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ASPCA® Mission: Orange™
Target Community: Charleston County, S.C.
Backgrounder

Boasting a comfortable climate, great location, and historical charm, the Charleston area is one of the best places to live in the nation. Charleston County is comprised of the Cities of Charleston, Folly Beach, Isle of Palms, North Charleston and the Towns of Awendaw, James Island, Kiawah Island, Lincolnville, McClellanville, Meggett, Mount Pleasant, Rockville, Seabrook Island and Sullivan’s Island, and stretches some 35 miles inland, with 90 miles of oceanfront. With its diverse economic mix and rich, historic charm, the region boasts a multi-billion dollar visitor industry, one of the Southeast's most impressive medical hubs, a well-established base of national and international manufacturers, a large military presence, and abundant cultural opportunities.

The companion animal demographics of this mid-size community are representative of much of the nation. With an estimated population of 109,495 dogs and 117,918 cats, Charleston County struggles with many of the same issues surrounding homeless pets that face other communities. The county’s animal welfare organizations have a strong history of working together to effectively address the overpopulation and care of animals through disaster response efforts, low-cost spay/neuter initiatives, adoption campaigns and animal cruelty prevention and law enforcement.

2008 has been a significant year for animal protection in Charleston County. The area has welcomed the opening of two brand-new animal shelters, which include high-volume affordable spay/neuter clinics to significantly reduce the number of animals entering those shelters. With the resources of ASPCA® Mission: Orange™ added to this effort, the three partner agencies, Charleston Animal Society, Pet Helpers, and Humane Net, look forward to making an adoption guarantee for every at-risk animal not only attainable, but sustainable.

Charleston is focused on meeting the goals of ASPCA Mission: Orange, which include:

- Working collaboratively to develop a community plan to focus on programs, services, strategies and tactics that are targeted to reduce the population of homeless pets, increase the live release rate of adoptable animals, provide affordable and accessible spay/neuter services, promote adoption of shelter animals, and create a community where all animals are treated with respect and kindness;
- Striving to increase the community shelter adoption rate by at least 10% within the first year following the launch of ASPCA Mission: Orange;

- Moving toward a 75% live release rate for the community shelter partners by 2011; and
- Fostering a mutual respect for each other and ALL members of the partnership.

Charleston County Stats-at-a-Glance

Canines and Felines	Intakes		Euthanized		Live Exits		
	Year	Total #	# per 1,000 Population	Total #	# per 1,000 Population	Total #	# per 1,000 Population
	2005	11,144	34	7,301	22	4,093	12
	2006	10,526	32	6,634	20	3,019	9
	2007	10,668	32	6,810	21	3,140	9

The ASPCA will work with the Charleston partners to identify and implement proven effective strategies and tactics to address:

- Animal Placement
 - Meet Your Match™ adoption program training and implementation;
 - SAFER screening for aggression in dogs;
 - Off-Site adoption activities;
 - Improved and increased adoption training;
 - Transfers within community partnership;
 - Transports to areas outside the community where there is an appropriate and legitimate demand for animals;
 - Marketing campaigns to increase adoptions; and
 - Processes to enhance adoptions and reduce returns.
- Intake Reduction
 - Promoting and making available affordable microchips so that more pets can be reunited with their families;
 - Supporting Trap-Neuter-Return programs with training and assistance;
 - Encouraging regional animal shelters to sterilize animals prior to adoption; and
 - Working with animal control agencies to implement returning animals in the field through enhanced identification methods.
- Spay/Neuter
 - Support current and planned activities to offer affordable high-quality sterilization of animals;
 - Establish the Humane Alliance model in the Partner clinics to optimize the number of animals sterilized; and
 - Increase and enhance marketing campaigns to encourage people to sterilize their pets.

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