



# Animal Welfare Position Statements

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- British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) and CEO Craig Daniels
- Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) and Executive Director Stephanie McDonald
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- Ottawa Humane Society (OHS) and Executive Director Bruce Rooney

Each of these organizations is a leader in animal welfare in Canada and North America and each agreed that the Calgary Humane Society may use materials from their statements of position in formulating the following document.

We are very grateful for their support, and to work with such collaborative colleagues in pursuit of a society in which all lives are respected and treated with compassion.

## Glossary of terms

**Companion animals:** Domesticated animals that have been selectively bred to live and thrive in mutually beneficial relationships with humans.

**Distress:** The state of being in need of adequate care, food, water, or shelter; or being injured, sick, or in pain, or suffering. Distress includes fear, agony, and stress and induced psychological phenomena; being abused; being subject to undue hardship, deprivation, and / or neglect. (See footnote for the Alberta Animal Protection Act definition of distress and some related explanations.)<sup>1</sup>

**Domesticated animals:** Species selectively bred by humans over hundreds and often thousands of generations, in order to alter their genetics to create animals that are dependent, docile, predictable, and controllable, and that no longer occupy an ecological niche in the wild.

**Exotic animals:** Species that are non-domesticated, non-indigenous wild animals, whether captured from the wild or captive-bred.

**Feral cats:** Unsocialized cats who may be one or more generations removed from a home environment and who may subsist in a colony of similar cats living on the fringes of human existence. Feral cats have missed the window of developmental opportunity during which they could be socialized to live with people.

**Hybrid exotic animals:** Individual animals that are the offspring of wild/exotic animals that have bred with either domesticated animals, or other wild/exotic animals.

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<sup>1</sup> The Alberta Animal Protection Act states that an animal is in distress if it is  
(a) deprived of adequate shelter, ventilation, space, food, water or veterinary care or reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold,  
(b) injured, sick, in pain or suffering, or  
(c) abused and subjected to undue hardship, privation or neglect.

The provisions for ventilation and space mean that animals kept in holding facilities are entitled to fresh air and sufficient room to carry out normal activities. The term “veterinary” is to clarify the type of care, and to ensure that animals receive proper medical attention when needed.

The requirement for reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold makes it an offense to fail to protect animals from extreme temperatures. The type of protection varies according to species, and sometimes by breeds within a single species. However, all species require some form of protection from the elements. Dogs left outdoors, for example, need a degree of protection dependent on their breed hardiness. Some livestock species such as pigs require enclosed structures, while windbreaks are acceptable for cattle and horses.

**Tame/captive-bred exotic or wild animals:** Individual wild animals that have been habituated to living amongst humans but have not been selectively bred, and therefore still retain the genetic biological and behavioural characteristics of their non-captive counterparts.

**Wild animals:** Species that have genetically evolved in complex ecological systems resulting in mutual interdependencies with other animals and the surrounding environment. Wild animals all have an ecological niche.

# Introduction

## ***Objects of the Society***

1. To promote, primarily within the city of Calgary, but also provincially, nationally, and globally, a humane ethic encompassing respect for all animals.
2. To provide a shelter for lost or unwanted animals in which their comfort, safety, and health are maintained in an exemplary environment and compassionate atmosphere.
3. To alleviate the suffering of animals and eliminate cruelty and neglect.
4. To promote responsible practices which will reduce the number of lost or unwanted animals.
5. To reunite lost pets with their rightful owners.
6. To ensure that animals that cannot be placed in good homes are humanely euthanized.
7. To recruit to our membership caring individuals dedicated to animal welfare and humane issues.

(NOTE: The above Objects of the Society were submitted for ratification at the Annual General Meeting of the Calgary Humane Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals held in the City of Calgary on April 27, 2011.)

## ***Calgary Humane Society Vision***

A community in which all lives are respected and treated with compassion.

## ***Calgary Humane Society Mission***

To help as many animals as we can.

### ***Calgary Humane Society Business Planning Goals***

- To reduce the number of unwanted companion animals in Calgary and surrounding areas.
- To increase adoptability and find suitable homes for as many companion animals as possible that come into our open admission facility.
- To provide a healthy, clean, loving environment for sheltered animals for the duration of their stay.
- To develop and promote outreach programs that support responsible pet ownership and address animal welfare, protection and safety issues.
- To secure and maintain the resources needed to implement and sustain CHS programs directed towards helping as many animals as we can.
- To take a leadership role in collaborating with and encouraging collaboration among like-minded groups.

The Calgary Humane Society is an animal welfare organization, which means the Society recognizes that the use of animals for human purposes is legal, and that animals so used must be treated humanely. The phrase “animal welfare” refers to an animal's quality of life, and this is affected by their physical health and the feelings they experience.

Animals experience good welfare when they are able to experience positive feelings (arising from pleasurable activities and the fulfillment of their behavioural and social needs), and when they are free from poor physical health and negative feelings (such as pain, discomfort, hunger, thirst, fear, and frustration). Animals that are largely healthy, pain-free, comfortable, and unstressed are generally said to have good welfare.

Good animal welfare is widely thought to be achieved if animals are provided with the internationally recognized “Five Freedoms,” described first by the Farm Animal Welfare Council of the UK:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
4. Freedom from distress
5. Freedom to express natural behaviours that promote its well-being

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# Calgary Humane Society

## Open Admissions Shelter

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society is an open admission shelter and never turns an animal in need away, even if the shelter is full.

The CHS accepts all companion animals, including those that are ill, injured, feral, and behaviourally unsound.

### **Rationale:**

The CHS maintains that an open admissions policy is the best way to protect animals in need. Whatever the reasons an animal may come to the CHS – for example, if it is simply not wanted anymore, or if the owner cannot afford its care - the CHS believes that turning an animal in need away subjects that animal to the risk of abandonment, neglect, abuse or other suffering.



