

Puppy Sales Investigation by The Humane Society of the United States: Where Do Virginia's Pet Store Puppies Really Come From?

How truthful are Virginia's pet store owners and employees about the sources of their puppies? A member of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) puppy mills campaign and an undercover investigator visited every Virginia pet store we could find that sells puppies and traced the sources of more than 2,000 puppies shipped into the state during a seven-month period.

We wanted to find out:

- If store personnel were being truthful about the origins of their puppies;
- If the stores were buying from puppy mills with a history of federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) violations;
- If the stores were complying with a new law¹ that requires stores to post breeder information on or near each puppy's cage.



Dreamy Puppy pet store in Chantilly, VA, claims in online ads that it doesn't buy from puppy mills, and their staff told us they get puppies from "local breeders." But we found that Dreamy Puppy received at least six puppies from a facility linked to Angelia Kochs/Rocky Creek Kennel in Niangua, MO, which has been repeatedly cited for severe Animal Welfare Act violations. This photo of severely matted dogs was taken by a USDA inspector at Kochs's kennel last year. /USDA, 2013

Investigation results:

- **Despite claims that they only purchase from small, local and/or quality breeders, 12 of the stores were found purchasing from breeders who had been cited for AWA violations during the previous three years or from massive out-of-state brokers**

¹ humanesociety.org/news/news_briefs/2014/02/virginia-general-assembly-unanimously-passes-pet-and-consumer-protection-legislation-022714.html

linked to puppy mills. Most of the remaining stores refused to divulge much, if any, breeder information at all, in violation of Virginia law.

- **Six stores (Dreamy Puppy, Family Pet Center, Petland, Pet World, Puppy Love and Savita Pets) were found to be purchasing from one or more puppy mills so notorious that The HSUS had previously identified them in our 101 Puppy Mills report (2014)² and/or our Horrible Hundred report (2013)³.** Some of these operations have been cited for wounded and limping animals,



Judy Gray in Missouri was identified as a problem puppy mill in The HSUS's 101 Puppy Mills report earlier this year due to repeated violations of the Animal Welfare Act. She sold a puppy to Savita Pets store in Deltaville in May 2014. Photo of Gray's facility by USDA. /USDA, 2013

underweight dogs, filthy conditions and food bowls contaminated with feces. Two of the

breeders were even cited by the USDA for listing "gunshot" as their official method of euthanasia.

- **The majority of the 18 stores we visited appeared to be failing to comply with a state law that requires stores to post the name and location of each puppy's breeder near each puppy.** The law⁴ requires that the information be posted "on or near the cage of any dog or cat available for sale." Only four of the stores had this information posted on the cage of each puppy. One store had a list posted near the back of the store that did not identify the individual puppies linked to each breeder, while most did not post the information at all.⁵
- **One pet store had a basset hound puppy who was so sick that he appeared to be unable to stand on four legs and was audibly gasping for breath.** Yet the store had veterinary records "proving" he had been checked by a vet and was deemed to be healthy the previous day. Law enforcement was called immediately after The HSUS left the store (Pet-Go-Round, Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach).

² humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/101-puppy-mills-report-2014.pdf

³ humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/100-puppy-mills-report.pdf

⁴ ls.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?141+ful+CHAP0448

⁵ The disclosure law is meaningful for consumers because it enables them to do research to avoid purchasing a puppy from a known puppy mill.

Our findings underscore what The HSUS's undercover investigations have proven time and time again, including our prior pet store investigations in New York⁶, Chicago⁷ and Texas⁸: the vast majority of pet stores are supplied by puppy mills, regardless of what most pet store staff tell consumers.

State lawmakers can address this problem by passing laws to require pet stores to purchase only from breeders that adhere to high animal welfare standards.

Pet Overpopulation in Virginia

This issue is compounded by Virginia's already significant pet overpopulation problem. County and city animal shelters and pet rescues in Virginia take in an estimated 90,000⁹ unwanted dogs per year, according to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and more than 16,600 unwanted dogs were euthanized by Virginia shelters in 2013—more than 1,300 dogs a month. **Puppy mills add to this burden by flooding an already overstretched community with additional animals.**

The Humane Society of the United States encourages consumers to do their homework and to acquire puppies only from animal shelters, reliable rescue organizations or from responsible breeders¹⁰ they have carefully screened in person.

