



An agreement The HSUS reached with the egg industry could lead to the gradual replacement of battery cages (bottom) with enriched colony cages (top), bringing more room for hens plus nesting boxes, perches, and scratching areas.

An Accord for Hens | The HSUS forges unprecedented agreement

“Can you believe we’re here?”

The question—from United Egg Producers senior vice president Chad Gregory—captured the momentous nature of the July press conference and the unlikely allies behind it. While reporters listened attentively, leaders of the egg industry’s national trade group stood side by side with HSUS president and CEO Wayne Pacelle, detailing an agreement that could improve the lives of millions of hens each year.

In the negotiations leading up to the agreement, battery cages were a central issue. The industry norm for decades, these barren cages confine 92 percent of the nation’s 280 million egg-laying hens in spaces so cramped the birds can’t spread their wings or perform other natural behaviors. The HSUS-UEP agreement could lead to gradual replacement with enriched colony cages, which provide nearly double the space per bird as well as nesting boxes, perches, and scratching areas. It also calls

for labels to better inform consumers of methods used to produce eggs, an end to starving hens to manipulate laying cycles, limits on ammonia levels in laying facilities, and euthanasia standards for hens.

Since UEP guidelines are voluntary, both organizations are lobbying for federal legislation to apply the standards to all eggs sold in the U.S. If successful, it would mark the first time in more than 30 years that Congress has enacted a farm animal protection law and the first federal law addressing the treatment of animals on factory farms.

The agreement came just three years after the Proposition 2 campaign in California, when The HSUS and the egg industry were locked in conflict. At the time, “the chance of us having been able to find common ground on whether the sun would rise tomorrow seemed unlikely,” says Paul Shapiro, HSUS senior director of farm animal protection.

The turning point came when the

ballot initiative passed overwhelmingly; the law phased out battery cages and was later strengthened to cover all eggs sold in the state. Similar victories followed in other states, and The HSUS continued securing cage-free commitments from an impressive number of supermarkets and other food companies. Public sympathies were clearly shifting to the hens.

David Shirk witnessed this change firsthand. The Seattle social worker spent four months this spring gathering signatures for Initiative 1130, a ballot measure to outlaw extreme confinement in Washington. “Basically everyone out there knew about the issue already, and you didn’t have to convince them,” he says. “... Most people I came across were horrified by the whole battery cage system.”

While the egg industry faced an evolving consumer ethic, HSUS campaigners recognized the limits of the ballot initiative strategy. “The vast majority of egg-laying hens live in states where there’s no ballot initiative option,” says Shapiro. “There isn’t much of a pathway to help them. So if we want to improve the lives of all laying hens across the country, federal legislation is the best option.”

In the end, both sides compromised. The UEP agreed to a new housing model that it estimates will cost the industry \$4 billion. And while The HSUS will still work with food producers to switch to cage-free systems, it halted state ballot campaigns that seek cage-free standards for hens.

“It’s a basic social justice question,” Shirk says. “Do you help 6.5 million animals, or do you change the entire base standard for the industry affecting 280 million animals across the country? I think it’s really important to change the entire industry across the board.”

While he’s put away his petition board, Shirk is gearing up for the push to make the new standards federal law. “Honestly, it was the most important thing I’ve been involved in,” he says. “It’s not often that you get the chance to directly have a hand in changing the world.”

— Julie Falconer

The Long Haul

HSI-funded program helps working donkeys in Tanzania

Scratching a livelihood from the heat and dust of Tanzania's Kahama district looks something like this: Villagers leave their single-room mud or brick homes, which have no electricity or running water, and travel hours each day to sell produce, rice, and handicrafts. Few can afford shoes, clothes, or medicine; at the local rice plant, women search piles of dirt and discarded grains for a few kernels to eat.

After scraping by to meet their own needs, residents have little time and resources to properly care for the donkeys relied upon to plow fields and haul goods. Many donkeys work constantly, rented out even in the "off hours." But they have little access to water and may eat only bits of grass and garbage. And many owners beat their donkeys, viewing them as stubborn creatures who can only be controlled by violence.

Working conditions exacerbate this harsh reality. Yokes designed for oxen's sturdy neck muscles strain donkeys' long, thin necks, causing painful sores and lesions, says Humane Society International program manager Kelly Coladarci. Made of rope and discarded rice satchels, their overloaded packs chafe the skin and obstruct breathing.

With funding from HSI, the Tanzanian Animals Protection Organization seeks to brighten the picture for donkeys in Kahama, where their typical 40-year lifespan is shortened to 12 or 14. The group has enlisted local artisans to create a harness better suited to equine anatomy: A wide breast band allows animals to pull from their strong chests, and an inside surface made of softer, smoother nylon means no more wounds or rope burns.