# Calgary Humane Society

## Keeping Companion Animals as Pets

### **Position:**

Calgary Humane Society maintains the position that responsible pet ownership encompasses the following:

- Conducting research about responsible pet ownership prior to making the decision to acquire a pet, including research into the specific species and breed of pet being considered and its particular temperament and care requirements.
- Ensuring the pet is acquired through an ethical and responsible channel which does not source animals from “puppy or kitten mills” or through other inhumane means. Given the continued level of animal homelessness, CHS maintains the best way to source a pet is through a reputable animal shelter or animal rescue agency such as CHS. When sourcing a pet from somewhere other than a reputable animal agency, such as a breeder, it is important to investigate that the animals are provided with a proper standard of care including, but not limited to:
  - Regular veterinary visits
  - Adequate food and water
  - Clean runs with separate areas for elimination
  - Sufficient socialization, play-time, and outdoor runs
  - Proper bedding
  - Appropriate staff to pet ratio
- Providing the pet with appropriate housing, nutrition, exercise, daily human attention, companionship, grooming, and veterinary care for the duration of its life.
- Ensuring the pet is provided with safe and secure housing in the owner’s home, confinement to the owner’s property, and is kept safe and under control when the pet is off the owner’s property. It has been proven that indoor pets have a much longer life expectancy and enjoy better health than pets allowed to roam.
- Ensuring pets have permanent identification (microchip, tattoo or other forms of permanent ID) and appropriate municipal licenses. The information linking the pet to the owner must be accurate and up to date. These forms of identification ensure the pet can be reunited with its owners in the event it gets lost. On average, cats and dogs experience one loss episode during their lifetimes, which usually occur when the pet is in the care of someone other than its guardian.
- Adhering to all applicable municipal by-laws.

- Ensuring the animal is always under control.
- Using positive reinforcement training methods, ensuring pets are well-socialized and receive appropriate training.
- Providing pets with appropriate grooming and care which enhance the animal-human bond and is required for most companion animals' well-being.
- Should the pet owner no longer be able to care for the pet, re-homing it with a loving, responsible family or surrendering the pet to a reputable humane society or rescue organization.
- Providing required veterinary care throughout the lifetime of the pet, including providing humane euthanasia should the animal lose its quality of life due to illness or disability. The pet owner can determine when the latter is appropriate together with their veterinarian.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Spaying and Neutering of Companion Animals

### **Position:**

Spaying of females and neutering of males is necessary and desirable for both the effective control of unwanted animal populations and providing health and behaviour benefits to the animals themselves.

As such, the CHS supports:

- Sterilization of dogs, cats, rabbits, and ferrets that are not intended for responsible breeding purposes.
- Municipal authorities charging differential license fees for sterilized versus unsterilized companion animals. Spaying or neutering all dogs, cats, rabbits or ferrets, whether sold or adopted prior to moving them to their permanent homes.
- Early (pediatric) spay and neuter of cats and dogs.

Spay and neuter not only helps to reduce the population of unwanted, homeless companion animals, but also carries a number of behaviour and health benefits for animals. These benefits include the following:

- Eliminating or reducing sexual behaviours such as marking, aggression, roaming, or fighting.
- Reducing the risk of some diseases influenced by hormones, e.g., cancers, prostatic disease, pyometria.

NOTE: Pet owners should consult with their veterinarian about the right spay/neuter options for their pet.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Permanent Identification of Companion Animals

### **Position:**

Identification of dogs and cats is essential for the successful return of lost or stray animals. Each year, many families are devastated by the loss of their pet, and each year many animals suffer when they either stray or are stolen from their families.

The CHS supports:

- Proper licensing and identification of companion animals.
- The use of collars and tags that provide fast visual recognition.
- The use of multiple means of identification that together enhance the possibility of the animal's safe return should it get lost: microchip, tattooing, municipal license or internet-based forms of permanent ID. Each ID method has its strengths and weaknesses:
  - Microchips require trained personnel and special equipment to detect and read them.
  - Tattoos require special expertise to read and trace.
  - Licenses require access to the municipal database to trace.
  - Internet-based ID systems require access to a computer and the web but beyond that are accessible to anyone anywhere, whether an animal has been lost or found.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Breeding Companion Animals

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society supports responsible breeding of domesticated animals.

A breeder is “responsible” when he/she is concerned about the welfare of each animal and ensures they all have homes to go to. The points below detail the standards responsible breeders should maintain.

### **Responsible breeders:**

- Breed for the purpose of betterment of the breed, and therefore breed animals with positive temperaments (i.e., safe around humans), a good health history, and with proper consideration of genetic tendencies in the animal’s family pedigree.
- Register their animals with the appropriate organization.
- Find responsible homes for each animal. Some responsible breeders will not allow their animals to breed until they have a waiting list for the offspring. If a home cannot be found for an animal, the breeder will keep the animal and be responsible for its care.
- Interview each potential client, as he/she wants to know about the person that is purchasing his/her animals.
- Record and provide clients with information about the animal’s pedigree. Clients should also be able to meet at least one of the parents.
- Are willing to tour clients through the location and facilities where the animals are being raised.
- Show clients health certificates and complete records of veterinary visits.
- Contract to take the animal back if there is a medical or behavioural problem, or if the client is no longer able to care for the animal.
- Encourage spaying/neutering of any animal that will not be needed to continue the genetic line through future breeding.

## **Irresponsible or Substandard Breeders**

There are a variety of types of irresponsible breeders and the CHS strongly opposes the practices of the following:

- **Backyard Breeder:** A backyard breeder breeds an animal for financial gain and not for the purpose of betterment of the breed, with little or no thought regarding the consequences for or the well-being of the animals. Backyard breeders usually breed animals without proper regard for pedigree, proper planning for future homes, spay/neuter planning for offspring, and/or little knowledge of proper rearing techniques.
- **Puppy Mill:** “A puppy mill is a breeding operation in which dogs are repeatedly bred for financial gain and are kept in substandard conditions” (Ontario SPCA, as cited in No Puppy Mills Canada, 2001).
- **Accidental Breeder:** An accidental breeder is someone that has not had his/her animal spayed/neutered and an unplanned breeding occurs as a result. Many animals end up in shelters as a result of such accidents. Failure to control animal breeding is connected with other forms of neglect.
- **Other:** A breeder that registers his/her animals may be considered “irresponsible” if he/she does not follow the guidelines set out above in the Responsible Breeder section.

### **Rationale:**

- Irresponsible breeders are largely responsible for the pet overpopulation problem in many communities.
- Irresponsible breeders often breed animals even though they are too young, too old, or not in suitable health for breeding.
- Documented problems of puppy mills include over-breeding, inbreeding, minimal or no veterinary care, poor quality of food and shelter, lack of socialization with humans, overcrowded cages, and the killing of unwanted animals.
- Some puppies that come from puppy mills may have genetic diseases or health problems that are a result of poor breeding practices and will not show up until weeks, months or even years later.
- Irresponsible breeders focus on quick profits and thus deprive their animals of needed veterinary care and vaccinations. As a result, these substandard

breeding operations can become contaminated with diseases such as parvo and become a threat to the health of other animals in the community.

