



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Animal Welfare Groups unite against Puppy Mill Misery

*Call for higher standards, stricter regulations
and licensing and effective enforcement*

Singapore, 28 July 2010 – Representatives from key animal welfare groups in Singapore– Animal Concerns Research & Education Society (ACRES), Action for Singapore Dogs (ASD), Cat Welfare Society (CWS), House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS) and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) met up recently with officials from the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) to appeal for a strong stance against the unethical and unacceptable practices of puppy mills in Singapore.

During the meeting, the groups took the opportunity to present their recommendations to the AVA in a detailed proposal. Key points include setting higher industry standards and best practices, the urgent need to implement a robust licensing system and increase rigorous enforcement for the industry whilst sending a strong positive message to the public about what constitutes good practices in the pet trade.

Puppy mills have been around for decades. Puppy mills continue to thrive because the unwitting consumer is unaware of how these operations are run - with minimum care for the breeding animals involved.

Over the past two months, the animal welfare groups have met to discuss and draft the proposed recommendations with a focus to improve the standards and best practices of puppy mills in Singapore. It was identified that one of the major gaps is the lack of a criterion for entry into such a puppy mill business resulting in unqualified individuals setting up puppy mills with a lack of regard for the animals' welfare and/or health. In the process, these animals are subjected to unnecessary suffering.

The meeting with AVA was also a good opportunity to follow-up on any action being taken by the authorities in the recent Pasir Ris puppy mill case where 85 sick and neglected breeding dogs were rescued and cared for by a group of volunteers. Many of the dogs suffered from various serious illnesses including tick fever, skin problems and general neglect. Three of the animals had died. To date, investigations on the Pasir Ris puppy mill case are still ongoing. This is not an isolated case and not the first time that the poor standards of puppy mills here had been reported in Singapore.

In line with the prevention of animal cruelty laws in Singapore, where animals including breeding dogs are protected from cruelty and unnecessary suffering, we urge all parties involved to step up and undertake the necessary and critical proactive steps to close the gaps in the puppy mill industry to create a cruelty free and responsible industry. The animal welfare groups have offered to assist the AVA and will support the agency in its endeavor towards improving the welfare of dogs in puppy mills. The groups will also engage in educating the public on the puppy mills and their operations.

Note to Editor: Please refer to Annex A for photos of dogs from the Pasir Ris Farm.

About Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is the first registered animal welfare organisation in Singapore. The two main objectives of the SPCA are to promote kindness and to prevent cruelty to animals. Relying on kind donations from the public, the Society provides various animal welfare services to the community including a 24-hour emergency service, a lost-and-found service, and sterilisation voucher programme for strays as well as running an animal shelter. For more information, visit <http://www.spca.org.sg>

About Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (ACRES)

ACRES is a Singaporean animal protection charity and Institution of Public Character aimed at fostering respect and compassion for all animals. It currently has more than 20,000 individuals on its supporter database.

About Action for Singapore Dogs (ASD)

Action for Singapore Dogs Society was established in 2000 as a non-profit animal welfare organization with the mission to help the stray and abandoned dogs in Singapore, as well as to promote adoption and sterilization. For more information on how to help these animals, visit www.asdsingapore.com

About Cat Welfare Society (CWS)

The Cat Welfare Society is a charity whose aim is to improve the welfare of community cats in Singapore. All community cats deserve our compassion and protection, and we believe that there are humane, effective ways to control their population -- that is, through sterilisation instead of destruction.

About House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS)

HRSS is an all-volunteer, non-profit organisation dedicated to rabbit welfare and awareness. HRSS runs a fostering programme to rescue and re-home abandoned rabbits and participates in numerous public events to educate the general public about rabbit care and behaviour. For more information, visit <http://www.hrss.net>.





Pictures courtesy of Dog Mill Rehomers