Research Methods:

- An HSUS investigator made in-person visits to 18 pet stores with a hidden camera to look for puppy source information, usually accompanied by a member of The HSUS's puppy mills campaign. If the source information was not visible near the cages, the investigator asked to see paperwork for selected individual animals.
- HSUS researchers acquired shipping records for over 2,000 puppies shipped from out of the state to Virginia pet stores this year, mostly between February and August 2014. We also researched puppy records that were shown to the undercover investigator who visited the stores in person. The records are a sampling of all the puppies shipped to the pet stores during the calendar year. The total number of puppies estimated to be shipped to all Virginia pet stores annually is likely more than 10,000.
- The breeders and brokers identified on the shipping records were then matched with kennel inspection reports and/or photographs that are publically available from the United States Department of Agriculture and/or state agencies that inspect puppy mills.
- An HSUS investigator visited and photographed many of the pet stores' suppliers in person.

⁶ humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/ny_puppy_stores_investigation_2011.pdf

⁷ humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/report-hsus-chicago-pet-stores-2012investigates.pdf

⁸ humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/investigation-report-texas.pdf

⁹ arr.va-vdacs.com/cgi-bin/Vdacs_search.cgi Virginia Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2013.

¹⁰ humanesociety.org/issues/puppy_mills/tips/finding_responsible_dog_breeder.html

Stores visited, and our findings:

Dreamy Puppy, Chantilly: Bought From Breeders Listed in the 101 Puppy Mills Report

- **Dates visited:** 7/25/14 and 9/3/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** Dreamy Puppy claims in online ads that it doesn't buy from puppy mills, and their staff told us they get puppies only from "local breeders around the area," yet we found that Dreamy Puppy received puppies from several notorious midwestern puppy mills. We even found the store buying dozens of puppies from at least three dealers who are so problematic that they were listed in our 101 Puppy Mills report¹¹ earlier this year:
 - In 2014, Dreamy Puppy received at least six puppies from a puppy mill linked to **Angelia Kochs/Rocky Creek Kennel**, in Niangua, MO. Kochs was cited for severe Animal Welfare Act violations by the USDA in 2013 and 2014, including limping dogs



Dreamy Puppy purchased at least six puppies from a facility linked to Angelia Kochs, who has been cited for numerous Animal Welfare Act violations by USDA inspectors. Photo of Kochs' facility by USDA, /USDA 2013.

with foot wounds¹², a French bulldog with patches of missing fur and nails so long that they were curling all the way around and growing back against the pads of her feet¹³, a lethargic French bulldog found lying down and

"shivering from the head to the tail"¹⁴ who had

- difficulty walking and nine dogs with "heavily wadded, matted hair,"¹⁵ among other problems.
- In February and March of 2014, Dreamy Puppy received at least 47 puppies from **Jonas Fisher/Country Boy Pets** (aka Playful Paws Kennel), a massive broker in Indiana who pled guilty to obstructing official business and complicity to cruelty to animals in April 2014 for issues related to 60 dogs who were inhumely transported in a van that broke down in January. Many of the animals were found sick and injured, according to news reports¹⁶, and at least one of them later died. Fisher has since cancelled his USDA license.

¹¹ humansociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/puppy_mills/101-puppy-mills-report-2014.pdf

¹² USDA inspection, May 2014

¹³ USDA inspection, Sept. 2013

¹⁴ USDA inspection, Sept. 2013

¹⁵ USDA inspection, Sept. 2013

¹⁶ newsmax.com/TheWire/62-dogs-minivan-ohio/2014/01/16/id/547376/

- In August 2014, Dreamy Puppy purchased three puppies from **Wanda Barker/Drycreek Kennel** in Arkansas, who appeared in The HSUS's 101 Puppy Mills report earlier this year due to a series of severe violations documented by USDA inspectors in 2013. During a November 2013 inspection, a USDA inspector noted that Barker had a written euthanasia plan in which ".22 shot by owner" was listed as the method of euthanasia. Underweight and ill dogs were also found repeatedly at inspections in 2013, including dogs suffering from hair loss, oozing sores and eye and skin disorders. USDA inspectors also noted that some of the dogs were found without adequate protection from the cold when overnight temperatures had been below freezing¹⁷. Barker's 2014 inspections have been compliant so far.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visits, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store. The breeder information above was acquired by HSUS via shipping documents.
- **Reported to USDA.** The HSUS has reported Dreamy Puppy to the USDA for apparently violating the retail pet stores rule, which requires puppy sellers that ship puppies online, sight-unseen, to be USDA licensed and inspected. Dreamy Puppy does not appear to have a USDA license, yet offers to ship puppies "anywhere in the nation" on its website¹⁸.

