



FACT SHEET

THE AMERICAN GREYHOUND RACING INDUSTRY

HUMANE ISSUES

What problems are associated with the American greyhound racing industry?

There are several problems that are associated with the American greyhound racing industry. The largest problem is the sheer number of dogs the industry requires in order to operate. This demand results in the breeding of tens of thousands of greyhounds each year, and the subsequent disposal of dogs who are not profitable as racers. Racing greyhounds are routinely caged for long periods of time, and many suffer serious injuries while racing. Finally, because greyhound racing is a profit-driven industry, the welfare of the dogs is often compromised.

How many greyhounds are killed each year?

Because many states do not keep records on the ultimate fate of racing greyhounds, there are no verifiable statistics on the number of dogs killed each year. Estimates range from 7,500ⁱ to 20,000.ⁱⁱ

How are greyhounds killed when they are no longer profitable as racers?

Most greyhounds are likely euthanized by private veterinarians. However, racing dogs have been disposed of by nearly every method imaginable. Since 1990, there have been more than 80 media documented cases of greyhound abuse, collectively involving thousands of dogs shot, starved, bludgeoned, electrocuted, and sold into research laboratories.ⁱⁱⁱ

How many greyhounds suffer serious injuries while racing?

Because many states do not keep adequate records, there are no national statistics on the number of greyhounds injured each year while racing. However, based on the records that are available it is likely that thousands of greyhounds are seriously injured each year nationwide. For example, in 2002, 172 greyhounds were injured while racing in Massachusetts, with an average recovery time of more than 6 months.^{iv} At one dog track in Wisconsin in 2002, 412 greyhound injuries were reported.^v

What kinds of injuries do racing greyhounds commonly suffer?

The most common injuries are bone fractures and soft tissue injuries. Other, less common injuries include spinal injuries, seizures, and death from cardiac arrest. Many injuries occur when dogs are bumped by other dogs.^{vi}

Is it true that unprofitable greyhounds are sometimes sold to research laboratories where they undergo invasive procedures?

Yes. In April 2000, a Wisconsin greyhound trainer was caught selling more than 1,000 former racing greyhounds to Guidant Corporation research laboratories, where they were used to test pacemakers before being killed.^{vii} In 1998, Colorado State University admitted that more than 2,600 ex-racing greyhounds had been donated to the university over a three-year period. According to published reports, roughly half of these dogs were used in terminal teaching labs, where they were not revived

after undergoing practice surgeries. The remaining dogs were either killed immediately upon arrival, used in anatomy classes, in dental experiments, or to test experimental treatments for injured dogs.^{viii}

Do greyhound trainers sometimes give greyhounds performance-enhancing drugs to cause them to run faster?

Yes. In May 2002, authorities from the Wisconsin Department of Justice launched an investigation into allegations that a greyhound trainer was receiving boldenone, an anabolic steroid, at his home via U.S. mail. After placing an undercover surveillance camera in the kennel where the trainer worked, authorities caught him injecting at least 11 greyhounds with a foreign substance over a two-day period.^{ix}

In a separate case, 119 greyhounds tested positive for cocaine at Florida racetracks between 2001 and 2003.^x Because the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering does not investigate how drug-positive dogs ingested cocaine, it is impossible to determine whether these were attempts to alter the outcome of races. However, according to a regulatory agency in the United Kingdom, even small amounts of drugs such as cocaine may affect a greyhound's performance.^{xi}

Is it true that greyhounds are often riddled with ticks and other parasites?

Yes. Many greyhound adoption groups report that they regularly receive racing greyhounds with severe infestations of fleas, ticks, and internal parasites.

How much time do racing greyhounds spend in their cages?

Greyhounds are individually caged in stacked crates for 18-22 hours per day. Shredded newspaper or thin carpet is generally used for bedding.

Is it true that greyhounds are fed raw meat that has been rejected for human consumption by the USDA?

Yes. According to *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, an industry handbook, the primary sources for meat used to feed greyhounds in the United States are "abattoirs that have commercial products of 4-D meat." It goes on to add, "The 'D' stands for dying, diseased, disabled and dead" livestock. Among the problems that can be traced to feeding this meat to greyhounds are false drug positives due to residues that greyhounds ingest when consuming 4-D meat. Also, as a result of eating this substandard raw meat, racing greyhounds are continually exposed to serious pathogens such as *Salmonella* and pathogenic *e.coli*.^{xii} Even the mink ranching industry has discouraged the use of 4-D meat, due to outbreaks of Aleutian Disease and Transmissible Mink Encephalopathy, a neurological disease that causes gray matter in the brain to be riddled with holes.^{xiii}

Why is "4-D" meat used to feed racing greyhounds?

According to *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, it is used because "it is the most economically feasible at this time."

