

## The Humane Pet Store Model

Recognizing the harm to breeding dogs in puppy and kitten mills and the harm to their litters, many pet stores are switching to a humane business model where “adoption days” are held with rescued dogs and cats and the focus is on the sale of pet supplies and services.

As one example: Angel’s Pet World in Wisconsin had purchased puppies from a dog breeder/broker (Menning Enterprises) located in southern Minnesota, who is one of the largest dog brokers and breeding facilities in the State. (Recent animal counts: 2021 USDA inspection recorded 616 dogs and puppies at facility; 764 dogs and puppies in 2019.) After years of receiving sickly dogs from this breeder/broker, the pet store could no longer afford to keep spending money on the veterinary care needed to treat the puppies and no longer wanted to support this breeder and his practices.

This humane business model has proven to be highly successful for this store.

***As explained by Angel Duratti, owner of Angel’s Pet World:***

HOME > RESCUE ADOPTION DAYS

**RESCUE ADOPTION DAYS AT ANGEL'S PET WORLD**

**We Support Local Cat and Dog Rescues**

Adoption is our favorite breed!

Find adoptable cats every day at Angel's Pet World in Hudson along with finding local dog adoption events every weekend in Hudson, WI at Angel's Pet World.

“For me, the switch was about doing the right thing. So many of the puppies we bought from this breeder had health problems, such as kennel cough, giardia, coccidian, roundworms, pneumonia, skin issues, ear issues, patellas, parvo and more. The last litter (10 puppies) I bought from him each had brucellosis, which is a dangerous disease.

Every time we received a delivery of puppies we immediately took them to our veterinarian to be examined.

Because there were so many health concerns, we also decided to wait ten days before selling any puppies — just in case one of the puppies showed signs of an illness. But even that didn’t work. I never knew when I’d get a call from a customer saying “my puppy is sick.” I would reimburse consumers for their vet bills, which was expensive. We didn’t need to do that legally, but I wanted to. I didn’t want to deceive my customers.

We could return sick puppies to the breeder, but I never did. I didn't want the animal killed. When I would notify the breeder about a health problem, he might discount the price or sometimes just tell my vet to euthanize the animals — which I wouldn't allow.

So I decided we would no longer buy from breeders — and instead go humane, which meant working with rescue groups and holding adoption days at my stores.

Some people ask me how that decision impacted my sales. Puppy sales alone made up about 22% of our sales. But the vet expenses exceeded that amount. Plus, once we joined up with Coco's Heart Dog Rescue and people started hearing that we went humane, we got huge support. Within 2 years, our customer base grew about 70%. People who really care about animals and oppose puppy mills started buying their pet supplies from us. Even my employees were so happy we made the switch.

Going humane has been wonderful and has changed everything. The reward is so much greater. I fully support the humane pet store model.”