

Baby Mouflon Dies of Food Poisoning in Nizhny Novgorod Zoo

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Baby Mouflon has died after visitors fed it food laced with poison.

A baby mouflon sheep housed at a zoo in Nizhny Novgorod has died after visitors fed it food laced with poison, the animal park said in an online statement.

Staff at the Limpopo Zoo discovered the mouflon, which passed away in May, had been fed products contaminated with rat or cockroach poison after carrying out an autopsy on the young animal.

While the poisoning may not have been intentional — the food may just have been kept somewhere close to the toxic chemicals — the outcome was "nevertheless sad," zookeepers said in the statement.

The zoo said staff visitors continued to bring their own feed to the park, despite warnings not to do so.

"People just do not understand that by feeding avocado to a goat — as happened a few years

ago with our horned goat, after which it died — they are killing rare animals," the zoo said in the statement.

To counter the problem, the park said it offered special animal feed at 20 rubles (\$0.60) a bag, but that visitors continued to bring "moldy bread, unwashed vegetables and rotting fruit from home."

"Therefore I would like to appeal to all of our visitors: Please be humane to the animals, do not kill them with your would-be kindness and home-made food," zoo director Vladimir Gerasichkin said in the statement.

Mouflon, a subspecies of wild sheep, can grow to a height of one meter and are most commonly found in the Caucasus area and some parts of Iraq and Iran.

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