But isn't this the same meat that is used to make pet food?

Yes. However, 4-D meat used to make pet food is cooked to remove disease-producing bacteria. Racing greyhounds are fed 4-D meat raw because many trainers believe this causes them to run faster.

Do racing greyhounds compete in extreme weather conditions?

Yes. Greyhounds race on the hottest days of summer and the coldest days of winter.

Is it true that greyhounds are sometimes trained with live animals, such as rabbits?

Yes. In 2002 a greyhound breeder and owner had his state racing license temporarily suspended after he was caught using domestic rabbits to train his greyhounds. At least 180 rabbits were found at his kennel in rural Arizona.^{xiv}

Are greyhounds sometimes transported in a dangerous manner?

Yes. Because greyhounds typically race at several racetracks during their racing career, professional haulers often transport large numbers of greyhounds from one racetrack to another. During this process, greyhounds are usually transported in cramped conditions, and in some cases undergo cross-country trips in unventilated, aluminum trailers or rental vans. According to *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, transportation over long distances can cause greyhounds to suffer from dehydration, weight variation, and exhaustion, and recommends administering the drugs Roserpine and Lomotil so that travel-worn dogs will be able to perform.^{xv}

In recent years, multiple cases have been reported by the media of greyhounds dying while in transit. For example, in 2003 two greyhounds died while being transported from Oregon to Oklahoma.^{xvi}

How exactly is the welfare of the dogs compromised by the fact that greyhound racing is a profit-driven industry?

The daily care racing greyhounds receive, including diet and veterinary care, is dependent on the economic success or failure of individual kennels. Feeding greyhounds raw 4-D meat that has been condemned by the USDA for human consumption is a good example of how kennels cut costs to maximize their profit margin. Once a greyhound suffers a serious injury or is no longer fast enough to be profitable, that dog becomes a financial liability, and must be replaced by another greyhound with greater profit potential.

If greyhound trainers depend on their dogs to earn a living, why would they mistreat them?

To the racing industry, greyhounds are short-term investments. As with all investments, making a profit depends on securing the highest possible return while incurring the least amount of cost. Except for a handful of champion dogs, racing greyhounds are disposable, and there are always young greyhounds available to replace dogs who are no longer profitable.

GREYHOUND RACING: QUICK FACTS

How many greyhounds are required to operate a commercial racetrack?

On average, 1,000 greyhounds are required for the operation of a commercial greyhound racetrack.

How many racing greyhounds are bred each year, and how many of these greyhounds actually make it to the racetrack?

In 2000, 34,141 greyhounds were bred as potential racers. The same year, 26,464 greyhounds were individually registered to race at 14 – 17 months of age.^{xvii}

How many greyhound racetracks are currently operating in the United States?

There are currently 46 operational greyhound racetracks in the United States.

In how many states is greyhound racing illegal?

Greyhound racing is currently illegal in 34 states.

Do greyhounds typically spend their entire racing careers at the same track?

No. Generally, racing greyhounds compete at several tracks, in multiple states, during their careers.

How many states have outlawed dog racing in recent years?

Greyhound racing has been outlawed in 8 states since 1993.

How many people are employed by the American greyhound racing industry?

According to a study funded by the dog racing industry, the greyhound racing industry accounts for approximately 30,000 jobs related to the operation of racetracks and other agricultural operations nationwide.^{xviii}

GREYHOUND ADOPTION

How many greyhounds are adopted into loving homes each year?

The exact number of greyhounds adopted into loving homes each year is not known, and estimates vary from 12,000^{xix} to 18,000^{xx}. What is certain is that not all greyhounds are adopted, and thousands are killed each year when they are no longer profitable as racers.

How can I adopt a retired racing greyhound?

To learn more about adopting a greyhound and to find a local adoption organization in your area, visit our online adoption directory at www.grey2kusa.org.

SUBSIDIZING GREYHOUND RACING

How have state lawmakers subsidized dog racing?

Across the country, state lawmakers have given wealthy dog track owners millions of dollars in tax cuts, direct subsidies, and the authorization to conduct other forms of gambling at their racetracks. For example, Florida lawmakers gave the dog racing industry a \$14 million annual tax break in 2000. Racetrack owners have used this legislative assistance to artificially perpetuate greyhound racing.

Are racetrack owners still asking for handouts?

Yes. Across the country, dog track owners are constantly seeking legislative assistance.

Why do dog tracks want slot machines and other electronic gambling devices?

Video slot machines, sometimes called Video Lottery Terminals, are considered by experts to be the most addictive – and lucrative – form of gambling known to man. According to clinical psychologist Robert Hunter, electronic gambling devices are the “distilled essence of gambling.”^{xxi}

Why is GREY2K USA opposed to the legalization of slot machines at dog tracks?

