



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

A Happy Easter for Bunnies

Singapore, 1 April 2011 – In another joint public education initiative, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and the House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS) caution viewers against rushing into getting a rabbit, simply because they look adorable after watching the animal's cute and wonderful antics in the upcoming animation HOP (which features the Easter Bunny's teenage son, who heads to Hollywood, determined to become a drummer in a rock 'n' roll band).

Both the SPCA and HRSS are concerned over the increased enthusiasm to buy a real rabbit. The HRSS and SPCA are anticipating that pet stores in Singapore may stock up on rabbits during the Easter season, with the objective of attracting more buyers as children naturally, are drawn to the cuteness of these furry creatures.

President of HRSS, Ms. Jacelyn Heng commented that, “rabbits and children are not a good mix, as rabbits require plenty of care and maintenance that children cannot be expected to commit to for the duration of the animal’s life.” Ms. Heng adds, “The exuberant and excitable nature of a child is far too stressful for the sensitive nature of a rabbit and unlike the impression that people have of rabbits being passive and cuddly, they are, in fact, shy and easily frightened creatures that do not take well to being held.”

Rabbits liken the feeling of being held to being caught by a predator and they will often bite and scratch to defend themselves if new pet owners are unprepared in their approach to caring for their rabbit. As a result, novices may be turned off and “set free” their pet bunnies to an uncertain fate in parks and reservoirs.

In 2010, a total of 481 rabbits found abandoned or given up, was taken in by the SPCA. Ms. Deirdre Moss, Executive Director of SPCA said, "It is the prospect of rabbits bought on impulse or as festive gifts that worries the SPCA. People assume rabbits only live for a couple of years, but they have a life span of eight to 12 years which is comparable to cats and some dogs."

The SPCA adds that most investigations of cruelty involving rabbits, show them isolated in small cages along corridors with only the basics provided. In extreme cases, not even water is available, or the animals are found to be suffering from neglect and malnourishment through inadequate or improper diet. Cruelty to animals is a crime, including abandonment of one's pet, and is punishable by law. Anyone who is found guilty can be imprisoned for up to 12 months, fined up to \$10,000, or both.

While the myth of the Easter Bunny does contribute to the fun of Easter holiday, HRSS and SPCA urge the public not to let live bunnies suffer during this joyous occasion. People should consider carefully before deciding to own a pet rabbit and also be reminded that there are plenty of loving rabbits available at SPCA and HRSS foster homes waiting for the right owner.

Note to Editor: Please refer to Annex A for Easter Bunny poster.

About Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is the first registered animal welfare charity in Singapore. The two main objectives of the SPCA are to promote kindness to animals and to prevent cruelty to animals. Relying mainly on donations from the public and fundraising, the Society provides various animal welfare services to the community including a 24-hour emergency service, cruelty investigation, a sterilisation voucher programme for strays as well as running an animal shelter for abused and abandoned pets and strays. For more information, visit <http://www.sPCA.org.sg>

About the House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS)

The House Rabbit Society of Singapore (HRSS) is an all-volunteer, non-profit organisation dedicated to rabbit welfare and awareness. The HRSS runs a fostering programme to rescue and re-home abandoned rabbits and participates in numerous public events to educate the general public about rabbit care and behaviour. For more information, visit <http://www.hrss.net>

ANNEX A



**Rabbits are
NOT for Easter**
我不是复活节兔

**A rabbit is a 10-year commitment.
Please think twice before you buy.**

饲养兔子是一项**10年**的承诺和义务。在购买前请务必三思。