



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ASPCA Assists Worth County Sheriff's Office in Seizure of Nearly 170 Dogs from Iowa Puppy Mill

Dogs and puppies found living in deplorable conditions, ASPCA provides medical treatment and temporary sheltering

WORTH COUNTY, IOWA—At the request of the Worth County Sheriff's Office, the [ASPCA](#)® (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is assisting with evidence collection, transport and sheltering of nearly 170 dogs from an inhumane commercial breeding facility often referred to as a "puppy mill" in Worth County, near the north-central border of Iowa and Minnesota.

A search warrant was executed Monday where investigators discovered hundreds of dogs, all Samoyeds, living in appalling and overcrowded conditions and exhibiting signs of neglect with no access to clean water. Many of the dogs were found in filthy dilapidated kennels in below freezing temperatures with minimal protection from the elements. There is debris scattered throughout the property as responders work to safely remove fearful and undersocialized dogs. A few cats were also found inside the residence exhibiting signs of neglect.

"We have tried to work with the individual in addressing the growing concerns about the welfare of her animals over the past several months and unfortunately met resistance," said **Sheriff Dan Fank with the Worth County Sheriff's Office**. "This is a large-scale breeding operation involving many animals, and we asked the ASPCA and their affiliates for assistance in removing them from the property and ensuring that they get much-needed care and treatment as we continue our investigation."

"Many commercial breeding operations prioritize profit over the well-being of the animals, often producing puppies that suffer from health and behavioral problems," add **Tim Rickey, Vice President of ASPCA Field Investigations and Response**. "Thanks to local animal welfare groups for raising their concerns and the Sheriff's Office for taking swift action in launching an investigation, we were able to support the case by providing expertise and resources to remove these dogs from this heartbreaking situation."

The investigation was set into motion by the Sheriff's Office several months ago when local animal welfare groups became aware of the breeder's inability to properly care for her animals and alerted local authorities to investigate the matter. The breeder was previously licensed through the USDA, despite failing to provide animals with adequate veterinary care, food, clean water, and sheltering.

The ASPCA is transporting the animals from the property to a temporary shelter where they will receive ongoing daily care until custody is determined by the court. Once medical exams are conducted, behavior experts with the ASPCA Anti-Cruelty Behavior team will be evaluating each dog and implementing enrichment protocols at the temporary shelter.

The following agencies are supporting the ASPCA in the field and with its sheltering operation: Animal Rescue League of Iowa; Companion Animal Practices North America; Dubuque Regional Humane Society; Humane Society of North Iowa; Humane Society of Scott County; Nebraska Humane Society; Veterinary Centers of America (VCA); and Wichita Animal Action League.

Animal neglect charges are pending based on evidence collected by ASPCA experts in support of the investigation. The ASPCA's Legal Advocacy department will work closely with law enforcement and prosecutors to ensure the best outcome for these animals.

The ASPCA has rescued countless dogs from puppy mills across the nation and has been active in promoting legislation at both the state and federal levels to strengthen regulations and improve oversight of the standards of care of dogs in commercial breeding facilities. Dogs at these facilities are often kept in crowded, unsanitary conditions without adequate access to veterinary care, food, water, or socialization. The ASPCA's [Barred From Love](#) campaign urges the public to

Speak out against cruel breeding and also encourages dog lovers to adopt from a local shelter or rescue group or learn how to identify a responsible breeder.

About the ASPCA®

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA® (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) is the first animal welfare organization in North America and serves as the nation's leading voice for animals. More than two million supporters strong, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of anti-cruelty, community outreach and animal health services. For more information, please visit www.ASPCA.org, and be sure to follow the ASPCA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).