

The State of Animal Welfare in British Columbia

An assessment of the state of animal welfare in BC shows that in 2017, more animals are at risk of suffering than ever before. The BC SPCA is poised for leadership on a new scale to mitigate these problems and forge a bold path forward to create a more humane future for animals in British Columbia.

Farm animals top the list of animals impacted directly by people each year, with more than 120 million raised for food each year in the province, not including farmed fish. Animals used in research and kept for companionship account for a smaller proportion of the total, yet these animals also face serious threats to their well-being.

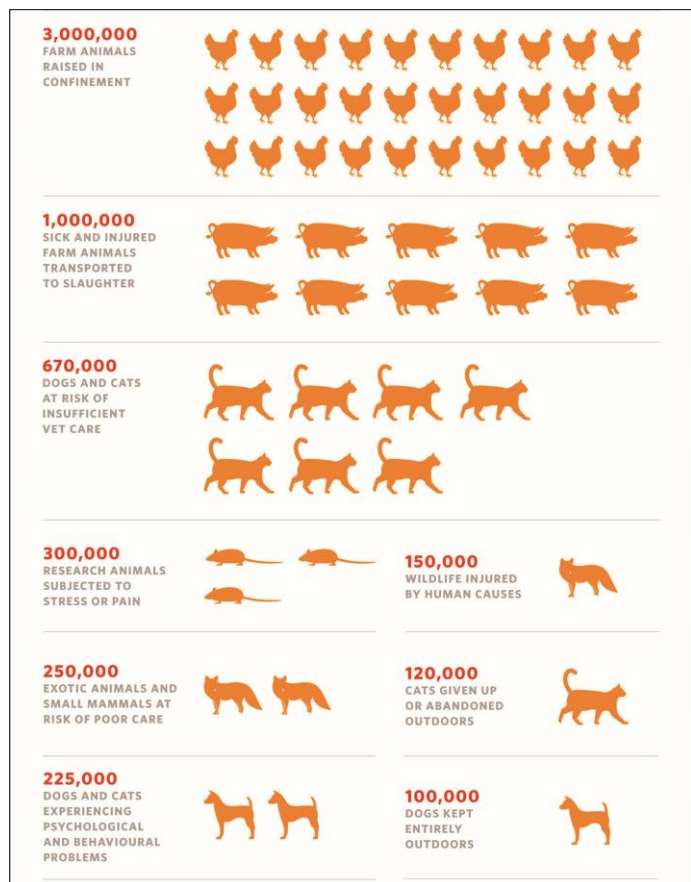
The issues deemed most pressing for intervention due to their severity and the numbers of animals involved annually are depicted here.

These threats to animal welfare persist due to human behavior that impacts animals both:

- **Directly**, through practices that directly cause harm or that deprive animals of their needs; and
- **Indirectly**, as consumers of products and services causing suffering and by creating adverse conditions in their environment.

These issues demonstrate **a breakdown in the human-animal bond** in three general scenarios:

1. **Commercially Exploited Animals**, where methods of housing or management are cost effective over humane (e.g. confinement housing, minimal veterinary care, and rough handling). Animal-related businesses operate with few standards and limited oversight, despite having significant impacts on the welfare of farm, companion and wild animals.
2. **Animal Guardians who are Unaware, Unconcerned, or Unable**. They may not see animals as sentient, or do not know how to meet their emotional or behavioural needs and how to provide them (e.g companion animals with unaddressed behaviour problems, farmers not providing pain control), or they may simply lack the financial resources to provide adequate care.
3. **Unwanted Animals**, including surplus animals where they are not wanted (e.g. feral cats, rabbits, and wild rodents), and animals no longer serving their purpose (e.g. pets with behaviour or health problems, culled farm animals or working animals)



The BC SPCA's Impact on the Lives of Animals

Past and current BC SPCA initiatives have already made tremendous progress in positively impacting the welfare of animals in BC, opening up opportunities for the society to pursue progressive change in new areas of focus.

An assessment of the BC SPCA's performance in impacting animal lives in BC demonstrates the following major accomplishments as of 2018:

- Reducing companion animal overpopulation through spay/neuter programs, resulting in a measurable drop in animals surrendered to BC animal shelters
- Providing care and assistance for 47,776 animals in distress and need annually through the BC SPCA's 36 branches
- Increasing the number of cats and dogs with permanent ID through the *BC Pet Registry* (more than 83,000 animals microchipped and registered to date)
- Improving standards of care for millions of farm animals through advocating for new industry Codes of Practice and providing incentives to farmers to meet higher standards through *SPCA Certified*
- Caring for more than 3,000 injured wildlife annually at WildARC, the BC SPCA's Wild Animal Rehabilitation Centre
- Responding to more than 8,000 complaints of animal cruelty annually, leading to 1,087 animals removed from abusive or neglectful situations annually and successful prosecutions of the worst cases
- Educating 12,000 young people and families annually through school outreach, summer camps and *Bark!* Magazine

These accomplishments are made possible by a strong, mature organizational structure and a steady growth in financial resources. Highlights of the BC SPCA's organizational health and development include:

- A highly engaged and dedicated employee and volunteer workforce driven by their passion
- Volunteer contributions from an estimated 4,000 volunteers giving more than 150,000 hours of time towards our the BC SPCA's mission annually
- Fundraising revenues growing strongly at 8% annually
- Carefully managed finances, with annual surpluses exceeding \$1 million in recent years
- An increase in the proportion of resources allocated to prevention-oriented activities like spay/neuter, veterinary hospitals, education and advocacy (presently 23%, up from 20% in 2013)
- A strong recognized brand and media presence, with social media visits growing at 19% annually