

Citizen Resolution # 020621

(For Hearing Officer completion)



Fatal, irresponsible feeding

Bait accounts for 40% or more of black bear diets in northern Wisconsin. Problem: Any amount or type of chocolate may legally be used as bear bait. Toxicology reports revealed a mix of corn, molasses, cookies, blue-frosting and chocolate shavings killed a cub in Bayfield county, which illustrates why unregulated use of chocolate bear baits is not best management practice.

Although the DNR discourages the use of dark chocolate and solid blocks of chocolate, milk chocolate may also be fatal depending on a number of factors including but not limited to size and weight of the animal as well as their unique metabolic rate, but also the amount and concentration of caffeine and theobromine in the chocolate itself. Analysis of bear tissues from a cub who died from ingesting chocolate bait suggests that bears are as sensitive or more sensitive than dogs to chocolate. For example, a 30lb cub could become ill from ingesting 5oz milk chocolate, seriously ill from 9oz and possibly die from 22oz. A 30lb cub could become ill from ingesting as little as 2oz of semi-sweet chocolate, seriously ill from 4oz, and possibly die from 9 oz.

The adverse impact of chocolate bear baits on other wildlife tends to be discounted by those who support the use of chocolate baits. After bait is exposed at bait sites, other wildlife sensitive to chocolate may also become ill or die. Chocolate bait sales continue to be robust which indicates it is still being widely used. Bait suppliers sell plenty of effective and alternative baits. Some states that banned chocolate bear baits have seen their bear kill numbers increase. A proposed study on chocolate baits in the Wisconsin Bear Management Plan was never mandated, therefore allows for implementation of a ban.

Be it resolved on April 12, 2021, the Ashland County Conservation Congress work with WI DNR to address this lethal problem by banning chocolate bear bait.

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Please print typed resolution on 8 ½ X 11 white paper (one-sided) and provide the WCC County Chair with TWO COPIES at the spring hearing. Only the individual author or designated representative may present the resolution. The author or designated representative must be present at the time the resolution is introduced. No more than two resolutions may be introduced by any person during the Congress portion of the spring hearings.

Contact one of your [local WCC delegates](#) with questions or for assistance with writing your resolution.