Because the local children play a big role in animal care, TAPO also leads workshops for teachers, demonstrating a kinder, gentler husbandry. Coladarci has watched children petting and talking to their donkeys more often after seeing TAPO's leaders model these behaviors. Investing in happier, healthier animals means a more secure economy; says TAPO founder Yohana Kasilillah, "the goal is to change the image of the donkey in people's minds as an object."

Designed for oxen, these yokes cause pain to donkeys. HSI is funding the creation of harnesses better suited to equine anatomy.



OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP: JIS WEST; FARM SANCTUARY. THIS PAGE: KELLY COLADARCI/HSI



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From Squalor to Serenity

Rescued from a hoarding case, these dogs are now thriving

When the sheriff opened the side door of the squalid ranch house in Mississippi and permitted emergency teams inside, Chunk (above) was one of the first animals HSUS rescuers saw.

The low-slung dog with the big, worried eyes and patchy fur was in the first room, watching nervously as rescuers entered one by one. Wearing respirators to protect themselves from ammonia fumes, the rescuers stepped cautiously into the trash- and feces-filled house, going room to room to assess how many animals would need to be removed.

The teams gathered the squeaking puppies who sat in a pen under the red glow of a heating lamp, and they lured the timid dogs who darted through shadows and peered from under the bed. Meanwhile, Chunk paced back and forth, his raw and hairless paws squishing into a floor covered with poop and flattened bags of dog food and Wonder bread.

Local authorities had estimated that the woman running Raven's Hope Animal Sanctuary had about 70 animals on her prop-

erty. But by the end of that grueling, rainy day in March 2010, rescuers had pulled nearly 170 dogs out of the house and from muddy, algae- and feces-laden pens around the property.

Chunk and 69 others went north on an HSUS rig to the Washington Animal Rescue League (WARL) in Washington, D.C. Almost all the dogs were suffering from mange, and many were "fearful verging on feral," says adoptions and rescue director Jamie Scotto. They had rarely seen any human being but the hoarder herself and had been forced to compete for food.

Chunk had terrible skin problems and showed aggression toward other dogs, but shelter staff helped him and other victims from the case come around. For weeks—and in some cases, months—they built positive associations with humans by hand-feeding each dog.

They also introduced the dogs to leashes, no small task for unsocialized animals. "If you show a puppy how to do it, they pick it up immediately," says Scotto. "But adult dogs who've never been on a leash before? It's a totally different story."



The TLC paid off. Since his adoption and recovery from mange, Chunk looks like a different dog—“more basset-y in the snout,” says adopter Dan Metcalf. “He’s a great guy—the whole neighborhood loves him.”

Chunk is even mellow with other dogs now, enjoying his friendship with Daisy, a rescued boxer Metcalf and his wife adopted when they were expecting their first child and wanted a companion for Chunk. “They balance each other out really well,” Metcalf says. “She was isolated; she was tied up in a backyard. ... He’s very much a go-getter and friendly, and she’s kind of shy and jumpy, but they both sort of bring each other to the center.”

Helping dogs recover physically and behaviorally is often a long process for both shelter staff and adopters. But when “they finally make eye contact with you or show signs of recognizing you, it all becomes worthwhile,” says WARL behavior and training manager Michelle Yue.

During large-scale rescues, cruelty is often so pervasive that victims can be hard to tell apart: one dog after another malnourished and eaten up by skin parasites, one after another with infected eyes and runny noses, shivering in sickness and fear. Onsite and in the moment, the focus is on speed and quantity: Get as many animals out as you can, and do it as fast as possible.

The aftermath, though, is all about the individuals. It is during recovery that cruelty victims become particular. Their eyes, once clotted with infection, become clear and bright. Their fur grows, revealing true colors and hints of breed.

They heal, they put on weight, and they discover the thrill of running, the squeaky delights of a particular toy, a love for being scratched in one sweet spot—and the pleasure of finding a new home, where a family spoils you rotten and you don’t have to compete with scores of brothers and sisters in order to survive.

One of the last Mississippi dogs to leave WARL was Gili, who had no fur and was “just so uncomfortable for so long that it took a while for our behavior team to get through to her,” says Scotto. But when the traumatized dog met her new family, says adopter Madeleine Goldburt of Washington, D.C., “she lay down on her back and gave us

her belly and wanted to be scratched. This dog just seemed like she wanted to be loved.”

And while she’s still nervous about some things—plastic bags, for example—she loves to run in a field near her house. “She’ll go and dart out and do figure eights and make really sharp turns,” says Goldburt.

