

SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS



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As your reporter rightfully pointed out (“Owners spend big bucks to treat ailing pets”, Straits Times, Saturday June 15), canine distemper is a viral disease that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and central nervous systems, and can result in death.

It was also highlighted that Mr Kelvin Lam’s current pet, Happy, who was diagnosed and treated for distemper, was a replacement for another puppy which he had previously purchased from the same pet farm, and which also died of the disease.

While it is not mandatory, the SPCA hopes that vets who treat dogs and who then confirms, conclusively, that a dog has canine diseases, make timely notification of such outbreaks to the AVA as a matter of protocol. A registrar of such notifications can note the trends of such outbreaks, and improve the facilities where necessary.

Furthermore, the pet farms should voluntarily quarantine their animals, put advisories of such outbreaks at their premise and suspend sales until the premises are cleaned. This just makes good business practice. It is also good for the business, public relations-wise, to maintain clean, hygienic and disinfected breeding facilities.

It does seem more than a coincidence that both dogs originated from the same pet farm, which suggests that hygiene, animal management, wellness and welfare appear to be lacking with this pet farm.

Many of our pet farms have abysmal breeding facilities; the close enclosures make for easy transmission of diseases. Malnutrition, severe skin problems, little funds spent on veterinary care and little attention to hygiene and quarantining of sick puppies and adults are symptomatic of an industry that is more concerned about the health of their bottom line than that of the animals in their care.

But the unsuspecting buyer should not be a victim of such vagaries of the business.

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