

## **PETA Answer Guide to the ‘Inquiry Into Puppy Farming in New South Wales’**

Below are PETA’s suggested responses to help you answer the New South Wales government consultation on puppy farming. Please answer as many questions as you’re able to. The responses below are just a guide. For maximum impact, your responses should be personalised.

The deadline for responses is 6 March 2022.

The consultation can be [completed online](#).

### **1. Please enter your contact details**

*Please answer with your individual details.*

### **2. Are you a resident of NSW?**

*Please answer with your individual details.*

### **3. Do you have any comments on the current framework regulating dog and cat breeders in NSW, including but not limited to:**

**Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 (NSW)  
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2012 (NSW)  
NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice: Breeding Dogs and Cats?  
(max 300 words)**

The current framework regulating dog and cat breeders in New South Wales is clearly not sufficient to protect animals. The current rules establish no limits on the number of animals being bred on puppy farms or the total number of litters that an individual animal may be forced to produce. Breeders can simply apply for permission from their local council, which then approves or denies the application on planning and environmental grounds without any consideration for animal welfare. Regulations are needed to address animal welfare and community health issues created by factory-style breeding farms.

There have been numerous raids on puppy farms across the state in recent years. The RSPCA seized 79 dogs from a farm in the Central West region of New South Wales last year, and all the animals were admitted to veterinary hospitals. In 2020, eyewitness accounts surfaced from a puppy farm in Inverell, where a 10-month-old boxer named Strawberry had allegedly rotted from the inside out after becoming sick during a pregnancy. The RSPCA raided this facility and another in Wagga Wagga. Each of these raids puts huge stress on the resources of veterinarians, foster carers, the legal system, and the RSPCA.

I urge New South Wales to join Victoria and Western Australia by enacting amendments to restrict breeding and prohibit pet shops from selling companion animals not from rehoming organisations.

### **4. Would you like to see laws to stop puppy farming?**

Please select Yes.

**5. If yes, what should laws to ban puppy farming look like? (max 300 words)**

Laws to end puppy farms should involve the following:

- Restrictions on the number of animals any individual can have and breed
- Regular inspections of breeding facilities
- Mandatory desexing of animals by 2 years of age
- A centralised registration system that holds information on dogs and approved breeders, to assist with monitoring and enforcement
- Bans on selling animals in pet shops and online
- A plan to turn pet shops into adoption centres

**6. The Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 states that its objects are to amend the Companion Animals Act 1998 to:**

- (a) Regulate the conduct of businesses breeding companion animals and other companion animal businesses, and**  
**(b) Provide enforcement powers for the purposes of regulating the conduct of companion animal businesses.**

**Based on your own understanding and the information above, do you have any comments on the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021? (max 300 words)**

Regulations governing puppy farming are desperately needed in New South Wales to protect animals, community health, and consumers. The Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 should be passed and made into law.

**7. Do you have any comments in relation to the animal protection issues associated with puppy and/or kitten farming? (max 300 words)**

Puppy farms use mother dogs as breeding machines until their bodies break down – confining them without socialisation or veterinary care and forcing them to churn out hundreds of thousands of dogs every year into a world already bursting at the seams with homeless animals.

Environments which prioritise breeding large numbers of animals can often lead to severe crowding and unhygienic living conditions, not to mention the psychological damage inflicted on dogs by confining them to kennels or cages for long periods of time and the agony resulting when their babies are repeatedly taken away at 8 weeks of age to be sold.

Although breeders of “purebred” dogs claim to have “standards” for animals, these are usually aesthetic and are often detrimental to dogs’ health. For example, dachshunds have been bred to have long backs and short legs, which leads to a higher risk of lifelong problems with the back, knees, and other joints. German shepherds commonly have hip dysplasia and chronic pelvic pain. Brachycephalic (flat-faced) breeds such as pugs, French bulldogs, and British bulldogs all suffer from breathing problems and often must

have expensive corrective surgeries later in life. The Australian Veterinary Association recently called for a ban on breeding several purebred dogs who are currently manipulated “for ‘cuteness’ [which] often causes breathing issues, deformities and allergies”. Other “designer” dogs who have been bred for certain physical characteristics, such as being “hypoallergenic”, are no different. For example, Wally Conron, who bred the first labradoodle, has since reflected that he created a “Frankenstein” and that most poodle mixed breeds are either “crazy or have a hereditary problem”.

**8. Do you have any comments in relation to the consumer protection issues associated with the sale of pets from puppy and/or kitten farms online and in pet shops? (max 300 words)**

Because dogs and cats are bred for certain aesthetics at the detriment of their health, the industry is fraught with consumer complaints. Last year, The Animal Law Institute set up an Anti-Puppy Farm Legal Clinic following an increase in the number of people unknowingly buying sick companion animals online during the pandemic. Unlike other purchases, unhealthy puppies and kittens cannot simply be returned to breeders without, at the very least, psychological consequences for the animals, who quickly bond with their human companions. Most consumers also recognise that sending an unhealthy puppy back to a breeder may result in the animal being denied medical care or being killed by profiteers to avoid veterinary costs. Establishing regulations is critical to protecting consumers and animals.

There are many examples in the media of people who have purchased puppies who died or required thousands of dollars’ worth of veterinary care. A recent article in the *Daily Mail Australia* told the story of Maureen Elvy, who spent \$200,000 on surgery to address the health issues of her French bulldog, Phoebe, which were brought about by breeding practices. In another case documented by the ABC, a beagle-cross named Nala nearly died after arriving at her new home because she was so infested with worms.

Dogs such as poodles, labradoodles, and bichons frises are marketed as “hypoallergenic” because their long hair takes more time to grow to its full length and fall out. However, these breeds still shed, shake, scratch, and engage in all sorts of other dog activities that release dander. According to the chair of the Division of Allergic Diseases of the Department of Internal Medicine at the Mayo Clinic, “There’s no such thing as a hypoallergenic dog breed.” This is misleading marketing, and a better legal framework is required to help protect consumers.

**9. Do you have any other comments? (max 300 words)**

A significant proportion of the work of rescuing, fostering, caring for, and finding homes for the thousands of homeless dogs in Australia is performed by not-for-profit shelters, adoption groups, and networks of foster homes. These entities are primarily funded by community donations, state government grants, and bequests and are often heavily reliant on volunteers to sustain their work. Many are permanently overwhelmed and often refuse to accept animals because they have no room. Stopping puppy farming in New South Wales would help reduce the burden on volunteers and the community as a whole.

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**Thank you for completing the consultation. Your time is greatly appreciated, and you've played a meaningful part in efforts to improve the lives of animals. For more information, please visit [PETA.org.au](http://PETA.org.au).**