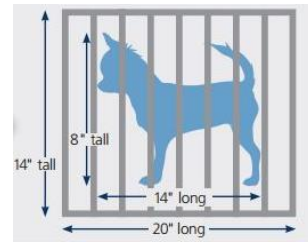


USDA'S BETRAYAL OF DOGS

A USDA-licensed facility may legally:

- ✓ Confine dogs in cages only 6 inches larger than their bodies
- ✓ Keep hundreds of dogs in stacked or elevated cages
- ✓ Provide only wire flooring
- ✓ Expose dogs to frigid or sweltering temperatures for hours
- ✓ Breed dogs repeatedly and excessively, without limits
- ✓ Deny hands on veterinary care to sick or injured dogs
- ✓ Kill dogs they no longer want



A USDA license does not indicate a facility is humane, as standards of care are minimal, and enforcement is lacking. In 2010, the Office of Inspector General reported that enforcement was ineffective against problem dealers. In 2021, the Inspector General [reported](#) that not much has changed as “[the USDA] is not able to ensure the overall health and humane treatment of animals at [dog breeding] facilities.”

- In 2021, after 4 years of no significant enforcement actions against commercial breeders and not a single license revoked, USDA revoked a license, but only after [“shocking cruelty”](#) was allowed to occur for months and over 120 animal welfare citations were issued.
- In 2023, a [terrible Iowa puppy mill](#) was shut down by county prosecutors after the breeder pled guilty to felony animal neglect. Yet, USDA allowed this breeder operate year after year with mere slaps on the wrist, even after he appeared in the annual HSUS Horrible Hundred report [six times](#) for a long list of egregious animal welfare violations that include cruelly killing dogs and leaving them to die in their cages.

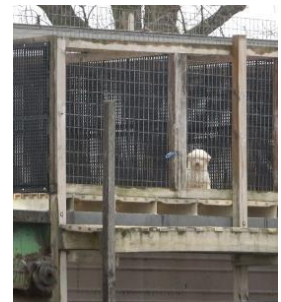
THESE PUPPY MILLS REMAIN LICENSED YEAR AFTER YEAR AND CONTINUE SELLING TO PET STORES:



USDA # 48-A-2152



USDA # 43-A-5385



USDA # 43-A-5986

USDA'S PRIORITIES ARE CLEAR: PROMOTE AND PROTECT PUPPY MILLS

- **2023 Horrible Hundred:** Our annual [Horrible Hundred Report](#) documents instances of breeders with numerous and egregious violations spanning years who remain licensed and breeders who had been cited by state officials for numerous and severe violations but received clean inspection reports from USDA.
- **Few inspectors:** In May 2020, USDA told stakeholders it had *only 95 inspectors* charged with inspecting more than 8,000 pet dealers, exhibitors, and research facilities and that they inspect over 1 million animals.
- **Partnering with puppy mills:** The [Washington Post reported](#) that USDA leaders told inspectors of a new policy that emphasized “education, not enforcement” and treating regulated entities “more as partners than as potential offenders.”
 - A USDA veterinarian who oversaw inspectors in 27 states told *the Post* the weakened enforcement had caused an **“untold number of animals” to experience unnecessary suffering.**
 - A USDA inspector for 20 years who left at the end of 2017 told *the Post*: “It feels like your hands are tied behind your back. **You can’t do many things you’re supposed to when it comes to protecting animals.**”