- Irresponsible breeders lack concern and/or knowledge about genetics, temperament and health of their breeding animals. As a result, the animals they breed are much more likely to have health or temperament issues and their breeding actually contributes to a decline of the breed.
- Irresponsible breeders sell to anyone who has the cash and offer no warranty or return program. Thus, many of these animals are left abandoned or surrendered, contributing to high volumes of homeless animals at shelters and animal control facilities.

#### References:

1. Canadian Kennel Club (n.d.). *Buying a Puppy/ Making the Right Choice/ The Golden Rules: Finding a reputable breeder*. Retrieved October 12, 2003 from <http://www.ckc.ca/default-refresh.asp>.
2. The Humane Society of the United States (2004). *Buying a Puppy*. Retrieved October 12, 2004 from <http://www.hsus.org/ace/11757>.
3. The Humane Society of the United States (2004). *Get the facts on puppy mills*. Retrieved October 12, 2004 from <http://www.hsus.org/ace/11797>.
4. No Puppy Mills Canada (2001). *The Back Yard Breeder*. Retrieved October 13, 2004 from [http://www.nopupmillsCanada.ca/back\\_yard\\_breeders.htm](http://www.nopupmillsCanada.ca/back_yard_breeders.htm).
5. No Puppy Mills Canada (2001). *What is a Puppy Mill?* Retrieved October 13, 2004 from [http://www.nopupmillsCanada.ca/what\\_is\\_a\\_puppy\\_mill.htm](http://www.nopupmillsCanada.ca/what_is_a_puppy_mill.htm).

#### Notes:

- According to the *Animal Pedigree Act*, an animal cannot legally be considered a “purebred” unless it has registration papers. These papers should be included, free of charge, with the adoption or purchase.
- Although registration papers show the animal’s lineage, there are no guarantees as to accuracy of the statements.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Transportation of Companion Animals

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society believes all companion animals should be transported in safe and humane ways.

Calgary Humane Society opposes the transportation of companion animals across great distances for the purposes of sales and believes that responsible pet owners will source their animals locally in order to avoid travel that can cause animals' distress, harm, or even death.

Given the stresses travel can place on pets, responsible pet owners should consider leaving their pets at home. If this is not possible, animals should be transported in one of two ways: 1) Confined to a comfortable, well-ventilated crate that is secured to the vehicle; or, 2) Restricted from movement within the vehicle by an animal seat belt (available at many pet stores).

### **Rationale:**

- There are many risks to an animal's health and safety if transported without proper confinement or restriction from movement within the vehicle. These include:
  - Falling out of or being thrown from the vehicle during sudden stops.
  - Jumping from the vehicle into traffic.
  - Suffering injuries from wind, insects and flying debris.
  - Strangulation or being dragged behind the vehicle if the animal is tethered in an open vehicle and falls or jumps out of it.
- Animals that are able to move around within a moving vehicle may distract the driver, which could result in an accident.
- In the City of Calgary and many other municipalities, transporting animals in the back of a pick-up truck is a violation of community bylaws.
- Transporting of animals in the cargo hold of airplanes can be both highly stressful for pets and dangerous.



- Animals left in unattended vehicles may easily be taunted, stolen, or harmed by extreme environmental conditions.
- Additional dangers/suggestions in warm weather:
  - On a warm day, a vehicle acts like an oven, trapping the heat inside. The inside temperature can soar to 39° C (100° F) in as little as ten minutes, and to 49° C (120° F) within thirty minutes. This can happen even if the windows are slightly rolled down or if the vehicle is parked in the shade.
  - Animals do not sweat in the same way as humans. With nothing but overheated air to breathe, a dog can quickly fall victim to severe discomfort, brain damage, or even death.
  - If it is necessary to travel with an animal, travel with a passenger so you do not need to leave your pet in the car with the windows rolled up.
  - Signs of heat exhaustion include heavy panting, unsteadiness, vomiting, glazed eyes, or a tongue that has changed in color to deep red or purple. If a pet is suffering from heat exhaustion, the owner should apply cool (not cold) water to its entire body, not including its head. The owner can also offer cool water to drink or ice cubes to lick, in addition to applying ice packs or cold towels to its head, neck, and chest. The owner should take his/her pet to the nearest veterinarian as soon as possible.
- Additional dangers in cold weather:
  - A vehicle can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. The companion animal can freeze to death.
  - If the car is left running, a pet could die from breathing in carbon monoxide.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Homing of Companion Animals

### **Position:**

In placing companion animals with owner families, the Calgary Humane Society supports ethical and responsible homing of companion animals.

Whether these parties are individuals, shelters, rescues, animal control agencies, breeders, or retailers, Calgary Humane Society believes that all parties that place pets into homes must be held to the same ethical, humane and responsible standards. These include:

- Ethical, responsible and humane animal breeding that ensures the welfare of both breeding animals and their offspring.
- Responsible lifetime care (socialization, exercise, environment, care, nutrition, veterinary attention, life enrichment and training) for all animals involved in the breeding operation (breeding animals and offspring).
- Providing lifetime return of animals and establishing of breed or species rescue networks for situations in which pet owners can no longer or no longer wish to care for an animal.
- Spaying or neutering of appropriate species when animals will not be used as breeding animals.
- Appropriate individual screening of prospective owners, including ensuring a good match between a pet and prospective family, owner education about the animal's needs, owner capacity to provide appropriate homing, training and care for the animal.
- Full documentation of the animal's past and future veterinary needs, genetic background (if appropriate and available), and permanent ID traceable to both the initial source of the pet (breeder, shelter, or other) and to the new owner.