Family Pet Supercenter, Chesapeake: Linked to Breeders with Severe Animal Welfare Act Violations

- **Date visited:** 9/22/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** In the Family Pet Supercenter, we linked puppies to several breeders with severe Animal Welfare Act violations. We were shown a puppy bred by **Sheryl Tietz/Heaven's Blessings Kennel** in Bancroft, NE, from whom the salesperson said, "we get a lot of puppies." Tietz was listed in The HSUS's 101 Puppy Mills report in May 2014 due to severe animal care problems, as documented in state and federal inspection reports, including using gunshot as an unapproved method of "euthanasia."

When a state inspector visited the Tietz kennel in August 2013, he found 150 dogs and multiple violations, including excessive feces, rusty cages and dirty conditions.

Repeated problems were found by federal inspectors as well, with USDA inspectors finding numerous sick or injured dogs as recently as July 2014. During one August 2013 inspection alone, USDA inspectors documented eleven pages of Animal Welfare Act violations at Heaven's Blessings, including an elderly dog named Shakespeare who had no teeth and was struggling to eat; at their next visit, USDA inspectors noted that Shakespeare and two other dogs they had identified as needing vet care had been "euthanized." On this same visit, the USDA inspector noted that the licensee's method of euthanasia was "gunshot to head."

Other suppliers to the store that have been cited repeatedly for Animal Welfare Act violations include **Bonnie Versteeg**¹⁹ in Platte, SD, who earlier this year was fined more than \$850 by the USDA for repeated violations at her kennel.

- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did show us

¹⁷ USDA inspection, Nov. 2013

¹⁸ dreamypuppy.com/index.php/shipping/

¹⁹ aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/2014/04/pdf/awa_april.pdf

paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store. Therefore, we were only able to research the origins of a few animals in the store.

Fins and Feathers, Ashburn: Store Owner Told Investigator, “If you want to make money in this business you have to sell your soul.”

- **Date visited:** 9/3/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** There was no information available about the puppies in the store.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Staff also refused to orally disclose any breeder information, except to say that some of the puppies were from Ohio.
- **“You really can’t care about animals at all.”** A man who self-identified as the store’s owner was asked what it is like to own a pet store. He said: *“If I had to do it all over again I wouldn’t. ...You know there’s a lot of talk in this business—I call it a thin brown line. If you want to make money in this business you have to sell your soul. You really can’t care about animals at all.”*

Noah’s Last Stop, Prospect:

- **Date visited:** 11/1/2014
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** The store owners told our undercover investigator that they breed the puppies sold in the store. Freedom of Information Act requests made by the HSUS did not reveal any additional information regarding the origins of the puppies.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law.

Pauley’s Pups, Ashland: Skirting State’s Disclosure Law

- **Date visited:** 9/22/2014
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** In 2007, this pet store was part of an HSUS investigation into Virginia puppy mills. That year, the store was directly linked to puppies from Junior Horton/Horton’s Pups, an unlicensed²⁰ puppy mill operator whose Virginia puppy mill was subsequently shut down²¹. Horton was twice convicted of animal cruelty due to sick, injured and underage animals at his facility. During this year’s visit, we were shown records for a puppy from **Abe Miller/Quail Creek Kennel** in Charm, OH, a large-scale puppy broker (middleman), and **Eli Raber** of Baltic, Ohio. Raber was cited for Animal Welfare Act violations in February 2012 for two dogs with such severe dental problems that the roots of their teeth were visible, which the USDA inspector noted could be painful and make it difficult for the dogs to eat.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store.

Pet and Aquatic Warehouse, Lynchburg: Linked to Massive Middleman Broker in Kansas

- **Date visited:** 9/21/14

²⁰ Horton had a county kennel license but was not licensed by the USDA to sell to pet stores.

