

Coalition of 100+ Rescues Pressures Petland to Stop Selling Rabbits

Led by The Rabbit.org Foundation, the Stop Rabbit Sales Coalition warns that Petland's rabbit sales worsen shelter overcrowding and animal neglect nationwide.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PALO ALTO, Calif. — October 21st, 2025 — The Rabbit.org Foundation, which created and leads the Stop Rabbit Sales Coalition, has launched a renewed national campaign calling on **Petland**, the largest national pet store chain still selling rabbits, to end the practice once and for all. The coalition represents a loose network of more than 100 rabbit rescues, shelters, and animal-welfare advocates across the country and warns that Petland's ongoing rabbit sales are worsening an already critical shelter crisis.

"Every rescue in our network is seeing the same pattern—rabbits sold as novelty pets, then surrendered, dumped, or neglected once the reality of care sets in," said **Paige K. Parsons**, founder of The Rabbit.org Foundation. "Petland's business model pushes animals into a pipeline of suffering that local volunteers and shelters are left to clean up. It's time for that to stop."

The Stop Rabbit Sales Coalition is highlighting the direct impact of Petland's rabbit sales on local shelters and rescues nationwide—from overcrowded foster systems to rising veterinary costs and limited intake capacity. The campaign follows alarming reports of abandoned "Easter rabbits" and overwhelmed shelters struggling to manage the fallout from retail sales.

"Rabbits are the third most surrendered companion animal in the U.S., yet Petland still profits from selling them as impulse purchases," Parsons added. "Every year, rescues are left to pick up the pieces—emotionally, financially, and physically—of an industry unwilling to evolve."

Courtney Gurley, Shelter Director of **Georgia House Rabbit Society**, said her team witnesses the impact daily.

"Across Georgia's three Petland locations, we see the fallout firsthand—rabbits sold far too young, kept in poor conditions, and sent home with families who have no idea what they truly need. Many rabbits arrive at our rescue never having been fed hay, a vital part of a rabbit's diet. Petland is fueling the crisis for vulnerable animals across the state."

Rachel Sanders, Director of **House Rabbit Society Chicago**, echoed the concern.

“Petland is one of the biggest sources of abandoned rabbits in the Chicago area. We take in rabbits who were sold sick, malnourished, or missexed—some arrive pregnant, others after weeks fending for themselves outdoors. Many rabbits arrive at our rescue never having received veterinary care. While Petland profits, rabbits suffer.”

Dawn Sailer, Founder of **Indiana House Rabbit Society**, described similar problems in her region.

“In Hamilton County, where Petland operates its Carmel store, the county shelter doesn’t accept rabbits. When people can’t surrender them, they dump them outside—and we’re the ones finding those frightened rabbits in fields and parking lots. Even when we’re at capacity, we cover the cost of spay or neuter and transfer them to shelters up north so they have a chance at survival.”

Humane World for Animals (formerly The Humane Society of the United States) added its support.

“A 2019 police raid of a Petland store in Virginia led to the discovery of 31 dead rabbits and a dead Yorkshire terrier puppy in the store freezer. Petland had acquired the baby bunnies from an atrocious facility where breeding rabbits were kept in filthy, tiny cages. Petland should do the responsible thing and stop selling rabbits,” said **John Goodwin**, senior managing director of puppy mills and equine protection for Humane World for Animals.

Petland operates nearly 90 franchise stores across more than a dozen states. The company has faced repeated criticism from animal-welfare advocates for sourcing from large-scale breeders and selling unweaned or unvetted animals. The Stop Rabbit Sales Coalition argues that ending rabbit sales would modernize Petland’s business model and align it with public expectations for humane retail practices.

The Rabbit.org Foundation and its partners are urging Petland to immediately end rabbit sales in all U.S. stores and transition to adoption partnerships with local rescues and shelters—a model already embraced by major retailers like Petco and PetSmart, which now host in-store adoption events instead of selling animals outright.

Supporters can help by signing and sharing the petition at change.org/petland-rabbits, contacting their local Petland franchise owners to voice concern, and choosing adoption over purchase when bringing a rabbit into their homes.

The Rabbit.org Foundation’s petition, **Demand Petland Stop Selling Rabbits**, has already garnered more than 5,000 signatures, signaling strong public support for humane retail reform.

For more information, visit rabbit.org/activism/petland.

About The Rabbit.org Foundation

The Rabbit.org Foundation is a nonprofit dedicated to improving rabbit welfare through education, advocacy, and collaboration with shelters, rescues, and veterinarians.