



FACT SHEET

Class B Dealers

➤ **What are Class B dealers?**

Class B dealers are businesses that purchase dogs, cats, and other animals from various sources for resale to research institutions for research, testing, or teaching purposes. Class A dealers also sell animals to research institutions, but only animals that they breed themselves. (Under their licenses, however, Class B dealers can also breed and sell animals to research institutions, in addition to purchasing them from other sources.)

➤ **Where do Class B dealers purchase dogs and cats from?**

Class B dealers buy dogs and cats from "random sources" including auctions, flea markets, and animal shelters. Class B dealers also procure animals from "bunchers," middlemen who have been known to acquire lost, stray, and "free to a good home" dogs and cats, and even pets from their owners' backyards. After purchasing animals, Class B dealers routinely hold them until they transport them to research institutions.

➤ **How many animals are handled by Class B Dealers?**

It is hard to determine the exact number of animals handled by Class B dealers for a variety of reasons, including poor compliance by dealers and institutions with USDA reporting requirements, inadequate and falsified records, difficulties with procuring institutional records through the Freedom of Information Act, multiple sales of the same animal, and the exclusion from totals of animals who die in the custody of dealers.

The National Association for Biomedical Research estimates approximately 20% of dogs and cats used in research come from Class B dealers. In 2005, 66,610 dogs and 22,921 cats (89,531 total dogs and cats) from all sources were used in registered research facilities, which translates into 17,906 from Class B dealers (0.20 x 89,531 = 17,906).

➤ **Are Class B dealers regulated?**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responsible for regulating Class B dealers under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). However, the USDA has a nearly impossible challenge in trying to properly monitor the activities of Class B dealers. Random-source animals are often trucked across state lines on their journeys to a dealer's premises and then on to a research facility, thus making it difficult to determine the sequence of ownership. Not surprisingly, the USDA has a poor track record in monitoring the trade in random source animals for research.

➤ **What are the animal welfare problems?**

On principle alone, The HSUS opposes all trafficking in pets for resale to experimentation laboratories. In addition, there have been a number of cases of egregious violations of the AWA by Class B dealers over the years—including lack of veterinary care, food and water, falsifying paperwork that is required to prove an animal is not a stolen pet, and trafficking in stolen pets. In 2006, an HBO documentary of an undercover investigation revealed atrocious conditions at a Class B dealer facility. Forty years earlier, a police raid on a Class B dealer revealed similarly horrific animal care and treatment, which helped prompt passage of the AWA that year. Little appears to have changed for the better in the intervening years. Despite widespread knowledge of concerns associated with Class B dealers, some research institutions continue to do business with them, perhaps because random source dogs and cats are cheaper than the "purpose-bred" animals.

➤ **How many B Dealers are in business?**

There are currently 10 Class B dealers that sell live random-source dogs and cats for research purposes. These facilities are located in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania. As of February 2007, three of these facilities are under investigation by the USDA, according to the Animal Welfare Institute.

➤ **What is being done to end the trafficking in random-source dogs and cats by Class B Dealers?**

The federal Pet Safety and Protection Act (PSPA) would prohibit research institutions from purchasing random source dogs or cats from Class B dealers. PSPA was introduced in the Senate, where it is known as S. 714, by Senator Akaka (D-HI) in February 2007 and in the House of Representatives, where it is known as H.R. 1280, by Representative Doyle (D-PA) in March 2007. The need for the PSPA was underscored by the results of an undercover investigation of a Class B dealer (C.C. Baird of Martin Creek Kennels in Arkansas) by the group Last Chance for Animals. The investigation, which resulted in an HBO documentary mentioned above, documented numerous and horrific violations of the AWA and led to the facility being shut down by the USDA.

➤ **How can I help?**

Contact your U.S. Senators or Representative and let them know that you support the Pet Safety and Protection Act. If they have not already done so, urge them to co-sponsor this bill (S.714/H.R.1280).

For more information, visit: humanesociety.org/classbdealers

