


**PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS**

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Keith E. Gammage
Fulton County Solicitor GeneralVia e-mail: 

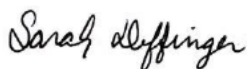
Dear Mr. Gammage:

We hope this letter finds you well. We are writing to request that your office (and the proper law-enforcement agency, as you deem appropriate) investigate and, as suitable, file criminal charges against those responsible for neglecting hamsters, gerbils, and a rabbit at Sun Pet Ltd. (hereinafter, "Sun Pet"), an animal dealer located at 3765 Zip Industrial Blvd. in Atlanta. We urge investigators to visit the facility with veterinarians who have expertise in exotic companion mammal health and welfare so that they can identify any animals in need of care and opine on the animals' condition and the living conditions there.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinarians documented the neglect in the attached report. On July 29, the veterinarians found that Sun Pet employees had failed to treat hamsters and a rabbit for swollen and crusted eyes, labored breathing, hair and weight loss, inflamed skin, and other painful conditions. In 21 enclosures, live hamsters existed among the corpses of the dead, with "pieces of deceased hamster" scattered throughout their food and bedding. In another, a hamster was being eaten alive by other severely stressed hamsters. The veterinarians also found that 10 underweight gerbils who had been unable to reach a source of water drank "voraciously" when finally allowed to drink, and boxes with hamsters inside them were "roughly" handled.

Action by the USDA doesn't preclude criminal liability under state law for federally licensed facilities and workers who perpetrate acts of cruelty to animals there. These omissions may violate O.C.G.A. § 16-12-4, which prohibits subjecting an animal to "physical pain, suffering, or death ... by any unjustifiable ... omission" or "fail[ing] to provide to [an] animal adequate ... water [or] sanitary conditions." If you'd like to learn more about the USDA's findings, please see the relevant contact information for the Riverdale, Maryland, office [here](#). Thank you for your time and consideration and for the difficult work that you do every day. Please let us know if we can assist you.

Sincerely,

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