



April 29, 2026

Craig R. Reinemeyer, DVM, PhD
CEO
East Tennessee Clinical Research
80 Copper Ridge Farm Road, Rockwood, TN 37854

Via e-mail: crr@easttenncr.com

Dear Dr. Reinemeyer,

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to urge you to reconsider East Tennessee Clinical Research's purchase of dogs from Ridglan Farms in light of the facility's documented animal-welfare failures and the rapidly changing federal landscape surrounding the use of dogs in experimentation.

As you know, Ridglan agreed to surrender its Wisconsin commercial breeder's license by July 1, 2026, to avoid felony-level animal-cruelty charges. Continuing to purchase dogs from a facility under such scrutiny risks tying East Tennessee Clinical Research to a supplier whose practices have already drawn significant public concern and regulatory attention. At a time when ethics, scientific modernization, and accountability are increasingly central to institutional credibility, this association poses reputational and strategic risks.

Conditions documented at Ridglan raise concerns warranting serious reflection by any company considering continued purchases from the facility. Witness testimony and inspection findings describe dogs housed in crowded, industrial conditions that can lead to both physical injury and profound psychological distress. A former employee testified that dogs' prolapsed eyelid glands ("cherry eye") were cut off with scissors without anesthesia or pain relief, and that untrained personnel were permitted to perform such procedures. Reports also describe untreated wounds, swollen feet from wire flooring, and chronic confinement that prevents dogs from engaging in normal movement and social interaction. Association with a supplier engaged in these practices carries clear ethical and reputational implications for downstream institutions.

East Tennessee Clinical Research's own compliance record underscores the importance of exercising heightened scrutiny in supplier relationships. Federal inspection reports show that the company has been cited for 9 Animal Welfare Act violations over the past 3 years, including failing to provide prompt veterinary care to a dog repeatedly observed with blood in her feces. The dog had pale gums, was lethargic, and had not eaten in 24 hours. Inspectors have also issued multiple citations related to deficiencies in the performance of the company's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)—failures that are particularly concerning, given that IACUCs form the cornerstone of animal-welfare oversight in laboratories and are responsible for ensuring that

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- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

animal use complies with federal standards and pain and distress are minimized whenever possible.

We are also aware that you have publicly expressed strong support for Ridglan and described East Tennessee Clinical Research as a “loyal” customer. However, several statements offered in defense of the facility—including assertions that beagles tolerate intensive confinement and that withholding pain relief during cherry-eye procedures is not cruel—appear to rely on outdated assumptions that are increasingly at odds with contemporary veterinary standards and public expectations regarding the treatment of dogs. In light of the evidence, these characterizations warrant reconsideration.

Equally important, federal agencies—including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health—are actively shifting policies and expectations away from reliance on dogs and other animals in testing and toward human-relevant, state-of-the-art methodologies. As these changes accelerate, companies that remain closely tied to animal experimentation may find themselves increasingly out of step with regulatory priorities, funding trends, and client expectations.

This moment presents an opportunity for East Tennessee Clinical Research to demonstrate leadership and foresight. Reconsidering purchases from Ridglan could be a meaningful step toward aligning the company’s practices with the direction of federal science policy—and with the growing demand for more predictive testing approaches that better reflect human biology.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alka Chandna".

Alka Chandna, Ph.D.
Vice President
Laboratory Oversight & Special Cases