NOTE: See CHS Positions on the following related issues for a more complete picture of what is meant by ethical, humane and responsible homing practices:

Keeping Companion Animals as Pets  
Spaying and Neutering of Companion Animals  
Permanent Identification of Companion Animals  
Breeding Companion Animals  
Veterinary Care and End of Life Care for Companion Animals  
Non-medical and Cosmetic Surgeries on Companion Animals  
Improper Environment as a Form of Abuse

## Training of Dogs

### **Rationale:**

- As long as there are animals waiting for a home in animal shelters or with rescue groups, we encourage the public to first consider adoption of a homeless animal through a reputable shelter or rescue organization or through a pet store that provides adoption space for shelter or rescue animals.
- Many sources of pets do not ask sufficient questions or attempt to educate the client about an animal's lifespan, the responsibility, and the commitment required. Some sources will sell animals without consideration for the quality of home the animal will have.
- Many sources of pets provider no support to owners such as a helpline, online or print resources, or training classes.
- Many sources of pets have no mechanism for the rescue of returned animals when owners cannot or do not want to continue caring for the pet. These animals often then become a burden on shelters.
- Sources of pets that sell unsterilized animals contribute to the pet overpopulation problem, and also supply breeding stock to other irresponsible breeders.
- The required transportation of animals to distant outlets often causes the animal's distress, and/or injury, and/or death. For example, there is a high rate of injury to so-called "pocket pets" such as mice, gerbils, and hamsters.
- Sales practices such as giving away gerbils or hamsters or rabbits "free" with cages and other gear contributes to these animals being seen as of low worth. Many of these animals are neglected, denied needed veterinary care, and/or abandoned.
- Abandoned and unsterilized domestic rabbits have bred and become a community nuisance, as well as being subject to conditions that can cause distress and suffering.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Veterinary Care and End of Life Care for Companion Animals

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society believes it is the responsibility of all owners of companion animals to provide them with regular and lifetime veterinary care, including end-of-life care. Further, failure to provide such care is a violation of Alberta's Animal Protection Act.

The CHS believes all owners should have a plan to provide such care prior to acquiring a pet. If an owner does not have the financial resources to provide needed veterinary care, including regular check-ups, vaccines and dental care, they should surrender the animal to an organization such as CHS that can provide this care for the animal.

The Calgary Humane Society believes that owners whose companion animals suffer from incurable illnesses are responsible for providing either palliative care (i.e., comfort measures, including medication to manage pain), or should palliative care not be an option, humane euthanasia if the animal's suffering cannot otherwise be alleviated.

Neglecting to provide or failing to provide suitable care for an animal regardless of the animal's life stage or prognosis constitutes an offense under both Alberta's Animal Protection Act and Canada's Criminal Code.

Failure to provide an animal with required veterinary care, including needed dental care and grooming, may result in charges being laid.

Because many animals do not exhibit pain overtly, it is the responsibility of the owner to consult with a veterinarian about the decisions around palliative care or euthanasia.

Palliative care remains a viable option only so long as the animal's pain can be managed as determined by a veterinarian and only so long as the owner remains able to meet the animal's developing care needs; thereafter, the only humane option is euthanasia.

While losing a loved pet is a painful experience, Calgary Humane Society believes that the animal's needs and welfare take priority over the owner's feelings.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Calgary Humane Society, Animal Research and Veterinary Education

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society provides a safe haven for stray and homeless companion animals and is committed to treating all animals in its care with respect and dignity. As such, the CHS does not sell or transfer companion animals in its care, whether dead or alive, for research purposes, for the practicing of medical procedures, or for harvesting organs, tissues or blood.

The CHS believes that experimental treatments involving companion animals in its care, such as drug trials, presents a potential conflict of interest with its mission.

The CHS does not support nor permit unnecessary procedures on companion animals in its care, even if these do not inflict harm.

The CHS supports the education of students of veterinary medicine, including Animal Health Technologists, foreign vets seeking certification in Canada and students in humane animal training courses. CHS provides this support through student rotations in Shelter Medicine, practicum placements and lectures, tours and other educational events.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Wild / Exotic Animals as Pets

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society opposes the breeding and keeping of exotic or wild animals, including their hybrids, as companion animals, and to the importation and commercial trade in exotic or wild animals destined for the pet market.

The Calgary Humane Society opposes the capture, transport, ownership, or breeding of wild/exotic animals except where these practices are conducted by authorized and licensed parties for the well-being of these animals or species, for example for the re-population of the species, or re-introduction of the species into its natural habitat.

### **Rationale:**

The CHS maintains that wild/exotic animals are inappropriate companion animals for a variety of reasons.

#### Animal welfare risks:

- Wild/Exotics are often acquired as “status” pets, without due consideration being given to their specialized needs.
- Wild/Exotics have food/housing/maintenance needs that cannot be provided by the average guardian. Few exotic pet guardians recognize the specialized needs of exotics or can provide the full Five Freedoms for their exotic pets (see above).
- Many new wild/exotic “fad” pets are introduced into the pet trade each year that are not domesticated animals but wild caught or captive bred. Many of these animals suffer from confinement or improper care.
- Relatively few veterinarians possess the training/experience to deal with the veterinary needs of wild/exotics.
- Wild/Exotic pet guardians often attempt to change the nature of their companion animal by surgically removing teeth/claws, leaving the animals potentially stressed and defenseless.
- Wild/Exotics have specialized behaviours, some of which their new guardians try to forcibly alter, with devastating effects on the animals’ well-being. Many nocturnal wild/exotics, for example, are forced to adapt to the diurnal lives of their human keepers.
- Many wild/exotics become unwanted after the novelty of the pet wears off. Few resources exist to take in these unwanted pets as most zoos, animal shelters and wildlife sanctuaries do not have the capacity to take in unwanted wild/exotic pets. The result is poor animal welfare, a high rate of euthanasia and widespread

abandonment of these animals. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) estimates that 90 percent of wild/exotic pets in the United States die “within the first two years of captivity.”

- Many wild/exotics are wild-caught, with high rates of stress, injury, disease and death during the capture/transport process. For example, the World Wildlife Fund estimated in 2003 that up to 80 percent of wild-caught birds die in the capture/transport process.

Public safety risks:

- Because they can carry exotic pathogens, wild/exotic animals present special risks to humans and other animals. For example, Centers for Disease Control statistics report over 93,000 cases of salmonella poisoning from reptiles in the United States each year, many of which are pet reptiles.
- Wild/Exotics still retain their natural predatory and defensive instincts, making them dangerous or unsuitable to living in an environment with other animals and humans. Even in play, many wild/exotics can harm another animal or human.

Environmental risks:

- Escaped or released wild/exotics may breed with local species, diluting the gene pool and introducing exotic diseases. For example, in 2003, a shipment of Gambian rats from Africa escaped and introduced the potentially fatal disease Monkey pox into North America.
- Escaped or released exotics can disturb natural indigenous ecologies. The devastating effects of releasing wild/exotic catfish, toads, red-eared slider turtles, bullfrogs, and other species into local environments, for example, are well documented.
- Many wild-caught wild/exotics are captured through partial or whole destruction of their environment. The northern coast of Borneo, for example, has been significantly damaged by collectors bleaching reefs in order to fulfill the demands of the exotic pet fish trade.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Classroom Pets

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society supports classrooms caring for a resident pet only if that pet is owned by a responsible adult and is taken home when school is not in session.

