Vote “Yes” to Halt FL Pig Factory Farming

The HSUS strongly supports the November 2002 ballot initiative in Florida to outlaw the cruel and intensive confinement of pigs in gestation crates on factory farms. Please vote “yes” in November to halt this form of cruelty.

Every year, billions of animals are reared and confined on factory farms and then sent to slaughterhouses. Breeding sows are confined in gestation crates—barren metal cages measuring just two feet wide—for almost their entire lives. They cannot exercise or even turn around and are prevented from engaging in natural behaviors or from satisfying basic psychological needs. Pigs in gestation crates suffer from an array of physical ailments such as joint disorders and lameness, and psychological maladies including chronic stress and depression.

Gestation crates are so cruel that they have been outlawed in other countries. You can help end the practice here.

To help with the campaign, please write Floridians for Humane Farms at 1859 South Dixie Hwy., Pompano Beach, FL 33060; call 954-946-1691; or e-mail info@BanCruelFarms.org.

Vote “yes” this November to outlaw gestation crates like this on Florida’s factory farms.

Dealing Blows to Greyhound Racing

Gov. Bush Vetoes Bad Track Bill

Florida’s greyhound racing industry was dealt several blows earlier this year that will hopefully signal its eventual end. The HSUS has long held that greyhound racing is an industry whose time has passed. It is responsible for thousands of surplus animals every year, the majority of which are ultimately killed by various means that are not always humane. The life of a racing greyhound literally hinges on how fast and for how long he or she can run.

Florida has 16 greyhound racing tracks, a third of all such facilities in the country. During the 2002 state legislative session, Sen. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz introduced a bill (SB 160) with the best of intentions—to increase adoptions at greyhound tracks around the state in an effort to reduce the number of dogs killed when their racing days are over. However, as the bill wound its way through the Legislature, it was amended to allow increased gambling that would help the tracks compensate for their declining revenues. This was to be done by expanding the operating hours of the tracks’ card rooms and increasing the amount that could be wagered and won in card games.

Despite efforts to stop SB 160 during the session, it passed the Florida Legislature and was sent for Gov. Jeb Bush’s approval. The HSUS joined others in an intense campaign to urge a veto of the bill. In a letter to the Governor, SERO Director Laura Bevan wrote, “SB 160 will do greater harm than good to greyhounds because it significantly increases the operation of card rooms at the tracks, both in hours and in wagers. While some greyhounds would benefit from the adoption aspect of the legislation, in the end it would mean suffering and death for a far greater number. The tracks will essentially be required to conduct dog racing in order to offer high stakes poker even if dog racing isn’t profitable or the public no longer wagers on the dogs.”

Thankfully, Gov. Bush vetoed the legislation and echoed our comments in his veto message. Bush said that the bill “began as a well-intentioned effort to help find homes for rescued and retired greyhounds and provide them with better treatment,” but is now “a vehicle for the expansion of gambling” and “bad public policy.” We thank Gov. Bush for taking action against this bad legislation.

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Georgia Voters to Decide on License Plate

With attendance at racetracks dwindling nationwide, greyhound racing is on the decline, yet it is still entrenched in a number of states. Forty-six tracks operate in 16 states. Florida has 16 tracks and Alabama has three. However, greyhound farms where the dogs are bred, raced, and trained exist throughout the Southeast.

1. How is the greyhound racing industry fighting back?

Because of unavoidable economic trends, many tracks have lost enthusiasm for dog racing and, instead, are concentrating on gaming. Tracks everywhere are pushing state legislatures to add slot machines, video lottery terminals, or other forms of gambling to their failing dog-racing operations.

2. Could the greyhound racing industry ever be operated humanely?

No. The racing industry is inherently cruel. Greyhound racing is a form of gaming in which the amount of money a dog generates determines his or her expendability. The answer for greyhounds is neither regulation nor adoption of "retired" dogs, but the elimination of the greyhound racing industry.

3. Are "retired" greyhounds adopted? What happens to those who aren't?

Although The HSUS applauds the efforts of volunteers who give their time and money to place unwanted greyhounds in loving homes, thousands of these dogs are still destroyed each year because there are not enough homes to accept them.

4. What can I do?

• Help pay for sterilization procedures.
• Provide educational materials about the importance of sterilization, and
• Promote a "Vote YES" campaign.

In the months before the November election, The HSUS will be joining the Humane Society of Georgia in encouraging voters to vote for the amendment. We need the support of voters, dog advocates, and dog lovers.

For more information about how you can help promote Georgia's dog and cat sterilization license plate contact, contact SERO or visit the Humane Society of Georgia Web site at www.humansocga.org.
so much cruelty for no reason other than greed and entertainment.

In 1989, I helped pass Florida’s felony animal cruelty law, the fourth in the country. The hope was that by making the penalties greater we could discourage abuse of animals. It is hard to know what cruelties haven’t taken place that might have otherwise. Certainly, this law helped give law enforcement agents and the courts better tools to deal with cases such as the Eldred/Pettyjohn one described on page 3. In the past, such teenagers who exhibited signs of disturbed minds would have been charged with misdemeanors and put back on the streets to commit more heinous acts of animal cruelty.

Despite the bad, the past 15 years have had an equal measure of good. I have met some of the finest people in the world in my five states—people who get up every day with the goal of making the world a better place, and who set out to do it by all means possible. I try to help them whenever I can. We are a team, and with persistence, we mean to change our corner of the world.

One of the finest people helping animals is also celebrating her 15th anniversary with SERO, Administrative Assistant Andrea West (pictured below). Andrea started work a few months after me. She was six months pregnant at the time with her son Daniel and was skilled well beyond any other candidate. Andrea balances her work life with a busy home life that includes three children, three dogs, and two cats. She has her hands full at home and work! It has been a wild ride for both of us, but together we have hung in and worked hard for the animals in this region. Here’s to another 15 years!

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Pettyjohn, had received a five-year sentence for his part in the crime. Both had been sentenced previously for attacking and killing two bulls in their pasture with bows and arrows.

Ann Chynoweth, counsel to The HSUS’s investigations department, helped SERO track the cases and stayed in contact with law enforcement and prosecutors. Chynoweth wrote to the judge in the Eldred case urging the maximum penalties for the crimes. “What makes Mr. Eldred’s crimes so shocking is that they were such calculated and unrestrained acts of cruelty. It would appear as though his actions were motivated by nothing other than a depraved sense of personal enjoyment.”

A special “thank you” to Detective Thomas Hoddinott of the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office and William Burgess, assistant state attorney, for their excellent work and dedication to bringing Eldred and Pettyjohn to justice.

The SERO Regional News is a publication of The Humane Society of the United States, Southeast Regional Office, 1624 Metropolitan Cir., Ste. B, Tallahassee, FL 32308; 850-386-3436. Laura Bevan, director. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on federal holidays. © 2002 by The Humane Society of the United States. All rights reserved.