Yoda—named for her expressive ears—found a home with Cammie Backus’s family in Takoma Park, Md. “We do a Yoda voice for her ... and she won’t actually beg at the dinner table, but she’ll make these little rrrrrrr sounds,” says Backus, emitting a noise that sounds like a cross between a moan and a hungry stomach. “We say that’s her Wookiee voice.”

A blind dog named Wonder is no less shy in conveying her needs. Taken into foster care with Valerie Brehm’s menagerie soon after the rescue, her sightlessness made placement a challenge. But the dog worked her charms, and Brehm and her husband finally concluded that she belonged with them. In July, they decided to officially adopt her.

“She’s pushy, which surprises me, because I would think she’d be more reserved,” says Brehm, who lives in St. Petersburg, Fla. “But when she wants affection, she’s right there.”

Like all the other dogs rescued and brought to life by so many caring people, Wonder is finally herself—and she is finally home.

— **Carrie Allan**



Recovered from neglect at the hands of a Mississippi hoarder, Carolina—now called Gili—no longer has to compete with scores of other dogs to survive. With adopter Madeleine Goldburt, “she has two beds of her own, plus our bed.”



**TO THE
RESCUE**

In the Nick of Time

HSUS teams help save hundreds of lives

► **LOCATION:** Hudson, North Carolina

► **ANIMALS SAVED:** 276 dogs

Emma lay bleeding in her crate. After two years in a North Carolina puppy mill, the black and white shih tzu had finally found her freedom, but her fight was far from over.

Her left eye had already been removed—the result of a severe infection brought on by overgrown and matted hair. And when her foster family briefly left her alone, she clawed at the walls of her crate so furiously that she tore open the stitches from her spay surgery.

Just two weeks after The HSUS helped rescue Emma and 275 other dogs from squalid conditions at Mason Creek Kennel, the bloody scene showed once again that mass breeding facilities can exact a devastating toll on dogs.

In this case, many were kept outside in rabbit hutch-style cages. They suffered from parasites, from dental problems, from eye and ear infections. “There was a whelping area inside of the home that was probably one of the most disgusting places I’ve been in,” says

The HSUS’s Michelle Cascio, deputy manager of the Maddie’s Fund Puppy Mill Task Force. “We had a local news reporter with us who actually had to leave the room to go vomit.”

Rescuers set up a shelter, examined the dogs, and then placed them with eight of The HSUS’s Emergency Services Placement Partners—all over four days in June. The resulting media coverage, from Charlotte to Raleigh and beyond, helped highlight the fact that North Carolina still does not regulate puppy mills selling directly to the public.

Meanwhile, Emma survived the scare with her stitches. She began to build trust with her foster family—eventually taking treats out of their hands and running around playfully outside. And on July 14, she was adopted.

“There’s obviously a need there for stricter laws, since this is a recurring theme,” says Kim Dillen, whose family fostered Emma. “These animals are coming in for a reason, and that’s because it’s being allowed to continue. Something obviously needs to happen.”

— **Michael Sharp**

► **LOCATION:** High Springs, Florida

► **ANIMALS SAVED:** Nearly 700 cats

On the grounds of this overrun Florida “sanctuary,” the room was known as the infirmary. More accurately, says The HSUS’s Ashley Mauceri, “it was just a room of death.”

Old syringes, dirty bowls, and crushed soda cans littered the place. Intense smells of ammonia and illness hung in the air. And in cage upon cage, sick and injured cats lay suffering. “It was just the most sad, sad room of misery I’ve ever seen,” says Mauceri, deputy manager of animal cruelty investigations. “They were basically just waiting to die there.”

It was a particularly hopeless scene in an unprecedented situation, as The HSUS helped remove nearly 700 cats from the rural property in June—marking the organization’s largest single feline rescue ever.

The cats suffered from malnourishment, severe eye problems, skin conditions, and untreated injuries. And they were crammed everywhere, from rabbit hutches to the shelves of gazebos. As one rescuer walked into an outdoor pen, a cat crawled up his leg and into his arms, quickly earning the name Velcro.

“He stuck to you like Spiderman,” Mauceri says. “But when I say that so many were just like him, it’s not a joke. They just wanted to be held and touched, and they were so content with that.”

As the criminal process unfolded, The HSUS and United Animal Nations were helping to care for the cats in converted warehouses, and Mauceri marveled at their transformation: “It’s so true how just a clean environment, a little bit of care and basic veterinary attention, and a little bit of human interaction can make a world of difference.”

— *Michael Sharp*



► **LOCATION:** Fairview, Wyoming

► **ANIMALS SAVED:** 94 horses and burros

Stacy Segal happened to turn her back for one moment, and just like that, the birth was under way. Suddenly, the pregnant mare who’d been standing nearby in this Wyoming corral was lying down in hay. And 10 minutes later, she was officially a mom.

