

## Planetary Wellbeing

- Cut Pollution & Toxicity
- Ensure Animal Wellness
  - Cruelty-Free Consumerism
  - **Pet Overpopulation, Spaying, & Neutering**
  - Vegetarian Nutrition
- Ocean Awareness
- Protect Biodiversity
- Reduce Resource Consumption
- Save Energy & Climate

## Pretty in Pastels



Shop all pretty in pastels



## Adopt a Purebred Without Relying on a Breeder

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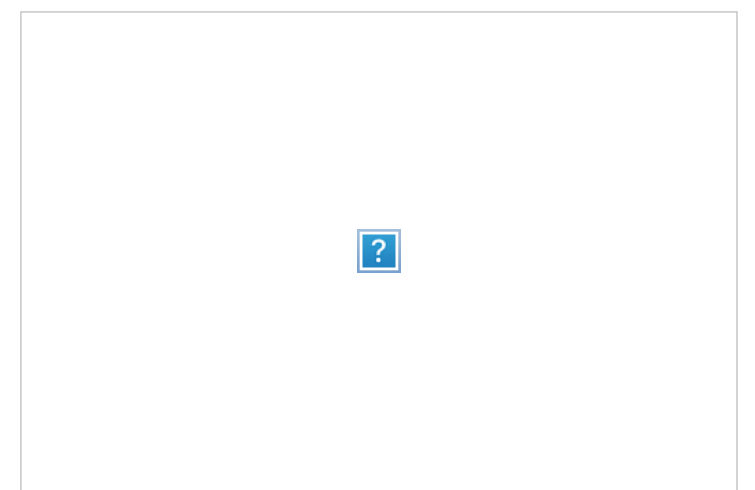


The sight of dogs and cats pressed against pet shop windows can be incredibly heartbreaking, especially if there's a chance that animal companion will never find a home! **Animal overpopulation** in our country has led to serious overcrowding issues in pet stores and animal shelters alike, and breeders are partially responsible. By contributing to a growing animal companion population boom, breeders are actually making the job of preventing animal cruelty more difficult for animal protection agencies like humane societies and animal shelters.

At Hearts, we love animals and want to help raise awareness about potential breeder problems. As Michelle (our president) is fond of saying, "We want people to gain awareness so they can make conscious decisions, and know they have purchasing power!" Perhaps one of the most effective ways for us to collectively protect animals and reduce overpopulation is to support animal shelters rather than breeding operations when looking for purebred pets. Whether you're looking for a purebred Lab or a Siamese cat, our guide will help you find a wonderful, loving animal companion desperate for a forever home – without going through a breeder.

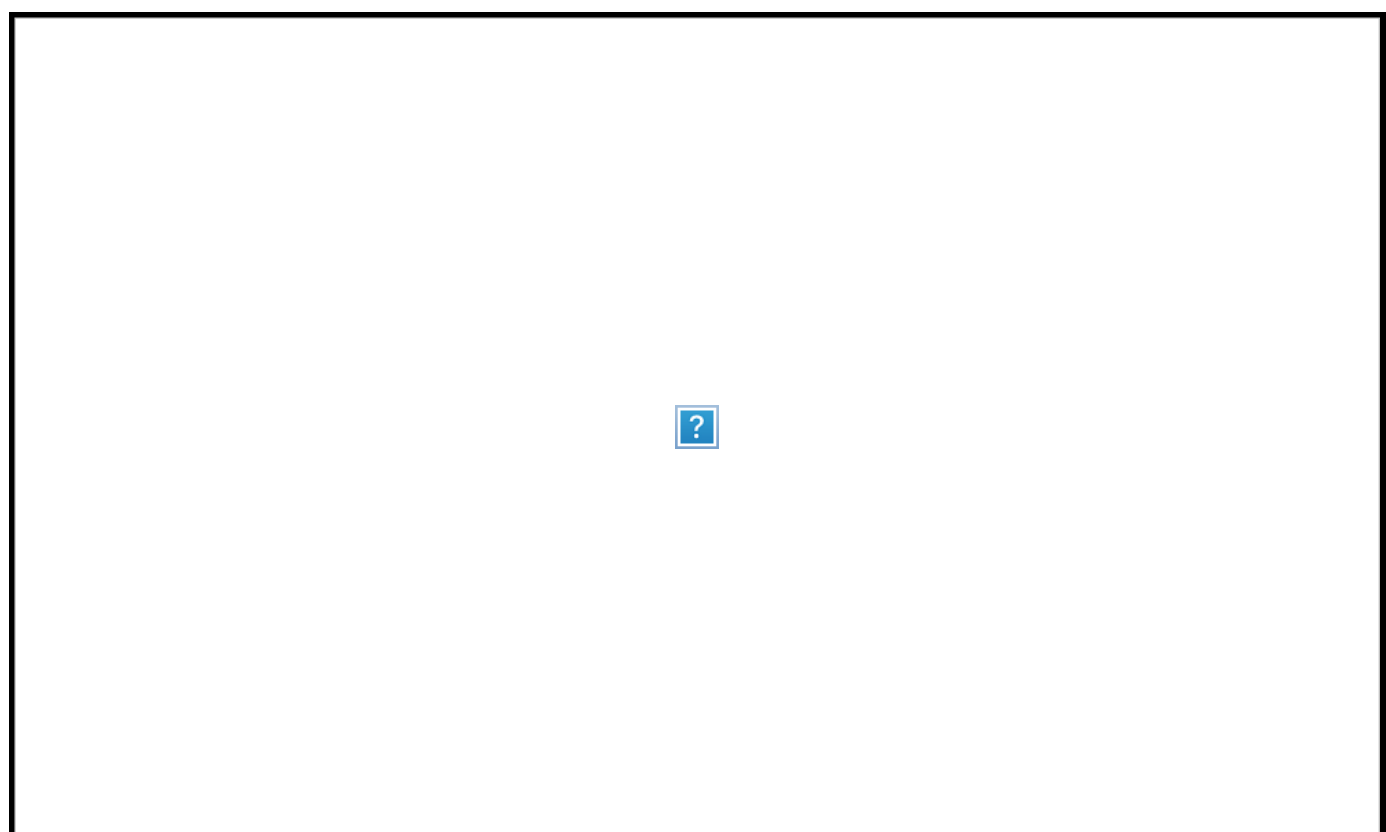
## Quick Guide: Problems of Animal Breeding