²¹ humansociety.org/news/press_releases/2009/07/notorious_virginia_puppy_miller_sentenced_under_new_law_071309.html

- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** Records viewed in the store linked its puppies to a large-scale broker (middleman dealer) in Kansas and some individual Kansas breeders. Because many of the puppies were supplied by a broker, we were not able to get much information on actual breeders. Had the store been complying with the state law that requires them to post breeder information on puppy cages, customers would be able to find out more about how their puppies were born and raised before making a purchase.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did answer a few questions we asked in the store.

Pet-Go-Round, Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach: Extremely Sick Puppy Found in Store

- **Date visited:** 9/23/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** Through public records requests to the state, we found shipping documents indicating that this pet store purchases puppies from some of the biggest brokers (middlemen for puppy mills) in Missouri. In fact, between February and August 2014, the two Pet-Go-Round stores in Virginia Beach received 800 puppies from some of the biggest brokers in Missouri: **The Hunte Corporation, SanJon Kennels and QD Kennels.**
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store.
- **Sick puppy:** At this store we held a basset hound puppy from a breeder named **Devaron Zimmerman** in Kansas. The puppy appeared to be extremely sick. When our investigator put him on the floor, he seemed to be unable to stand up using his back legs, and he was audibly gasping for air. Yet the salesperson seemed unconcerned. She handed us a veterinary record indicating that the puppy had been treated for an upper respiratory infection, yet had been cleared for sale just the day before by the store's veterinarian. HSUS staff were so concerned about this puppy that they immediately notified local animal control as soon as they left the store and asked them to check on his welfare. The next day, HSUS staff were assured by local animal control that they had visited the store to check the puppy and stated that the store was treating him for his illness. The HSUS was unable to get additional follow-up details. Although HSUS staff continued to check the store's website for a basset hound puppy to see if he was ever put up for sale again (10/1/14, 10/8/14 and 10/16/14), we never saw any sign of the puppy again on the store's website.

Pet-Go-Round, Pembroke Mall, Virginia Beach: Buys from Massive Middleman Brokers in Missouri

- **Date visited:** 9/23/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** Through public records requests to the state, we found shipping documents indicating that this pet store purchases puppies from some of the biggest brokers (middle men for puppy mills) in Missouri, including **The Hunte Corporation** and **QD Kennel.** Although the staff told us they receive puppies from "licensed breeders," the puppy they showed us in the store had a breeder name of Morgan Branson, who is not USDA licensed. Paperwork showed that the puppy had been shipped to the store by a licensed broker (QD Kennels), but his breeder was not USDA inspected; this is not

necessarily a violation of the law, but showed that the sales staff was not telling the truth about sources.²²

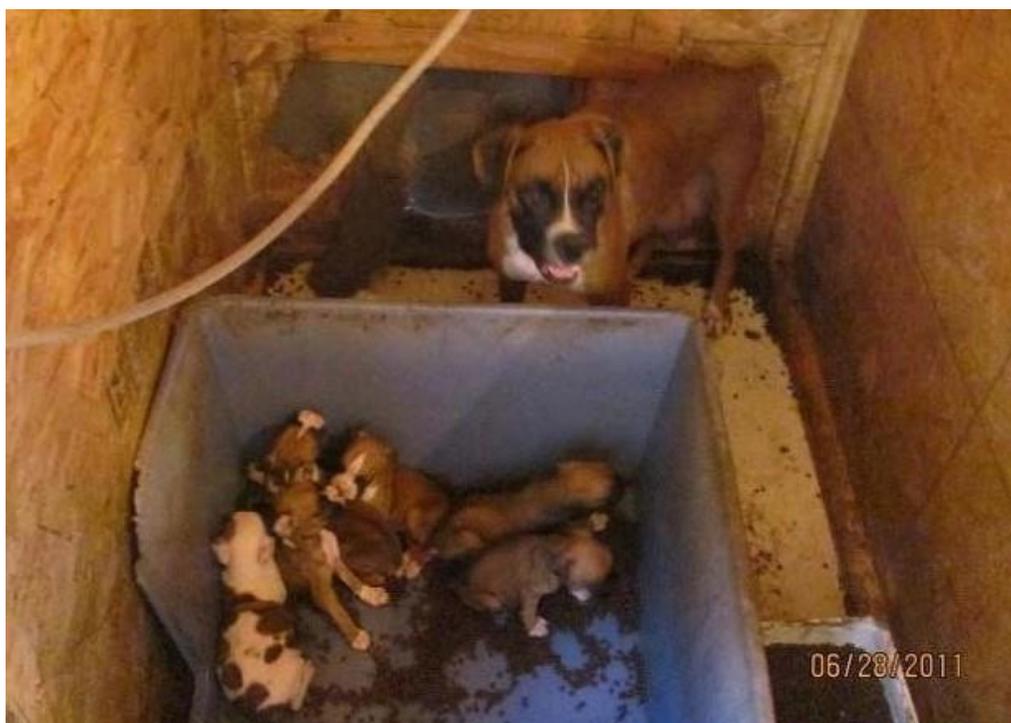
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, in violation of state law. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store.
- **Both Pet-Go-Round stores market heavily to military families**, offering “military friendly financing.”