The students must also be taught how to care for, respect and handle the animal visiting or living in the classroom. Further, animals chosen to live as a classroom pets must be able to thrive in that environment and live a full and active life.

### **Rationale:**

- Students who assist in caring for pets learn about the animal's needs and behaviours. They also learn about the responsibilities of care for and ownership of animals and empathy.
- Since students see teachers as role models, teachers must ultimately be responsible for the care of classroom pets. The best way to assume this responsibility is to have the teacher adopt the pet, thus showing the teacher's willingness to assume full responsibility for the classroom pet and that caring for a pet is an important commitment for the lifetime of the pet.
- The responsibilities and requirements for owning a pet should be thoroughly researched, including:
  - Determining the appropriate type of pet and the care and socialization needs of specific species and breeds.
  - The cost of feeding, housing and veterinary care.
  - Liability.
  - Proper handling and socialization of the animal.
  - Health concerns for students including allergies.
  - Understanding for and reduction of stress that the animal may experience in the classroom setting.

### **References:**

1. National Association for Humane and Environmental Ethics (1998). "Is a classroom pet for you? Problems and promises of pets in the K-6 classroom" [Brochure].
2. BC SPCA - <http://www.sPCA.bc.ca/Educators/clsrmanimals.asp>.

Note: The parents, the school's principal and custodial staff should be informed of the arrival of a classroom pet before it enters the classroom.



# Calgary Humane Society

## Abandonment of Companion Animals

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society denounces the abandonment of any animal. Abandonment is an offense under Alberta's Animal Protection Act and federal animal welfare legislation.

### **Rationale:**

Abandoned animals regularly die of starvation, exposure, or are killed by other animals or hit by vehicles. The suffering of abandoned animals is severe since they are not adapted to living on their own or in the wild.

Abandoned companion animals can become a nuisance to the community. For example, abandoned dogs may attack people or other pets or pack together. Pet rabbits and cats abandoned may continue to breed, creating large populations of unwanted animals.

Abandonment is particularly blameworthy and inhumane since pet owners can surrender unwanted pets to the Calgary Humane Society. The Calgary Humane Society is an open admissions shelter and never turns away an animal in need.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Animals as Prizes or Gifts

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society opposes the giving of animals as prizes.

The Calgary Humane Society advises against giving pets as gifts.

Gifting of an animal may be humane and responsible, but only if the person receiving the animal has given informed consent to receive the animal and is fully prepared and willing to commit to a lifetime of care for that animal. In any case of gifting, the Calgary Humane Society maintains that the receiver of the pet must first meet the pet to ensure a good fit and informed consent.

Parents gifting pets to their children should assume full responsibility for any pet brought into their family.

### **Rationale:**

Owning an animal requires planning and preparation prior to acquiring the pet. Further, having a pet or animal for which one is responsible is a long-term commitment.

Acquiring a pet as a prize or as a surprise gift does not allow for the needed preparation, nor does it ensure the needed long-term commitment to care for the animal for its lifetime.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Animals in Entertainment

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society is opposed to the use of animals in any form of entertainment that puts the animal at risk of suffering stress, pain, injury, or death.

The Calgary Humane Society is opposed to exhibitions or presentations of animals in circuses or travelling menageries, including petting zoos.

The CHS recognizes that rodeo events, racing and other related forms of entertainment involving the use of animals take place and are legal in western Canada. The CHS believes the best way to serve the interests of the animals involved is to work with those using the animals in these venues to ensure that the potential for suffering is minimized or, preferably, eliminated.

### **Rationale:**

Animals in circuses and other traveling shows are kept for long periods of time in close confinement, in abnormal social groups and are continually being transported, all of which causes stress to these animals and can cause illness, injury or death.

Performing animals are often subjected to forced training, performing to a timetable and performing acts that are unnatural for them, as well as being exposed to a variety of acts unnatural to their species.

Animals obtained from the wild for display in zoos, circuses or other forms of entertainment undergo unacceptable suffering and distress caused by their capture, transportation and acclimatization. Capture may also involve the injury and/or killing of other animals.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Non-medical and Cosmetic Surgeries on Companion Animals

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society opposes the surgical alteration of companion animals for cosmetic and non-medical purposes. The Calgary Humane Society supports only those surgeries done to treat injuries or for reasons of health.

The CHS strongly recommends that breed associations remove cosmetic and non-medical surgeries from their breed standards and condemns tail-docking and ear-cropping as inhumane, unethical, and unnecessary.

### **Rationale:**

- Cosmetic surgery causes unnecessary pain and suffering. Cosmetic surgery may lead to life-threatening complications such as infection and hemorrhage.
- Cosmetic surgery poses no benefit to companion animals and is sometimes ineffective in achieving the desired result.
- A number of veterinary associations have banned members from performing cosmetic surgeries and see these procedures as inhumane and unnecessary.
- Research indicates that because the tail is an important means of social communication for dogs, depriving a dog of its tail may have negative social effects on the dog.
- Several countries in Europe have banned tail docking.
- Some dogs have dew claws that may catch on objects, tearing the skin or perhaps even ripping off completely. Removing dew claws should never be done for merely cosmetic reasons. However, if removal is advised by a veterinarian, they should be removed by a veterinarian.
- The CHS opposes declawing of cats and recommends a number of other remedies to clawing behaviour. The surgery is a serious one, involving amputation of the last joint in the paw and can pose serious and painful complications to the cat (see further, CHS Position on Declawing of Cats).

# Calgary Humane Society

## Improper Environment as a Form of Abuse

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society supports animals being raised and kept in an environment that promotes and maintains their emotional and psychological needs, in addition to their physical needs. Animals can only be free from distress and in a state of “well-being” if their emotional, psychological and physical needs are met.

'Psychological' well-being is a state in which an animal is free from distress most of the time, is in good physical health, exhibits a substantial range of the species-typical behaviours, and is able to deal effectively with environmental stimuli.