For Segal, equine cruelty specialist for The HSUS, it was one of the smoothest births she had ever witnessed. It was also a fitting symbol.

“This perfect little foal just came out, and we watched him stand up and take his first steps,” Segal says. “And it was just really serene and peaceful. And it just really struck me that had someone not intervened, that baby probably would not have survived.”

The young foal’s first taste of life could have come on a neglected Lincoln County property where emaciated horses and burros suffered from open wounds, overgrown hooves, and parasites. But in late May, the Wyoming Livestock Board rescued the mother-to-be and nearly 100 additional equines.

Soon after, The HSUS stepped up to provide financial support, covering everything from gelding stallions and assessing pregnant mares and foals, to treating injuries and providing vaccines and farrier care. Within weeks, all 94 surviving animals were either adopted or placed with rescue groups—a tremendous feat, particularly in a state where some still push for horse slaughter as the solution to such overbreeding.

“By placing them in Wyoming and helping them find new homes, they will continue to contribute to the horse community in Wyoming and be viable productive partners for people, rather than being shipped off to slaughter,” Segal says. “So it was a great success.”

— *Michael Sharp*





Stacked Deck

The HSUS goes behind the fences of captive hunting facilities

Working under the guise of a husband and wife looking to share the thrill of hunting, two HSUS investigators traveled to Action Outdoor Adventures in Hondo, Texas. Their mission was to secretly film captive hunting operations, where semi-tame animals are shot in fenced areas.

At the hunting lodge, the couple was given booklets with pictures of animals from past hunts, then told how much it would cost to kill similar ones. Discussing

the heads of blackbuck antelopes and other exotic animals dotting the walls, the owner admitted, “Oh, well, these are all accidental overdoses. Oops,” says the investigator who operated under the name Annie. “And so I said, ‘Overdoses?’ And he responded, ‘Oh yeah, I gave them too much tranquilizer.’”

With one sickening revelation after another—from drugged animals to shooting sites overlooking feeding troughs—the months-long investigation

also surveyed three canned hunting facilities in upstate New York, plus Texas wildlife auctions where frightened and bewildered animals rammed themselves against rails in hopes of escaping.

The findings aired on *Animal Planet Investigates* in June. In one scene, dall sheep run past Annie and her partner “Larry,” having been flushed out of hiding by a so-called hunting guide. In another, a young aoudad (a type of exotic sheep) walks right up to Annie, allowing her to pet him. A kangaroo, alone in a small enclosure, eats from a human’s hand. “This one’s got a bounty on his head,” investigators are told.

“It’s ridiculous. It’s a farce,” says Annie, noting the guides know the animals and their routines and have even given some names, like pets. “I don’t think that killing animals should be a Disneyland experience. It’s an animal. It’s a life.”

The episode has exposed one of the most problematic issues within the captive hunting industry, says Andrew Page, senior director of The HSUS’s Wildlife Abuse Campaign: the buying and selling of animals from a variety of sources.

He lists roadside zoos, even circuses—places where animals are used to being around people. “One day a kid is feeding an exotic animal a handful of corn at a roadside zoo, and the next day the animal is on a hunting ranch and not behaving any differently.” — *Michael Sharp*

▶ **WATCH** a video about the investigation at humanesociety.org/allanimals.



Not in Their Backyard

A flurry of construction near his parents’ house was Kevin Gause’s introduction to a brutal blood sport in which dozens of dogs compete to chase and sometimes rip apart wild-caught foxes and coyotes in fenced-in areas.

Gause, a fair-chase hunter, was dismayed to learn that fox and coyote pens would be coming to the quiet town of Conway, S.C., located near Myrtle Beach. It would be a stark contrast to the peaceful wildlife scenes enjoyed by his mother, in a wheelchair with multiple sclerosis, from her back porch. “There’s nothing that she loves more than to go back there in the spring and watch the does come out with their fawns,” he says.

After he and his father lost an initial zoning board case to

shut down the pen, they rallied the community, collecting money to hire an attorney to file an appeal. “It was a huge stretch for everyone,” says Wendy Sarvis, whose elderly aunt and mother-in-law donated.

In May, they won their case. For Gause, seeing his community pull together to prevent cruelty was worth the two-year battle. He now speaks out against pens whenever he can. “Even if one animal dies for just human entertainment, that’s too much.”

— *Ruthanne Johnson*

▶ **TO JOIN** The HSUS’s efforts to end fox and coyote penning, email wildlifeabuse@humanesociety.org.