



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

“CANADA’S PUPPY MILL SCANDAL”

A recent article in Reader’s Digest explored the lack of effective laws regarding animal welfare in Canada, and the resulting number of ill or dead animals resulting from puppy mills. The writer told of his personal experience with a puppy that he ended up euthanizing at the age of 6 years because of so many behavioral issues.

Even though the criminal code regarding animal abuse and neglect changed in 2008, the majority of puppy mill owners and animal abusers escape any real punishment. The penalties in Canada are so minor that the problem continues.

First, what is a puppy mill? It is defined by the National Companion Animal Coalition as a “high-volume, substandard dog breeding operation” - a breeding facility where females may be bred starting at their first “heat” at 6 months when they are not physically or emotionally ready for being a parent. These females are often bred twice yearly in very unsanitary conditions and kept in small cages along with their offspring. Most of these dogs never get outside in the fresh air. They are not socialized and many do not receive any medical care whatsoever.

The puppies are not checked by a veterinarian, and often have physical and behavioral health issues including hip dysplasia, cataracts, heart problems, chronic skin problems, fear, aggression, etc.

Puppy mills often provide fake papers along with their puppies. Outrageous prices are charged for these puppies sold by pet stores and puppy mill owners posing as breeders. There is no guarantee of health and the puppy cannot be returned or the owner reimbursed for any medical costs resulting from poor breeding.

It is impossible to know how many puppy mills puppies there are out there, but Jim Berry, a veterinarian and member of the Animal Welfare Committee with the Canadian Veterinary Association estimates that there may be more than a million in Canada.

What can you do to stop the support of puppy mills?

1. Never buy a puppy from a pet store
2. Adopt a puppy or an older dog from your local shelter or from a rescue group
3. Visit www.petfinder.org to find a dog (purebred or mixed breed)
4. Research a reputable breeder if you are looking for a specific type of dog. A good breeder will have you fill out a questionnaire and do an interview with you to determine if you are a good candidate to adopt one of their dogs. A good breeder will show you a veterinary certificate for the parents and the puppies. There should be a guarantee with the puppy and the option to return the puppy to the breeder if the situation in your home does not work out.
5. Recognize that many of the new “designer dogs” are products of puppy mills and are not breeds recognized by the Canadian Kennel Club and are not worth the money that is being charged for them. These designer dogs are a cross between 2 different breeds chosen only for cosmetic purposes without consideration for the health of the animal.
6. Support changes in animal welfare laws by being informed, writing letters to your MP, signing petitions, etc.

SUMMER TRAVEL WITH YOUR PETS_If you are traveling in your car or R.V., camping, sailing in your boat, or just want a water bowl that keeps in the water inside the bowl, try the new “STAY DRY WATER DISH”. These Canadian made bowls require a little training on your pet’s part, but once they catch on you’ll clean up a lot less water from your floor.

Start by taking the lid off of the bowl and using it like any other water dish. After the pet adapts, put the lid on, but leave the wheel out of the opening. Then the next step is to insert the moving wheel inside the opening. The pet learns to lick water from the wheel in the top of the dish, thereby saving water from slopping all over your floor.

We also have fold down travel water bowls with drawstring tops.

EARTHBATH’S GREEN TEA GROOMING WIPES are very handy for in between baths, cleaning beards after meals, cleaning dirty paws or bums and just freshening up your pet in general. The wipes come in 2 package sizes, a 28 wipe, resealable package, or a 100 wipe recloseable plastic tub.

FORCE FIELD SPRAY is a useful product if you walk your pet in areas where they may be fleas, ticks or mosquitoes. This repellent citrus-based spray puts a non-detectable surfactant coating on your pet's fur that prevents insects from being able to land and cling to your pet. It should be reapplied frequently if your pet spends a lot of time outdoors, walks in highly infested areas and after bathing or being in water.

DELI FRESH is a ready to feed dog food in a tube. You simply slice it up, heat it slightly and serve. It is a great food to feed anytime, but Deli Fresh is very convenient for traveling.

In good health, Mike, Lee, Jayne & Moxy

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