### **Rationale:**

- Animals need companionship (human and/or animal, depending on the species), care, exercise, and attention.
- Animals whose emotional, psychological and physical needs go unmet can exhibit signs of distress (e.g., behavioural issues, depression).
- Although current Animal Protection laws do not allow the Calgary Humane Society to charge owners for psychological abuse, the CHS considers failure to care for an animal's psychological and emotional well-being as a form of abuse.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Devocalizing of Dogs

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society does not support the “devocalization” of dogs.

The CHS urges that owners explore humane solutions to barking behaviour, including working with a certified humane trainer on the issue. If barking cannot be ameliorated and owners cannot tolerate or manage the behaviour, the society urges them to surrender their pet to the Calgary Humane Society.

### **Rationale:**

- Dogs bark for many reasons and although barking can be normal behaviour, excessive barking can be a manifestation of behavioural issues such as boredom, inappropriate environment (e.g., when the dog is exposed to too many passers-by and becomes anxious or afraid), generalized anxiety, compulsive disorder, or separation anxiety. In such cases, the underlying issues, such as anxiety or boredom, should be treated.
- Consulting with a qualified trainer should be the first approach to solve the problem of excessive barking. Veterinarians, board certified behaviourists, or those certified by the Canadian Pet Dog Trainer association can be of help in this.
- Devocalization deprives a dog of a major means of communication.
- Devocalization may result in infections, laryngeal paralysis and airway stenosis.
- Alternatives to devocalization, such as behaviour modification techniques, citronella bark collars and pharmaceutical remedies should be pursued before devocalization is considered.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Breed-Specific Legislation

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society does not support the banning of any breed of dog and opposes labeling any specific breed as inherently aggressive, vicious or dangerous.

The Society takes the position that each dog must be regarded as an individual and assessed on its specific behaviours. The CHS maintains that rather than breed-specific bans, the required deterrents to dog aggression are responsible breeding, responsible homing, responsible and humane training, and responsible pet ownership.

### **Rationale:**

- Research indicates that the breed of dog is not an important indicator of whether that dog might be involved in an aggressive incident, nor of whether that animal will pose a danger to the community.
- Many dog bites go unreported. The media publicizes a dog biting incident, or a dog attack when the dog is of the so-called “bully breeds” such as Pit Bulls, Rottweiler’s or Presa Canarios, and this publicity may be followed by public calls for breed-specific legislation. The statistics on dog bites and the particulars of aggressive dog incidents do not provide foundation for such legislation.
- An individual dog’s temperament and proclivity toward aggressive or dangerous behaviour is determined by a number of factors: breeding (genetics), training, socialization, health, breeding status (unneutered or unspayed, pregnant or just having given birth, or in heat), and its treatment by a guardian or owner.
- Research indicates that the primary or foundational causes for dog attacks are:
  - Chained dog.
  - Loose or roaming dogs.
  - Leaving dogs reproductively intact.
  - Failure to provide adequate and appropriate humane training, socialization and daily companionship and exercise.
  - Multiple-dog households in which owners either are ignorant about, or do not care about, the behavioural dynamics that can result when dogs “pack”.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Over 1966-2005, 65% of human fatalities from dog attacks in the USA were the result of an attack by a single dog. However, in 87% of these cases, these single-dog attacks occurred in a residence that housed multiple dogs, or in situations where multiple dogs were nearby. During the same time period, 35% of fatal dog attacks involved more than one dog attacking. Karen Delise (2007), *The Pit Bull Placebo: the Media, Myths, and Politics of Canine Aggression*, Ramsey, NJ: Anubusi Publishing, pp. 165-166.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Animal Limits Within the City of Calgary

### **Position:**

Calgary Humane Society does not support a companion animal limit within Calgary city limits. As an enforcement agency, CHS believes the term “responsible pet ownership” incorporates the expectation that pet owners demonstrate the knowledge and training required to ensure the proper welfare and well-being of their companion animals. This also includes adhering to all provisions of the *Animal Protection Act*. (For complete details on the *Animal Protection Act*, see <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/acts/a41.pdf>).

CHS believes limiting the number of animals in a home does not address the core issues demonstrated in cases of over-crowding and/or hoarding and may result in otherwise responsible pet owners not licensing their pets or seeking veterinary care if the household is in excess of an imposed limit.

See CHS position statement, “Keeping Companion Animals as Pets” for guidance on what responsible pet ownership encompasses.



# Calgary Humane Society

## Training of Dogs

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society supports the use of humane training methods and opposes training methods based on dominating the animal, use of aggression or methods that cause pain, fear and/or undue stress.

### **Rationale:**

- Historically, training methods for dogs focused almost exclusively on the use of force and coercion to obtain the desired behaviour. Dogs trained using these methods often perform out of fear and anxiety. Based on research and evidence, there has been a shift towards reward-based methods of training, such as clicker training and the use of food, toys, praise, and other rewards as motivators.
- The Calgary Humane Society supports the use of humane training methods that are based on and supported by current scientific knowledge of learning theory and animal behaviour. The Society uses current training techniques such as desensitizing and counter conditioning.
- The Calgary Humane Society encourages the use of Haltis, gentle leaders, body harnesses (non pain-inducing), and flat collars when training dogs. The Society chooses not to use choke (slip), pinch (prong), and shock collars due to their potential to cause stress, pain, and fear, especially when used by people with no expertise, experience, or credentials in humane dog training.
- Should an animal fail to respond to positive rewards training, and its behaviour is such that other methods must be explored, the Society urges all pet owners to find an experienced and certified trainer with whom to work on the issues.
- Abusive training methods are unacceptable as they cause the animal to suffer and by increasing its fear and anxiety can actually cause or increase aggression. Examples of abusive training methods include:
  - Hanging a dog by the choke collar and leash.
  - Spinning the animal off the ground (“helicopter technique”) at the end of a choke collar and leash.
  - Beating a dog into submission.
  - Alpha rolls (forcibly flipping the dog on its back, applying pressure to its throat until the dog submits).
  - Hitting the animal’s snout.

References:

1. American Humane Association (2001). *Guide to Humane Dog Training*. Englewood, Colorado, USA.
2. Dodman, Nickolas (2000). *Dogs Behaving Badly: An A to Z Guide to Understanding & Curing Behavioral Problems in Dogs*. Bantam trade paperback edition.
3. Landsberg, Gary and Horwitz, Debra (2003). *Behavior of Dogs & Cats*. A LifeLearn Publication.
4. Miller, P. (2001). *The Power of Positive Dog Training*. Hungry Minds, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA.
5. Overall, K. (1997). *Clinical behavioural medicine for small animals*. Mosby-Year Book Inc. Missouri, USA.
6. Tucker, M.T., ed. *Professional Standards for Dog Trainers: Effective, Humane Principles*. Delta.

