

## Class B Dealers

### ➤ What are Class B dealers?

A "Class B" dealer, licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is defined as a dealer whose business includes the purchase and/or resale of any animal. Class B dealers that sell dogs and cats to research institutions, procure these animals from "random sources". In contrast, Class A dealers can only sell animals that they have bred themselves.

### ➤ Where do Class B dealers procure "random source" dogs and cats?

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

### ➤ How many Class B Dealers are in business?

As of February 2009, there are 11 Class B dealers of live random source dogs and cats who sell to research facilities, two of whom are under investigation by the USDA for alleged violations of the Animal Welfare Act. One dealer recently had his license suspended for five years. While today there are less than a dozen of these dealers remaining, and their numbers continue to dwindle, they numbered in the hundreds in decades past.

### ➤ How many random source dogs and cats are purchased and sold to research by Class B Dealers?

Year	# Animals Purchased	# Animals Sold
2005	4576	4065
2006	6311	5969
2007	5255	4754
2008*	4274	3953

\* As of September 2008.

Information from USDA via APHIS Form 7003s

### ➤ How widespread is the use of Class B Dealers among research facilities?

The HSUS, in partnership with the Animal Welfare Institute, conducted a survey in 2006 of the approximately 1200 universities and other research institutions registered with the USDA to conduct animal-based research. Of the 212 institutions that responded, 203 (96%) indicated they do not purchase random source dogs and cats from Class B dealers and 9 (4%) said they do. These results show that a very small minority of research institutions are still purchasing random source dogs and cats from Class B dealers. According to a survey by the American Association Veterinary Medical Colleges, at least 19 of the nation's 28 vet schools do not use live, random source dogs and cats from Class B dealers. Thus, even in veterinary education, more than half the schools are not purchasing animals from Class B operations.

### ➤ Are Class B dealers regulated effectively?

The USDA is responsible for regulating Class B dealers under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). However, this is a nearly impossible challenge. Random-source animals are often trucked across states lines on their journeys to a dealers' premises, and then on to a research facility, thus making it difficult to determine the sequence of ownership. Moreover, individuals listed in dealer records as providers of animals are often be in cahoots with the dealers and simply lie to USDA inspectors about having bred and raised the animal provided to the dealers. 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?

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 inadequate provision of veterinary care, food and water; inhumane handling; fraudulent paperwork that is required to prove an animal is not a stolen pet; and outright trafficking in stolen pets. In 2006, the HBO documentary "Dealing Dogs" exposed the atrocious conditions at Martin Creek Kennels - a Class B dealer facility run by C.C. Baird - through an undercover investigation. In fact, the original reason for the passage of the AWA - to stop the theft of pets for research - was triggered by a police raid on a Class B dealer, revealing similarly horrific animal care and treatment. While the numbers of these dealers have dwindled, little appears to have changed for the better in these unsavory operations in the intervening years.

### ➤ Why do some universities still purchase random source dogs and cats from Class B Dealers?

Some schools obtain random source dogs and cats from Class B dealers because the purchase price of these animals is typically less than Class A, purpose bred dogs and cats. However, there is evidence that random source animals actually cost more to use, given the added costs associated with their quarantine, treatment, and higher mortality stemming from their unknown and variable medical backgrounds as pets and strays. Nevertheless, the HSUS strongly feels there is simply to justification for conducting experimentation on one's pet.

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

The Pet Safety and Protection Act, a federal bill, would prohibit research institutions from purchasing random source dogs or cats from Class B dealers.