Petopia, Lynchburg: Refused to Divulge Information on Breeders, a Violation of State Law

- **Date visited:** 9/21/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store** The store had prominent “no puppy mills!” signs posted, yet refused to identify the breeders of their puppies either in conversation or in writing, in violation of state law. Staff told us that even if we purchased a puppy, they would not provide breeder info (this is also a violation of the law).
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** Staff stated in conversation that they buy only from local breeders, yet repeatedly refused to provide any documentation to prove their claims.

Petland, Fairfax: Selling Puppies from Some of the Worst Puppy Mills in the Country

- **Dates visited:**
8/19/14 and
9/3/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** The Fairfax, VA Petland was found to be selling dogs from more notorious, problem puppy mills than any other store we visited for this investigation. Many of their suppliers have even been publically identified by The HSUS as known puppy mills in our Horrible Hundred report (2013) and our 101 Puppy Mills report (2014), including:



USDA inspectors found puppies in filthy conditions at a facility owned by Charlene Koster, who sells to Petland. Although this photo was taken in 2011, Koster has been cited for multiple, repeat Animal Welfare Act violations as recently as August 2014. /USDA, 2011

²² Per the USDA’s database of licensed sellers, viewed on 10/20/14, there is no USDA licensee for anyone with the last name of Branson in Missouri.

- **Brandi Cheney/Circle B Farms, Huntsville, MO.** A Missouri state inspector found a dead wheaton terrier inside one of Cheney’s cages in May 2013. One of the other dogs in the same cage had “blood on her head and body” from puncture wounds, according to the inspection report. At the same visit, inspectors noted rodent droppings, unsanitary conditions and other problems. In March 2014, a USDA inspector found puppies with their feet falling through 1” by 1” gaps in the flooring, a significant injury and entrapment risk. Cheney was also linked to a USDA kennel in another part of the state that was fined and shut down in 2011.
- **Charlene Koster/Rainbow Ranch, Minneapolis, KS:** Since appearing in The HSUS’s Horrible Hundred report in 2013 due to severe Animal Welfare Act violations, Koster continued to accumulate new violations in 2014, including unsafe enclosures that could trap and injure puppies,²³ a matted dog that the inspector couldn’t touch because her gate was frozen shut, 43 dogs in the winter cold when temperatures had been below freezing, feces smeared on the walls and floors and puppies who had feces mixed in with their food²⁴.
- **Lanae Jackson/Jackson Kennels, Clifton, KS:** Since appearing in the The HSUS’s Horrible Hundred report in 2013 due to repeated severe Animal Welfare Act violations, Jackson continued to be cited for even more violations as recently as September 2014, including a Shiba Inu with a swollen mass who couldn’t put weight on his foot, three other dogs with visible foot and leg injuries and a German Shepherd with an open, oozing wound.²⁵ Petland Fairfax purchased at least 17 puppies from Jackson between February and July 2014.
- **Sandra Rottinghaus of Seneca, KS,** who identifies herself on shipping documents as a “hobby breeder,” but is associated with a licensed kennel under her daughter Krystal’s name²⁶ (Krystal Rottinghaus, aka Krystal Tangeman). Repeated Animal Welfare Act violations linked to the kennel include limping and injured dogs who had not been treated by a vet, a severely underweight dog, dogs with eye injuries and dogs in the winter cold without adequate protection.²⁷ Krystal Rottinghaus was fined \$8,000.00 by The USDA in September 2013 for these and other violations.
- **Lizann Miller of McCook, NE,** where a USDA inspector found dogs in the cold without adequate protection from the elements, excessive amounts of feces and dogs with solid ice in their water bowls who “were observed sticking their nose in one of the water receptacles and aggressively pawing at the solid ice inside of it.²⁸”

In addition to buying from numerous breeders with a history of animal welfare problems, Petland’s salespeople orally assured our staff during our visit that they don’t buy from massive breeders with hundreds of dogs, which is untrue according to USDA records. Several of the breeders listed above had more than 100 dogs in their kennels during recent USDA inspections, and one (Jackson) had 480 dogs²⁹. We also found Petland Fairfax buying from massive middleman dog brokers in OH and MO.

