



Cats need our help ... this is the help they need!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nova Scotia SPCA Joining National Campaign to Address the Cat Overpopulation Crisis

Nova Scotia, 5 JANUARY 2011: According to the Vietnamese calendar, 2011 is officially the Year of the Cat. That makes this the perfect year to celebrate North America's number one animal companion with a nation-wide 'Year of the Cat' campaign. The program is designed to increase the value of owned, homeless and feral cats and, in doing so, address the issue of cat overpopulation in Canada.

"We are pleased to announce that we will be one of many organizations across the country working collaboratively on Year of the Cat initiatives," explains Executive Director, Kristin Williams "This program is being lead by a new national volunteer organization called [Care for Cats](#). Coping with the seemingly never-ending stream of stray, abandoned and feral cats that enter our shelter each year is a growing problem ... not only in our community but also across the country. With the Year of the Cat resources to assist us, we can work together to create responsible and compassionate communities where people care for cats.

"The bottom line is that cats need our help and no one organization can achieve desired results alone," adds Williams. "We believe that our participation in the Year of the Cat program will help us convey the importance of the involvement of government, animal welfare groups, veterinarians and the public to achieve a more compassionate Nova Scotia. Care for Cats will help us present a powerful and unified message about responsible cat ownership and the value and needs of our feline friends."

Hamilton, Ontario, veterinarian and feline specialist, [Dr. Elizabeth O'Brien](#), is the official spokesperson for the Care for Cats committee. She says that 2011 The Year of the Cat is modeled after a similar highly successful campaign created by the [Hamilton-Burlington SPCA](#) in 2008.

"Care for Cats has built its public educational campaign based on solid facts," explains O'Brien. "The 2008 [Business of Urban Animals Survey](#) (BUAS), commissioned by [PetLynx Corporation](#) for the [International Summits for Urban Animal Strategies](#), provided statistical proof of what people working in animal shelters and veterinary hospitals have known for decades: *cats are not generally valued as much as dogs*. In almost every category covered by this survey, dogs received better care than cats."

The PetLynx Urban Animal Survey revealed:

- There are 8.5 million cats in Canada
- 36 per cent of Canadian homes have one or more cats
- 50 percent of these cats did not receive regular veterinary care in the past 12 months
- Less than 25 per cent of Canadian cats have permanent identification, such as tattoos or microchips
- 41 per cent either haven't been vaccinated in the last four years or have never been vaccinated at all
- 54 per cent of people who owned cats that were not currently spayed or neutered reported that they were "unlikely" to have their cats altered in the coming year.

“The message we need to get to the public is not only about the importance of spaying and neutering cats as a means of population control,” concludes O’Brien. “We also have to try to change attitudes about the intrinsic value of cats in our society. In a nutshell, we need people to start treating cats like dogs! We invite anyone interested in cats and creating healthy communities to visit our website and get involved in the Year of the Cat campaign.”

ABOUT THE NOVA SCOTIA SPCA

The Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (Nova Scotia SPCA): Protecting animals from cruelty since 1877, the Nova Scotia SPCA is a registered charity, comprised of a network of Branches, which rely primarily on volunteers and donations to fund animal protection; care and rehabilitation; advocacy; and humane education. The Act to Protect Animals and Aid Animals in Distress mandates the Society to enforce animal cruelty laws, making the Nova Scotia SPCA unique among animal welfare organizations in the province. To learn more, visit www.spcans.ca.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Nova Scotia SPCA is to prevent abuse, neglect and cruelty to animals, and provide for province-wide leadership on matters that promote and improve the welfare of all animals through animal protection; care and rehabilitation; humane education; advocacy and engagement and collaboration with stakeholders.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Nova Scotia SPCA is that Nova Scotia be a No Kill province and a safe place for all animals with zero tolerance for animal cruelty.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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CARE FOR CATS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

ANIMAL WELFARE

- Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
- Ontario SPCA
- SCAT Street Cat Rescue Program, Saskatoon, SK
- Pierre's Alley Cat Society, Halifax, NS
- Calgary Humane Society, Calgary, AB
- Meow Foundation, Calgary, AB

ANIMAL CONTROL & LEGISLATION

- City of Calgary Animal & Bylaw Services
- Toronto Animal Services

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
- The Cat Clinic, Hamilton, ON
- Diane Frank, DVM, Feline Behavioral Specialist, University of Montreal
- Alice Crook, DVM, Animal Welfare Specialist, Atlantic Veterinary College
- Margie Scherk, DVM, Feline Specialist, Vancouver, BC
- Susan Little, DVM, Feline Specialist, Ottawa, ON
- Hugh Chisolm, DVM, Feline Practitioner, Halifax, ON
- Anne Marie Carey, DVM, Charlottetown, PEI
- Diane McKelevey, DVM, Feline Specialist,

ANIMAL SERVICES

- Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) Canada
- Petsecure, Western Financial Insurance
- PetLynx Corporation

ABOUT CARE FOR CATS AND YEAR OF THE CAT

Care for Cats (CFC) is a long-term project that will increase the value of owned, homeless and feral cats in Canadian communities. CFC has a model of ‘free of charge’ distribution of impactful public education programs and support materials that can be used by anyone working in the companion animal industry, including shelters and rescue organization, municipalities, pet stores, veterinarians and more. One purpose of the initiative is to encourage community collaboration across all industry sectors; providing accurate resources; and the collection and evaluation of national metrics to measure success. <http://www.careforcats.ca>

CFC is organized under the direction of a volunteer Advisory Council with representatives from all four sectors of the companion animal industry. (See below.) It is being financially support by [Petsecure Pet Insurance](#), [Ontario SPCA](#), [PetSmart Charities Canada](#), and [PetLynx Corporation](#).



2011 Year of the Cat (YOC) is a Canada-wide initiative intended to ‘get rid of the myths and give the facts!’ This program will bring a national time-line of events such as adopt-a-thons and an identification week. To facilitate the effective delivery of these programs online toolkits will be provided at no cost to community collaborators across Canada.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SUMMITS FOR URBAN ANIMAL STRATEGIES

The International Summit for Urban Animal Strategies [ISUAS] attracts Executive Thought Leaders from North America’s Companion Animal Industry to develop strategies that will create and sustain healthy communities for pets and people. Executive level discussion, networking and world-class speakers facilitate the executive working sessions. The Annual Summit Awards are presented in conjunction with the alumni Summit each October and bestow the recognition of industry peers upon individuals and organizations who are achieving success in each summit award category. <http://www.tsuas.com> & <http://animalsummits.blogspot.com>

THANK YOU TO THE YEAR OF THE CAT SPONSORS: