



## Summary

- **Conduct a full audit of animal welfare issues in Ireland.**
- **Increase financial support for animal welfare charities**
- **Promote responsible pet ownership through the school curriculum.**
- **Conduct a full review of the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 (DBEA).**
- **Stop live exports to countries where welfare standards at the final destination cannot be assured.**
- **Introduce measures requiring all animals, but especially pigs and poultry, to be provided with adequate space, natural light and opportunities to carry out their natural behaviours.**
- **Support the complete ban on the use of wild animals in circuses.**
- **Introduce a complete ban on the hunting of wild mammals with hounds.**
- **Introduce a complete ban on coursing live hares.**
- **Properly enforce the ban on doping of greyhounds, lurchers, and horses.**
- **Control and regulation of Greyhound breeding for profit.**
- **Examine and restructure Bord Na gCon.**
- **Ban fur farming.**
- **End badger culling by traps, snares and shooting.**
- **Ban all non-medical animal experiments.**

Animals are often treated with cruelty in our society. This is largely because they are viewed as a commodity by the private, profit-driven sector. We condemn all forms of cruelty and neglect. We advocate decent conditions for animals – where offspring are not separated from their mothers too soon, and where animals are kept in clean environments that are not cramped. We are opposed to the use of growth hormones and unnecessary usage of antibiotics or steroids. The use of painful methods of killing – such as grinding up live chicks – is abhorrent and should be banned outright. Furthermore, we want to see the following policies brought into effect:

- **Conduct a full audit of animal welfare issues in Ireland.** In line with the recommendations of the ISPCA, there should be an independent audit of animal welfare issues in Ireland covering companion animals, equines, farm animals, wild animals and animals used for entertainment, sport and research.
- **Increase financial support for animal welfare charities.** Although ex-gratia grants to animal welfare charities have increased in recent years, more funding should be made available for reputable animal welfare organisations.



- **Promote responsible pet ownership through the school curriculum.** Education is the key to better animal welfare in Ireland. We would like to see animal welfare lessons and activities introduced to the curriculum of all schools in Ireland.

- **Conduct a full review of the Dog Breeding Establishments Act 2010 (DBEA).** The ISPCA has called for a review of the Dog Breeding Establishment Act 2010 which regulates dog breeding in Ireland. Puppy farming is a serious problem in Ireland. Currently anyone with six or more breeding bitches must be licensed and registered by the local authority. Dogs are social animals and this must be reflected in the regulations. There should be a minimum ratio of carers to dogs introduced to ensure high welfare standards and to ensure that all dogs are properly socialised. We would also like to see the introduction of random, unannounced inspections carried out by the Department of Agriculture, local authorities and the ISPCA.

- **Stop live exports to countries where welfare standards at the final destination cannot be assured.** All food animals should be humanely slaughtered as near as possible to the point of production and should not be exported to countries that do not apply the same animal welfare standards that apply within the EU.

- **Introduce measures requiring all animals, but especially pigs and poultry, to be provided with adequate space, natural light and opportunities to carry out their natural behaviours.**

- **Support the complete ban on the use of wild animals in circuses.** Circuses can never provide a suitable environment for wild animals such as tigers, lions and elephants. We believe that the welfare of wild animals is compromised by regular transport, loading and unloading, noise and lights. Many countries around the world have introduced bans or partial bans on the use of wild animals in circuses. We also believe that coercing wild animals to perform unnatural behaviours is morally and ethically unacceptable.



• **Introduce a complete ban on the hunting of wild mammals with hounds.** Hunting wild mammals with hounds is cruel and out dated. Scientific research has shown that the welfare of a fox pursued by hounds is severely compromised and death is rarely instantaneous, contrary to the claims of the hunting industry.

• **Introduce a complete ban on coursing live hares.**

In 2015, almost 7000 hare's were taken from the wild to be used in live coursing events by licensed coursing clubs. Despite the greyhounds being muzzled, the hares suffer fear and distress and some are killed or seriously injured and have to be euthanised. Live hares should not be used for this activity and alternatives should be introduced.

• **Properly enforce the ban on doping of greyhounds, lurchers, and horses.** Even 1% of Greyhounds testing positive for doping is an unacceptable level. These drugs can have debilitating side effects in an animal, one of which includes permanent heart damage. The Greyhound Rescue Association of Ireland (GRAI) has called for owners found to have dogs which tested positive to be banned from owning dogs, not just from racing them. People Before Profit is also calling for those convicted of this act of cruelty be prevented from owning animals.

• **The control and regulation of Greyhound breeding for profit.** Greyhounds are victims of a massive profit making industry in Ireland. Given the sheer numbers of abandoned or "euthanised" greyhounds each year, it is clear that some in the industry are breeding far too many animals. This needs to be regulated and controlled. Charities are starting to re-home some of these unwanted dogs, but their resources cannot stretch to meet the actual need. Furthermore we advocate banning the export of greyhounds to jurisdictions where equivalent welfare standards to Ireland do not exist.

• **Examine and restructure Bord na gCon.** In 2007, Bord na gCon received €14.5 million in state funding. Much of the state subvention is spent on refurbishing stadia – such as in Limerick and Kilkenny. The private sector is making massive profits on the greyhound



industry and must be expected to invest in basic infrastructure. The duty of Bord na gCon should be to ensure that owners and trainers adhere to welfare laws. In 2006 it failed to make public when two dogs tested positive for Erythropoietin. When the CEO at the time – Aiden Tynan – wrote to the then Minister for Sport, John O’Donoghue, outlining his concern with the situation; he was subsequently removed from his position by the board. Mr Tynan felt he was sacked as a result of sending the letter to the Minister. This indicates an unhealthy culture of cronyism and animals will suffer as a result. Furthermore, a 2008 report by the Comptroller and Auditor General found some irregularities in the board’s accounts. This must be investigated immediately. The orientation of this investigation should not be to “maximise the commercial income of the Bord” (as the Minister called for in 2013) but for the welfare of the animals involved.

- **Ban fur farming.** Fur farming of all species (mink, fox etc.) is cruel and unnecessary in the current age. Confined to small cages, animals reared for fur often express stereotypic behaviour – a clear sign of distress. Fur farming has been banned or phased out in most EU Member States.

- **End badger culling by traps, snares and shooting.** There are perfectly adequate alternative measures to minimise the spread of bovine tuberculosis, such as oral vaccination. Culling is completely unnecessary as badgers do not pose a serious threat of infection, as was proved in a report by Defra in 2011.

- **Ban all non-medical animal experiments.** These are unnecessarily cruel and must cease immediately.