²³ USDA inspection, Aug. 2014

²⁴ USDA inspection, February 2014

²⁵ USDA inspection, Sept. 2014

²⁶ Both Sandra and Krystal are listed on the Kansas state license for the kennel at the same address.

²⁷ USDA inspection, April 2013

²⁸ USDA inspection, Dec 2013

²⁹ USDA records, Sept. 2014

- **Breeder disclosure law:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, which is a violation of the law. One long list of breeders was posted far in the back of the store, but there was no information near the cages indicating which puppy came from which breeder. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store.

Pets N Pals, Staunton: Unlicensed Breeders?

- **Dates visited:** 8/20/14 and 9/19/14
- **Puppy sellers linked to store:** Pets N Pals was featured in an earlier HSUS investigation (2008) and was found to be purchasing from unlicensed breeders. One of the breeders, Jean Payne (aka Jean Payne-Cyhanick)³⁰ of **Rainbow's End kennel**, was eventually shut down by Virginia authorities and convicted of 50 charges related to the improper treatment of animals at her kennel³¹.

This year, we were again unable to find licenses from several of the breeder names that were disclosed on the cage signs at Pets N Pals. While it is not necessarily illegal for breeders to sell to pet stores without a license, large-scale breeders such as Rainbow's End kennel are required to obtain a USDA license if they have more than four breeding females. During our visits, some of the cage cards did have license numbers on them and others did not.

- **Breeder disclosure law:** At the time of our first visit, some of the breeder information was posted as required, but not all of the cage cards listed a first and last name for each breeder. During our second visit, the information was missing, and the store clerk said that she was planning to re-make the cage cards.

Pets Plus, Inc., Stratford: Buys From Massive Middleman Broker in Missouri

- **Date visited:** 8/19/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** We found paperwork linking hundreds of puppies sold to Pets Plus from **The Hunte Corporation**, a massive Missouri broker known to be linked to puppy mills. As The HSUS reported earlier this year, several of the problem puppy mills in our 101 Puppy Mills report sold puppies to The Hunte Corporation.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about in the store.

Pet World, Hampton: Buys From Big Broker and Breeders with Animal Welfare Act Violations

- **Date visited:** 9/22/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** We found Pet World obtaining dozens of puppies via **The Hunte Corporation**, a massive middleman dog broker in Missouri that has been linked to puppy mills³². In addition, we found that some of the puppies sold by Hunte to the store had originally come from breeders with Animal Welfare Act violations, and at least one of them (Blomberg) was listed in The HSUS's recent 101 Puppy Mills report. HSUS staff who visited the store on 9/22/2014 found puppies linked to:

³⁰ whsv.com/home/headlines/10997561.html

³¹ newsleader.com/article/20101206/NEWS01/101206002/Staunton-kennel-owner-probed-again

³² Several of the problem puppy mills listed in The HSUS's 101 Puppy Mills report, released in May 2014, were found to have sold to The Hunte Corporation.

- **Kristina and Linda Baker/Ken Lynn Kennel of Huggins, Missouri**, where dogs were found with serious veterinary issues in 2013³³, including dogs with crusty eye discharge, white and cloudy eyes and signs of advanced dental disease which “can cause discomfort or pain to the dogs and affect their eating,” according to USDA inspectors. A 2013 USDA inspection found 459 dogs and puppies at this massive breeding facility.
- **Kathie and William Blomberg/Locust Creek Farm, Versailles, MO**: USDA inspectors found veterinary care violations at this facility in May 2013 for several dogs with medical problems, including five shih tzus with cloudy, crusty or oozing eyes who had not yet been seen by a vet, a shih tzu with hair loss on his tail area, and a pomeranian with “a heavy build-up of yellowish brown to dark brown material on the teeth” and gums so receded that the roots of a tooth were showing. The pomeranian also had fecal material matted under his tail. During the same inspection, USDA inspectors found dirty feeders with a “build up of food debris and grime” on them, among other problems. Its most recent inspection was compliant. The USDA noted 334 dogs and puppies at this massive breeding operation.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed**: At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by law. Staff did show us paperwork on a few puppies we asked about.