Notes:

- Neither the Canadian government nor any provincial jurisdiction regulates the conduct or certifies the skill of animal trainers or behaviourists.
- Though many dog trainers describe themselves as “behaviourists,” the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recognizes as Animal Behaviourists only those people who are both veterinarians and certified by the American College of Veterinary Behavior (AVCB) as Animal Behaviourists.
- Only trainers certified by either the Canadian Association of Professional Pet Dog Trainers (CAPPDT) or American Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) are certified by these associations as having mastered a body of knowledge regarding humane animal training methods.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Tethering of Dogs

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society opposes prolonged or continuous tethering of dogs as inhumane and dangerous to both the dog and the community and views such practices as neglectful.

### **Rationale:**

- Tethering or chaining of dogs refers to the practice of fastening a dog to a stationary object or stake, as a means of keeping the animal under control. Tethering does not refer to the periods when an animal is walked on a leash.
- A tether significantly restricts a dog's movement. A tether can also become tangled around or hooked on the dog's shelter structure or other objects, further restricting the dog's movement and potentially causing injury or death.
- Whether the owner is away or at home, tethering a dog in a yard for prolonged periods causes the dog stress and suffering. Dogs are social animals that need and want to be with their families. Prolonged tethering is a form of neglect and can and has led to all of the following:
  - The animal strangling itself to death.
  - Aggression against people and animals entering the yard while the dog is tethered.
  - Psychological and physical suffering for the dog.
  - Development of problem behaviours like destructive digging, self-mutilation, excessive barking, and anxiety.
- The Calgary Humane Society strongly recommends alternatives to tethering, such as keeping pets indoors or in an enclosed area (such as a fenced yard). The Society does not discourage pet owners from letting their dogs spend time outside, so long as the dogs are supervised and under control at all times.
- It is a violation of City of Calgary Animal Bylaws to tether a dog in a public place such as a store or coffee shop, or to tether a dog while the owner is not at home.
- It is an offense under Alberta's Animal Protection Act to tether a dog without providing adequate shelter, water and food.

### References:

1. Edmonton Humane Society Policy on Improper Psychological Environment as A Form of Animal Abuse, October 2004.
2. Pet Cruelty and Other Issues. "What you can do about a dog that's being left outside all the time." HSUS programs, *Companion Animals*, 2/17/01.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Wolf / Dog Hybrids

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society opposes keeping wolves and wolf hybrids as pets, defined as any degree of cross between a wolf and a dog.

### **Rationale:**

- While wolf/dog hybrids share some characteristics with dogs, the former are not domesticated, and behaviours that are natural for them in the wild pose dangers to people and other companion animals in the home. In addition, their needs cannot be met in a home setting.
- Interbreeding of dogs and wolves negates 12,000 years of domestication, resulting in offspring that are difficult to train, do not kennel well and show a high incidence of both predatory and aggressive behaviour toward both animals and humans.

### **Reference:**

Animal Welfare Information Center Newsletter, Winter 1994/1995, Vol. 5 No. 4:  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/newsletters/v5n4/5n4wille.htm>.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Indoor Cats

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society advocates that all cats be kept indoors or permitted to go outside only under direct supervision, meaning allowing a cat outdoors either into screened-in balconies, or outdoor enclosures, or on a harness for walking cats.

Recognizing that despite the dangers inherent to allowing a cat to roam (e.g., being hit by a vehicle, being stolen or taken in as a stray, disease, injuries from fighting, predators), many owners still allow their cats to roam, the CHS advocates that all owners ensure their cats are spayed or neutered and fully vaccinated, as well as appropriately tagged with identification.

### **Rationale:**

Cats permitted to roam at large are exposed to many dangers including injury, sickness and death. Cats kept indoors are generally healthier and live longer than roaming cats.

In the City of Calgary, allowing your cat to roam is a violation of municipal by-laws.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Declawing of Cats

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society does not support *onychectomy* (declawing) of domestic cats as a routine procedure and discourages veterinarians from performing this type of surgery.

### **Rationale:**

- Scratching is a normal feline behaviour used for olfactory and visual communication, as well as claw maintenance.
- In some European countries onychectomy is considered unethical and inhumane (United Kingdom) or even banned (Switzerland).
- Complications of declawing can include excessive bleeding, infection, exposure of the remaining bone of the toe or distorted claw re-growth, and the risks associated with general anesthesia. Some cats may develop an aversion to using the litter or to having their feet handled, possibly due to phantom pain.
- Alternatives, such as regular nail trimming and providing and encouraging the use of scratching posts or boxes, are preferred.
- If aggression is feared, the underlying causes of aggression should be treated before considering onychectomy.
- Declawing creates an additional concern for cats allowed to roam, since declawing diminishes the cat's defenses. The CHS opposes allowing cats to roam (see the CHS position on Indoor Cats).

### **References:**

1. Frank, D. (2002). "Management problems in cats," in: Horwitz, Mills, and Heath S., eds. *British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Manual of Canine and Feline Behavioural Medicine*, Blackwell Publishing, Ames, Iowa, USA.
2. Overall, K. (1997). *Clinical Behavioural Medicine for Small Animals*. Mosby-Year Book Inc. Missouri, USA.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Feral Cat Colonies

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society recommends that local Animal Control agencies and community members develop a management plan best suited for their community. An example of effective management would be “trap, spay/neuter, vaccinate and release,” where every colony has dedicated people managing the colony and committed to monitoring the welfare of cats in the colony.

The CHS supports the view of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS):

The goal of feral cat management programs should be to gradually eliminate feral cat colonies by a process of ‘aging out’ their members. In this scenario, colonies would be maintained in a healthy state and prevented from reproducing, leading to the eventual attrition of members. (Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, 2004.)

### **Rationale:**

- Feral cats are not only in danger of dying early deaths due to numerous outdoor hazards, they are also a threat to humans and other animals as they can carry diseases, destroy property or attack.
- Unsterilized feral cats contribute to the pet overpopulation problem as cats reproduce quickly.
- Removing feral cats from a colony does not ultimately reduce the colony size, as other cats move in to take the place of the former members.
- New members do not join a feral cat colony with a stable number of neutered cats.

