



MEDIA RELEASE

12 February 2009

Don't skimp on pet care during recession

Hard financial times may lead pet owners to skimp on the health care and well being of their cats or dogs, says a leading pet care company.

Country Manager for Nestlé Purina, Mr John Purdon, says that recent SPCA statistics of abandoned cats and dogs are not the only effect of the economic downturn on New Zealand pets.

“When times are tough, most owners will not stop buying their cat or dog the pet food they love, but there are some important health care needs that may not be undertaken because they are thought to be too expensive or unnecessary,” says Mr Purdon.

Desexing

Mr Purdon says that desexing is one of the most important things pet owners can do, but is often avoided due to its expense.

“Thousands of unwanted kittens and puppies are abandoned or brought into animal rescue organisations each year simply because too many dogs and cats are being allowed to breed without care or thought of the consequences.”

Mr Purdon says that desexing is not only vital for controlling the population of unwanted animals in the community; it is also better for a pet's health.

“Research shows that desexing dogs and cats reduces risks of some cancers and can assist in controlling unsociable behaviours like roaming, territory marking and aggression.”

Behaviour

Mr Purdon says that behavioural problems in pets can also lead to the tragic situations of abandonment or maltreatment by owners facing already difficult times.

“Behavioural problems in dogs, such as excessive barking or destruction of your property, can cause undue stress in a household. It’s best to deal with problems before they get worse and lead to tragic outcomes like the ones we have seen in recent times.

“For basic training, check out obedience classes that are available through your local Dog Clubs, or for more severe problems, consult with an animal behaviourist for professional advice,” says Mr Purdon.

Regular health checks

Mr Purdon says that a regular health check-up for pets is another common casualty of hard economic times.

“Keeping parasite treatments and vaccinations current is vitally important for protecting your cat or dog from a number of serious and potentially life threatening diseases, such as distemper, hepatitis and kennel cough.”

“A check-up from your veterinarian is the simplest and best way to ensure your pet is happy and content throughout their life. Take good care of your pet, and they will continue to care for you as a loving companion through a financially tough year.”

For more information on health and wellbeing for pets, Purina recommends the following web sites:

www.canineproblemsolutions.co.nz

- Helpful advice from a trained canine behaviour specialist

www.doglinks.co.nz

- A portal for everything to do with dogs and dog care in New Zealand

www.purina.co.nz

- Information on Purina’s full range of quality pet food for a balanced diet

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About Nestle Purina New Zealand

- For over eighty years Purina has been a leader in the advancement of pet care and pet nutrition.
- Purina’s expert nutritionists, food scientists, vets, and animal behaviorists are constantly discovering new ways to help pets lead healthier, happier, longer lives.
- No one invests more in research and development, and as a result Purina has made more breakthroughs in the field than any other company.
- Today Purina is one of the world’s leading pet care companies, producing some of the best known pet food brands; many of which have served pet owners for generations. Each is the result of the very latest advances in quality, taste and nutrition.

- Purina products are designed to give pets and their owners the best possible choice of recipes and formats, for every life stage and lifestyle.
- Purina is also a committed member of the wider pet care community, supporting charitable organisations, working closely with the communities in which we work and operate, and promoting responsible pet ownership in New Zealand and worldwide.
- With over seventy per cent of New Zealand households owning pets, Nestlé Purina is servicing a growing market.
- Throughout the company's long history in the pet care business, it has built strong brands such as TUX, FRISKIES and FANCY FEAST.
- In 2002 the company acquired Ralston Purina, which saw the introduction of brands such as Purina ONE, BENEFUL and PRO PLAN.