

# European Fact Sheet

## *the global trade in dog and cat fur*

Since 1997, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has investigated and documented the international trade in dog and cat fur and skins.

This undercover investigation has spanned the globe from source countries in China, the Philippines, and Thailand to retailers and wholesalers in the United States, Russia, and the European Union.

### Background

- Over two million dogs and cats are slaughtered each year for their furs and skins, mostly in China and other Asian countries.
- Investigators documented 50,000 to 100,000 cat pelts stockpiled at animal by-product factories in China.
- At least ten dogs are slaughtered to make a single coat – more if puppies are used. Up to 24 cats are slaughtered to make one cat fur coat.
- Dog and cat fur is used in trims, linings, hats, decorative figurines, and folk remedies. Skins are used in dog chew toys and shoe leather.
- The slaughter of these animals is violent and pitiless. Cats are strangled inside their cages as other cats look on. Dogs are noosed about the neck by metal wires, and then slashed across the groin. The wire noose cuts into their throats as they struggle in pain before finally losing consciousness. In Harbin China, HSUS investigators documented a German shepherd still blinking and conscious as he was being skinned. At a dog farm several hours north of Harbin, investigators documented dead dogs hanging from hooks as others, still alive, awaited their fate outside the same cold and dismal room.
- Dog and cat fur is often falsely labeled to obscure the true source of the fur. Dog fur products have been sold as *gae-wolf*, *goupee*, *Asian wolf*, *China wolf*, *Mongolian dog fur*, *Sobaki*, *Pommern wolf*, *dogues de Chine*, and *loup d'Asie*. Cat fur has sold as *rabbit*, *maopee*, *goyangi*, *katzenfelle*, *natuerliches mittel*, *chat de Chine*, and *gatto cinesi*. In fact, fur manufacturers in China told HSUS investigators they could sew any label they asked for onto dog and cat fur products to make them more marketable. Suggestions included *Asiatic raccoon* and *Corsac fox* for dog fur and *wild cat* for domestic cat.
- As a result of the undercover investigation, the U.S. Congress banned cat and dog fur and skin imports and exports in November 2000. The trade continues in the EU and Russia.

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