### References:

1. Bekoff, Marc, & Meaney, Carron A. (Eds.) (1998). *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
2. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (2004). *Position Statements*.
3. The Humane Society of the United States (2004). *HSUS Statement on Free-Roaming Cats*. Retrieved September 8, 2004 from <http://www.hsus.org/ace/11857>. For more information, please see the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies’ document “Feral Cat Factsheet” at <http://www.cfhs.ca/Programs/HumaneEducation/GeneralPublic/feralcat.pdf>.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Cat Trapping

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society supports the use of humane live cat traps only as a last resort to remove an unwanted cat from a property, and only if all appropriate actions are taken to ensure the health and safety of the trapped cat.

The City of Calgary Animal & By-law Services loans traps for a refundable deposit and requires a signed cat trapping agreement to ensure people trapping cats protect the animal's safety and turn the animal into Animal & By-law Services.

Citizens may use their own trap if they have a signed trapping agreement and their trap has been inspected by a by-law officer.

### **Rationale:**

- Before resorting to trapping, the CHS recommends trying other humane methods to deter a cat from entering property, such as:
  - Speaking to the cat's owner (if appropriate and feasible).
  - Placing a motion-sensor water sprayer on the property.
  - Erecting a physical barrier.
- Humane live-cat traps do not harm the animal; they simply restrict the animal's freedom. Removing an animal from property using a humane trap is a preferable alternative to the intentionally harmful actions that frustrated property owners sometimes take.
- It is a trapper's responsibility to ensure that:
  - A trapped animal is not left in a trap for an extended period of time.
  - The animal's physical needs (food, water and shelter from the elements) are attended to while in the possession of the trapper.
  - The animal is not intentionally harmed.
  - The animal is either:
    - a) Returned to its owner.
    - b) Released at the edge of the trapper's property.
    - c) Taken to the appropriate agency (e.g., City of Calgary Animal Services Department).
- Animals trapped in a live trap are protected from harm under current federal and provincial animal protection legislation.



# Calgary Humane Society

## Euthanasia

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society makes every effort to prevent medically and behaviourally sound animals in our care from being euthanized.

In addition, to reduce the causes for euthanasia in our community, the Calgary Humane Society provides training classes, behaviour advice and support, educates the public on the benefits of spay and neuter and responsible pet ownership, and promotes the need for lifelong veterinary care.

The Calgary Humane Society provides alternatives to euthanasia wherever possible, but will perform euthanasia to end the unnecessary suffering of companion animals when no other viable options exist.

### **Rationale:**

- The Calgary Humane Society does not have time limitations placed on an animal's stay in the shelter, but does have space limitations on the number of animals it can shelter at any one time. So long as they are physically and mentally healthy and there is space available at the shelter, animals in the CHS adoptions area remain available for adoption.
- The Calgary Humane Society is an open admission shelter and never turns an animal in need away, even if the shelter is full. The Calgary Humane Society accepts all companion animals, including those that are ill, injured, feral, and behaviourally unsound.
- Each animal is considered for adoption on an individual basis. The role of the Calgary Humane Society is to act in the best interest of the animal's well-being, while considering the availability of resources and the safety of people and other animals in the community.
- Animals are offered every possible and reasonable option for re-homing / adoption. These options include, but are not limited to, foster care, placement partners, surgical procedures that improve the health and adoptability of treated animals, socializing, behaviour intervention, and enrichment programs.
- The Humane Animal Review Team (HART) is a team of experienced CHS staff members including representatives from Animal Health, senior management, and the Behaviour Department. The team reviews the condition of each animal

coming into the shelter and explores reasonable alternatives before a decision to euthanize is made. Exceptions to this practice may occur when an animal is in obvious pain or distress, is unsafe to handle, or has a documented history of aggression.

# Calgary Humane Society

## Humane Pest Management

### **Position:**

While the Calgary Humane Society acknowledges that under certain circumstances, pest control and/or extermination may be required, the CHS only supports the use of humane methods. The CHS does not support methods of pest management that cause undue suffering, pain, or distress to an animal.

Certain methods, such as trapping (e.g., steel-jawed leg-hold traps), poisons and baiting strategies (e.g., cyanide, warfarin) and/or inhumane burrow clearing and fumigation techniques cause an animal to experience extreme pain and suffering.

### **Rationale:**

- Regardless of the problems pest animals cause, they require the same level of consideration for their welfare as animals in other contexts.
- The CHS recommends adopting solutions to control pest issues before they begin/escalate as well as subsequent to humane control measures being implemented. Preventative measures including filling cracks in buildings, erecting fences and keeping potential 'pest infestation sites' clean, sanitary and free from food products to reduce potential extermination issues.
- The CHS encourages a review of control or deterrent measures be taken prior to coming to the conclusion that extermination is required. Methods such as ensuring animals do not have a food source, eliminating areas where animals may burrow or nest (e.g., wood piles), installing motion detectors, alarms and sensor lights can often be sufficient to rectify certain pest problems.
- In the event that extermination is required, the CHS recommends methods that result in a more humane death (i.e., without pain, suffering or distress). These humane, safe and cost-effective methods include catch and release and traditional quick death traps.
- Conventional methods of extermination often involve the use of poisonous chemicals, which have effects on other non-target species, including humans. Other animals, children or adults can be harmed by an animal which has been poisoned or by the chemicals or baits used.

### **References:**

1. Proceedings of the 2003 RSPCA Australia Scientific Seminar, "Solutions for Achieving Humane Vertebrate Pest Control"; White Paper.
2. Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), "Associated Policies on Pest Management."

# Calgary Humane Society

## Farming

### **Position:**

The Calgary Humane Society recognizes that livestock are raised and marketed for food and resulting by-products, and believes that there must be a humane standard of care for all such animals that ensures the welfare of the animals, and that the welfare of animals must take precedence over financial considerations in human stewardship of those animals.

### **Rationale:**

- The CHS recommends that producers follow or exceed the standards set out in the “Codes of Practice & Fact Sheets for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals” by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council.

### References:

1. Alberta SPCA statements on welfare of livestock animals:  
<http://www.albertaspca.org/policies.htm#Position%20Statements>.
2. Canadian Agri-Food Research Council: Codes of practice & fact sheets for the care and handling of farm animals, [http://www.carc-crac.ca/english/codes\\_of\\_practice](http://www.carc-crac.ca/english/codes_of_practice).