



# ANIMAL FACTS 2007

## PUPPY MILLS

### The Issue:

A puppy mill is a facility that continuously breeds female dogs and houses the males, females and their puppies in deplorable conditions. Inadequate food, water, sanitation, constant exposure to the elements and dilapidated housing are commonplace. Due to these inhumane conditions, many puppies sold from these mills suffer from chronic physical ailments and may be fearful of people and other animals. These puppies are often transported across state lines and sold to unsuspecting customers through pet stores, over the Internet and through newspaper ads.

Puppy mills are a profitable business and are considered by some to be a 'cash crop' for breeders. They are kept in business due to the high demand for purebred dogs. However, pure breed registration papers and health certificates received with the purchase of puppies in pet stores cannot be guaranteed by the American Kennel Club, and are therefore worthless. Meanwhile, millions of dogs in need of good homes are euthanized in shelters each year.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is charged with enforcing the federal Animal Welfare Act, which regulates commercial retail pet dealers who sell through brokers to pet stores. Unfortunately, breeders who sell directly to the public are being excluded from regulation by the USDA, thereby placing in jeopardy the health of countless puppies every year.

### What You Can Do:

DDAL, along with other animal protection organizations, is working to close down puppy mills and ensure the safety and humane treatment of dogs living in breeding facilities. You can help by doing the following:

- 1) Refrain from buying puppies from pet stores, over the Internet or from newspaper ads. Buying puppies from these sources helps to keep puppy mills in business. Instead, adopt puppies from local shelters or rescue groups. Statistics show that approximately 25% of dogs in shelters are purebreds.
- 2) Contact your U.S. senators and representative and ask them for better enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act by the USDA and appropriations to do the job.
- 3) Send us newspaper articles and specific examples of the animal cruelty and inhumane conditions found at puppy mills to help bolster DDAL's case for stronger enforcement of the AWA.
- 4) Write letters to the editor about puppy mills and pet stores. Explain how puppies are treated inhumanely and how puppy mills contribute to pet overpopulation.



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