

Humane Society urges pet owners to stop breeding their dogs and cats

ORLANDO, Fla. (Reuter-Kyodo) The Humane Society of the United States on Thursday called on pet owners and breeders to stop breeding dogs and cats for at least one year to help ease what officials called a pet population crisis.

More than 8 million dogs and cats are destroyed each year in the United States, officials said. Animal overpopulation costs U.S. taxpayers \$1 billion each year.

All owners of dogs and cats should spay or neuter their animals and consider adopting a pet rather than breeding new ones, said Humane Society officials, in Orlando for a conference of pet breeders

and animal control officers.

"We're clearly in a crisis situation and we must act now," Humane Society President Paul Irwin said of the unprecedented plea. "The only way to relieve the suffering of companion pets is to take extreme and immediate action."

The society did not condemn euthanasia, however.

Humane Society officials said they will help municipalities to enact legislation that would permanently regulate breeding.

Kate Rindy, a Humane Society legislative assistant, said the society is suggesting a law that would ban breeding for two years. Afterward, a

breeding regulation system would be set in place.

At least one breeder was not happy about the suggested guidelines.

"You cannot take a breeding animal and turn it on and off like a light switch. It's not a machine," said Paul Dent, executive director of The Cat Fanciers' Association, the world's largest registry of pedigreed cats.

Owner of noisy cockerel taken to court over crowing

NEWTON ABBOT, England (Reuter-Kyodo) A noisy cockerel whose nocturnal crowing kept a family awake in an English village has landed its owners in court.

Government officials found the noise reached official nuisance levels and company director John Ritchings has applied for a court ban on the outpourings of "Corky the cockerel."

But Margery Johns, owner of the early bird, is fighting the application at a court in Newton Abbot in southwest England, arguing the crowing is a normal country noise.

"On a moonlit night the cock would wake us as early as 3.30 a.m.," Ritchings told the court Thursday. "It was beyond a joke."

The case continues.