

Clenbuterol in livestock farming may affect results of doping controls in sport

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The illegal use of clenbuterol in livestock farming may affect the results of doping controls in sport. This is the conclusion of a study by the Institute of Food Safety, RIKILT Wageningen UR, Netherlands, in partnership with fellow institutes.

At the behest of FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), RIKILT examined 47 meat and [food samples](#). All originated from hotels in Mexico where football teams stayed during the U-17 World Cup. In 14 of these samples, the growth promoter clenbuterol was found.

A different institute studied 208 [urine samples](#) from footballers staying at the hotels in question and found clenbuterol in 109 of them. Only five of the 24 teams which had provided urine samples tested negative for the presence of clenbuterol. At least one of those teams had been put on a strict non-meat diet.

FIFA

FIFA launched its investigation into possible problems with [food contamination](#) in connection with doping tests in 2011, prompted by five positive doping tests involving clenbuterol in members of the Mexican national football team during out-of-competition doping tests.

The study demonstrates that clenbuterol in meat for [human consumption](#)

causes major problems when eaten by top athletes who are registered in national and international doping control systems. As such, there is an urgent need for government action to combat the illegal use of clenbuterol in livestock farming worldwide.

Banned

The use of clenbuterol in [livestock farming](#) is banned in the entire European Union. This prohibition also applies to all meat exporting countries selling meat products in the markets of the EU member states.

More information: Thevis, M. et al. Adverse analytical findings with clenbuterol among U-17 soccer players attributed to food contamination issues, *Drug Testing and Analysis*, April 2013.

[onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10 ... 02/dta.1471/abstract](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/dta.1471/abstract)

Provided by Wageningen University

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