Puppy Cottage, Winchester: Refused to Provide Information on Breeders in Violation of State Law

- **Date visited**: 8/17/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store**: There was no information available about the puppies in the store.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed**: At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. The store owner also refused to divulge any information when we asked him face-to-face.

Puppy Love, Roanoke: Linked to Breeders with Animal Welfare Act Violations

- **Date visited**: 9/19/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store**: We found at least one puppy who had been purchased from a breeder (**Andy Troyer/Woodland Kennel** in Ohio) who was identified in our 101 Puppy Mills report due to Animal Welfare Act violations. Troyer has been cited by USDA as recently as January 2014, when he was not following an approved veterinary plan and had unvaccinated dogs. USDA inspectors found three dogs in need of veterinary care on his property, including one shih tzu who was limping and had a mass on her paw, a second shih tzu with a mass protruding from her eye and a third with signs of a dental infection. Another puppy we viewed in the store was from **Andy Nisley/Nunda Valley Kennels** in Ohio, who had Animal Welfare Act violations in 2013 for not following his approved veterinary plan (May 2013), a dog with hair loss who was in need of veterinary care (May 2013) and excessive feces and unsanitary conditions (both May and January 2013), although his most recent inspection was compliant. We also found paperwork showing that two other dogs had come from Ohio breeders with no recent violations.

³³ USDA inspection report, June 2013.

- **Breeder disclosure law:** Each puppy's breeder was identified, but not every card listed a full name, as required by law. Some cards listed only the last name and city.

Savita Pets, Deltaville: Buys From Breeders with Severe Animal Welfare Act Violations

- **Date visited:** 9/23/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** Through public records requests to the state and information witnessed in the store, we found that Savita Pets purchased puppies from some sellers in Arkansas and Missouri with Animal Welfare Act violations, including **Cedar Woods Kennel** in Lebanon, MO, which was cited by the USDA in March 2014 for dogs who had not had adequate protection from the weather during a period when temperatures ranged from 1 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit; **Linda Brasher/Elite Puppies**, Havana, AR, which has over 200 dogs and has had USDA violations for excessive excreta and dirty conditions (March 2013); and **Judy Gray** in Rothville, MO, who appeared in The HSUS's 101 Puppy Mills report in 2014 due to serious, repeated violations of the Animal Welfare Act in 2013, including filthy conditions, a limping Chihuahua with a foot injury, a Maltese with numerous skin lesions plus a missing foot, a three-week-old bulldog puppy with thickened, bright red skin and other problems.

The store also buys puppies from a middleman broker in Missouri called Tiffanie's LLC. Tiffanie's was cited twice in a row by USDA for not making its facility available for inspection as required by law (March 2014 and May 2014).

- **Breeder disclosure law:** Breeder or broker information in very small print was visible on each puppy's cage.

Silvia's Pets, Harrisonburg: "Local Breeders?"

- **Date visited:** 8/26/14
- **Puppy sellers linked to store:** None of the breeder names visible on the puppy cages was linked to a USDA license. While this is not necessarily illegal, a breeder who sells to pet stores would have to have only a few breeding female dogs (fewer than five) to be exempt from USDA oversight. We found the store selling puppies from breeders in PA and VA. The PA breeder, Trisha Leber, sells to at least two stores we visited, but does not appear to have a state kennel license nor a USDA kennel license.
- **Breeder disclosure law:** Each puppy's breeder was identified as required by law.

World of Pets, Danville: Buys from Massive Middleman Broker in Missouri

- **Date visited:** 9/19/14
- **Problem puppy sellers linked to store:** We found paperwork linking dozens of puppies sold to this store from **The Hunte Corporation**, a massive Missouri broker known to be linked to puppy mills. As The HSUS reported earlier this year, several of the problem puppy mills in our 101 Puppy Mills report sold puppies to The Hunte Corporation.
- **Breeder disclosure law not followed:** At the time of our visit, no breeder information was posted near the puppies in the store, as required by state law. Salespeople also refused to share the information orally when asked in the store. We found the information listed in this report via shipping documents obtained through a public records request.