

French animal lovers launch Olympic protest over dog kill



Cooked dog paws at a Chinese restaurant

PARIS, Feb 18, 2008 (AFP) — A French association of animal lovers on Monday launched a petition aimed at encouraging China to ban, by the Summer Olympics, the killing of dogs for food.

One Voice said the practice of preparing canines for the pot often involves slow and brutal methods in which the animal is beaten to death, boiled alive or hung up to bleed while still breathing.

"This trade is widespread in China, even in large cities, although in Beijing, the authorities are trying to push it outside the city ahead of the Olympics," said Muriel Arnal, president and founder of One Voice.

The association said it had researched the practice for six months and then sent a team out across China for more than three weeks with the help of Chinese associates, filming and photographing dogs being cruelly put to death.

Several years ago, the backstreet butchers' targets of choice were Saint Bernards, but now the favourite dogs for slaughter are German shepherds, it said.

Stolen pets, some of them still bearing collars, were also being killed, it said.

One Voice said its online petition, launched on websites in France and Britain, aimed at pushing China to pass laws banning the killing of dogs, in time for the August Olympics. Hong Kong, which is a special region of

China, and Taiwan, which China views as a renegade province, both have laws banning the consumption of dogs, One Voice noted.