that might be contaminated so we say to athletes that they should be sensible and cautious about where they eat," said WADA Director General David Howman.

"At the World Swimming Championships in Shanghai earlier this year, and the recent Pan American Games in Mexico, the advice from WADA was to stick to places given the all clear by event organizers. The Governments were able to give assurances to athletes at those events.

"It is the responsibility of event organizers and governments to ensure the meat available to athletes is not contaminated.

"WADA continues to give the same advice. These countries have assured WADA that they are taking steps to deal with this problem and to enforce laws that are in place to prevent steroid feeding of animals, but at the moment it is vital that athletes, coaches and team managers are aware of ways to avoid any risk.

"It is also important that those sports and organizations who are staging events in these two countries obtain guarantees from the hosting body and government that the food made available to athletes is not contaminated."

WADA will approach and study any positive case involving clenbuterol on an individual basis.