

## Instructions for Letters-to-the-Editor

When sending letters-to-the-editor, it is important to write the date at the top of each letter, including the name and address of the person to whom you are sending it.

Please be sure to provide your full typed and signed name, address and telephone number. Most newspapers and magazines will not publish letters if this information is not provided. Some will want to verify that the letter is legitimate.

If your letter is published, please forward a copy to ISAR as soon as possible.

Although these four sample Letters-to-the Editor are issue-specific, they can easily be adapted to other issues affecting animals. It is necessary only to identify the problem (e.g., Factory Farming), state why the particular practice is wrong, and offer a solution.

## Sample “Outside Dog” Letter

To the Editor:

Everyone has seen at least one “outside dog” – a dog constantly chained or tethered outside left alone with no companionship, entertainment and often without adequate shelter and food/water. Think about the life such a dog leads – endless loneliness, never-ending boredom, frustration from being isolated and seeing the world pass by, extreme cold and heat from the changing seasons, the exposure to unsanitary conditions produced from having to defecate in close proximity to where food/water and shelter, if any, are provided. The anxiety and frustration from being constantly chained/tethered also produces destructive and aggressive behavior in dogs, causing many “owners” to abandon their pet, either legally to an animal shelter, or illegally by simply dumping the animal on the streets, thus increasing the already enormous pet overpopulation crisis.

Some cities have introduced laws that place limits on the time a dog can be chained/tethered and some cities have even banned the inhumane practice altogether. Laws should be established statewide – and ultimately federally-to protect dogs from suffering because of this type of treatment. Readers can write to local, state and federal officials voicing their support for legislation banning chaining/tethering.

Sincerely,

(Typed name and signature of writer)

## Sample United Nations Spay/Neuter Stamp Letter

To the Editor:

Throughout the world millions of cats and dogs are without homes simply because there are too many pets and not enough caregivers to go around. They face abandonment, abuse, starvation, illness and ultimately death because they are unwanted. Much of this suffering could be ended and the pet overpopulation crisis could be alleviated and ultimately ended if pet owners acted responsibly and spayed/neutered their pets.

The United State Postal Service has acknowledged the pet overpopulation crisis with its commemorative spay/neuter stamps, thereby spreading the spay/neuter message to millions of people and exposing the scourge of pet overpopulation. The pet overpopulation problem is not an issue facing only the American people, however – abandoned animals face a cruel fate in every country throughout the world. Because pet overpopulation is a global concern, a United Nations spay/neuter commemorative stamp would serve to spread the spay/neuter message and address the pet overpopulation issue worldwide. The United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) issues six sets of stamps each year and puts them on sale for a 12-month period or until the limited supply runs out, making them collector's items as well as valid postage when mailed from U.N. offices in New York City; Geneva, Switzerland; and Vienna, Austria. The themes for the stamps reflect significant issues facing the world; past stamps have featured environmental issues and endangered species. Readers can contact Mr. Robert Gray, Chief of the UNPA New York office and express their support and interest in a UN spay/neuter stamp and hopefully the UNPA will soon choose to address the pet overpopulation crisis. Mr. Gray can be reached at:

Mr. Robert Gray  
Chief, United Nations Postal Administration, New York  
PO Box 5900  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163-5900

Sincerely,

(Typed name and signature of writer)

## Sample Pet Overpopulation Letter

To the Editor:

Across the United States, animal shelters are filled with millions of cats and dogs, kittens and puppies in need of loving, permanent homes. These are beautiful, healthy animals that have been cast away by people who were not willing to make a life-long commitment to them.

Many of the unwanted once lived in homes, but now exist behind bars. Many face certain death because of the serious problem of dog and cat overpopulation. Each day, shelters receive more and more animals and the caring shelter personnel who care for these wonderful animals then must kill them to make room for the new arrivals.

Pet overpopulation is a grave problem of our society. It calls for immediate public attention. Even those who do not have pets are affected by the dog and cat overpopulation crisis, because millions of tax dollars are spent annually to care for lost, abandoned and unwanted pets, and millions more to destroy those that find no homes.

There are two main ways to end this vicious cycle of pet overpopulation and death. The most important is spaying and neutering all dogs and cats. Spaying and neutering not only helps control overpopulation, but also provides many health benefits to companion animals. Spayed and neutered animals have longer life expectancies, and this procedure eliminates the risks of several different cancers among both males and females.

Besides spaying and neutering, if you are ready to make a lifetime commitment to a cat or dog, please visit your local shelter and save a life by adopting a pet.

Sincerely,

(Typed name and signature of writer)

## Sample Puppy Mill Letter

To the Editor:

Most people do not realize that the majority of dogs for sale in pet stores are the product of “puppy mills.”

Puppy mills are institutions of cruelty usually hidden from public view. It is not unusual for hundreds of dogs to be crammed together in filthy pens and cages. The dogs are bred repeatedly, and if their reproductive capacity wanes, they are often ruthlessly killed.

Thousands of dogs, unloved and starving; thousands of puppies, heartlessly shipped across the country like merchandise at too young an age; thousands of consumers, unknowingly buying sick dogs: these are the grim truths of the puppy mill-pet store trade.

The power to close down these inhumane facilities lies completely in the hands of consumers. By adopting from animal shelters and refusing to purchase dogs from pet stores, individuals can put an end to the vicious supply and demand cycle of puppy mills. Dogs are not commodities. They should not be sold by breeders or in pet stores. Millions of beautiful, healthy animals sit in shelters across the country, facing death for lack of a good home. Adoption not only puts inhumane puppy mills out of business, but also saves the lives of animals so desperately in need of a loving, permanent home.

Sincerely,

(Typed name and signature of writer)