- **Pet overpopulation = too many breeders in America:** There are national breeder registries, but in Oklahoma alone there are 222 licensed pet breeders.<sup>[i]</sup> Many unlicensed people breed, including informal breeders and pet owners who use their animals to produce purebred offspring for sale to family and friends.
- **Animal shelters are overflowing:** There are currently 35,000 animal shelters located in the US with 20,000 animals entering these animal shelters every day.<sup>[ii] [iii]</sup>
- **Breeders leave purebred animals in shelters:** 25% of the millions of dogs entering shelters are purebred.<sup>[iv]</sup> Inbreeding is huge in the purebred industry resulting in "defects." Breeders label some purebreds as "undesirable" and dump them into shelters (but really, what animal is truly undesirable? Our Hearts family doesn't think any animal is undesirable!).<sup>[v] [vi] [vii]</sup>



## Take Action! How to Buy a Purebred Without Animal Breeders

1. **Look for purebred animals from shelters:** If you wish to make a pure bred animal part of your family, never buy one from a commercial breeder. There are plenty of pure bred animals in animal shelters who need loving homes. Visit pet databases like [Petfinder.com](http://Petfinder.com) or [AdoptaPet.com](http://AdoptaPet.com) to locate the type of animal you want by inputting the breed you are looking for and your zip code to get a list of shelters with the breed of your choice.
2. **Tell shop owners you want adopted pets in their stores:** Many retailers today promote **pet adoption** which is fantastic! Support these stores over ones that sell animals from breeders. If there are no such pet stores in your neighborhood, encourage your local pet shop owner to partner with a rescue organization by telling them you will not frequent their shop until they agree to adopt rather than sell animal companions.
3. **Ask your vet to support animal shelters:** Encourage your veterinarian to promote purebred adoption from animal shelters rather than purebred sales from breeders when current clients ask for information on where to find new animal companions.
4. **Petition your local government authorities to ban pet shop purebred sales:** Shelters need all the help they can get to control pet populations. One way to do this is to encourage your local representatives to pass laws that prohibit the sale of purebred breeder animals in pet shops. You can request your Congress representatives to push for a bill that will enact this into a law or at least give incentives to pet shop owners who do this.



## Dig Deeper: Animal Protection and Animal Shelters

- Go through this [overview of the Animal Welfare Act](#) to learn more about the rights of animals in America.
- The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has a [database of animal shelters](#) in the country – use it to find your future adopted pet.

Learn about [what the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service \(APHIS\) is proposing](#) to protect animals from being purchased sight unseen online.

- Learn about the [most common animals](#) that are being commercially-bred for profit are dogs, cats, birds, fish, rabbits, and horses.

Images by [Ira Gelb](#), [jjskate](#) and [Life Lenses](#)

## References

## References

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