

## Why are we protesting Petland?

### Petland buys animals from puppy mills.

Puppy mills are breeders who produce mass litters of puppies, often in filthy and abusive conditions. The mass production and, often, incest yields disease and a host of other genetic health concerns.

Many come from the Hunte Corporation, the self-proclaimed largest puppy dealer in the nation. According to a 2007 "Tulsa World" news article, "In 2005, Hunte bought and sold 88,235 animals, according to USDA records. The company ships an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 puppies in an average week."

Smaller puppy mills are not as easily defined. "Backyard breeders" can be reputable and humane, though many are not. Either way, the greedy practice of churning out puppies as though they were inanimate objects is detrimental to the purity of the breeds, to the mother dog, who is forced to bear litters over and over again and to the new owners, who often within weeks of a purchase have a dead dog.

Pet stores, including the nation's largest chain **Petland**, have typically been the most notorious vendors of puppy mill puppies.



This is a rescued puppy mill "breeding stock" female.

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## **Puppy Mill Facts**

- Hundreds of thousands of puppies are raised each year in commercial kennels known as "Puppy Mills".
- Puppy mills are distinguished by their inhumane conditions and the constant breeding of unhealthy and genetically defective dogs solely for profit.
- Very often the dogs are covered with matted, filthy hair, their teeth are rotting and their eyes have ulcers.
- The dogs are kept in small wire cages for their entire lives, almost never allowed out to touch solid ground or grass to run and play.
- Many dogs lose feet and legs when they are caught in the wire floors of the cages and cut off as the dog struggles to free themselves.
- Very often there is no heat or air-conditioning so dogs freeze in winter and die of heat stroke or "cook" on the wires of the cages in the summer.
- Female dogs are usually bred the first time they come into heat and are bred every heat cycle then bred until they can't reproduce any longer and then they are killed, often by being bashed in the head with a rock or shot.
- Dogs in puppy mills are often debarked by ramming a steel rod down their throats to rupture their vocal cords.
- Puppies are often sold to brokers who pack them in crates for resale to pet stores when they are 5 to 8 weeks old.
- Pet stores often tell customers that their puppies come from local breeders or quality breeders.
- Innocent families buy the puppies only to learn of illness, genetic or emotional problems. Often the puppies die of disease or cost thousands of dollars in vet bills. Don't bring this misery into your home.
- Buying a puppy in a pet store has significant risks for the purchaser. A state funded survey in California found that nearly half of the puppies sold in pet stores were sick or incubating diseases. This doesn't count the ones suffering from genetic diseases. Imagine bringing a puppy home from a pet store only to have it die from parvo and cost thousands of dollars in vet expenses because of genetic problems like hip dysplasia.

**Please don't breed or buy while shelter animals die.**

**Spay Austin Coalition – [www.spayaustin.com](http://www.spayaustin.com)**

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