Proposals to legalize slot machines at greyhound racetracks almost always tie dog racing to slot machines in two ways. First, a percentage of slot machine profits are used to subsidize greyhound racing, thereby propping up this cruel industry. Also, the racetrack is required to conduct a certain number of greyhound races each year in order to operate slot machines. Essentially, greyhound racing becomes inextricably linked with, and serves as a loss-leader for, casino gambling.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

Can increased regulation of the industry solve all of the problems associated with greyhound racing?

No. While GREY2K USA does lobby for stronger laws to protect racing greyhounds, including record-keeping laws and adoption trust funds, increased regulation can not address many of the industry-wide problems associated with dog racing. The industry cannot exist without breeding and disposing of large numbers of greyhounds. Also, because this is a profit-driven industry, kennel revenues will always trump the welfare of the dogs.

If greyhound racing were outlawed, would the breed disappear?

No. Greyhounds have existed for thousands of years, and are even depicted in ancient Greek and Egyptian art. By contrast, organized greyhound racing has existed for less than 100 years. Greyhounds were here long before organized dog racing was invented, and will be here long after it is outlawed.

Will ending greyhound racing jeopardize the lives of the greyhounds that are currently in the racing system?

If it is done in a responsible manner, no. However, it is important that any proposal to outlaw active dog tracks includes a well-conceived plan to find homes for any greyhounds that may be displaced.

What about the people who work in the greyhound racing industry?

Any proposal to outlaw dog racing in a state with active racetracks should include, if possible, a provision that ensures racetrack workers receive assistance in finding other employment. However, just because an industry provides jobs does not mean it should be allowed in our society. There are many other industries – such as organized cockfighting, child labor, or sweatshops – that are outlawed in most states despite the fact that they would provide jobs for the local economy.

Are most greyhound trainers bad people that enjoy abusing their dogs?

Of course not. Greyhound racing should be outlawed because the American racing system cannot exist without breeding and disposing of large numbers of dogs, and because the economics of the industry require that profits be valued above the welfare of the dogs.

ABOUT GREY2K USA

Who supports GREY2K USA?

GREY2K USA is a national, non-profit greyhound protection organization with supporters in all 50 U.S. states. Our volunteers come from all walks of life - business people, lawyers, construction workers, artists, animal shelter workers, and many others. Our common thread is concern over this state-sanctioned cruelty of "man's best friend" and the endless killing that is a part of it.

How can I help GREY2K USA end the cruelty of dog racing?

It will take the support of everyone who cares about greyhounds to launch a multi-state initiative to fight the network of breeders, trainers, track operators, gamblers and state governments who profit from the institution of dog racing. To date, volunteers nationwide have contributed their time, money, and talents to help end this cruelty. To find out how you can help, visit us online at www.grey2kusa.org.

Is GREY2K USA opposed to horse racing?

No. There are a number of distinctions between horse racing and dog racing. First, it is much easier to breed and dispose of large numbers of greyhounds than horses. Second, horses can have a residual value as riding horses when their racing careers are over. Finally, there is often more money available for the care of race horses than racing greyhounds.

Is GREY2K USA opposed to other forms of gambling, such as slot machines?

No. GREY2K USA is only opposed to the legalization of other forms of gambling when it would serve to prop up or artificially perpetuate greyhound racing.

6/29/04

ⁱ National Greyhound Association, *Boston Herald*/J.M. Lawrence, November 11, 1999

ⁱⁱ Greyhound Protection League

ⁱⁱⁱ *Greyhound Network News*

^{iv} Massachusetts State Racing Commission

^v *Greyhound Network News*, Winter 2002-03

^{vi} *Associated Press*/Jennifer Peter, January 31, 2003

^{vii} *Greyhound Network News*, Summer 2000

^{viii} Rocky Mountain News/Dan Luzadder, June 7, 1998

^{ix} Wisconsin Department of Administration, Investigative Summary Case #302005 (Amended), May 22, 2002; *Associated Press*, September 19, 2002

^x *Tampa Tribune*/Alan Snel, May 3, 2004

^{xi} National Greyhound Racing Club, http://www.ngrc.org.uk/pages/about_us/drugs_2000.asp

^{xii} Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD, James R. Gannon, BVSc, FACVSc, A. Morrie Craig, PhD, *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, 119

^{xiii} *Fur Animal Research*, Volume 11, Number 4, December 2003; *Fur Rancher Magazine*, Volume 84, Issue No. 3, 2003

^{xiv} *Arizona Republic*/Mary Jo Pitzl, October 16, 2002

^{xv} Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD, James R. Gannon, BVSc, FACVSc, A. Morrie Craig, PhD, *Care of the Racing Greyhound*, 351

^{xvi} *Oregonian*/Stuart Tomlinson, February 3, 2004

^{xvii} American Greyhound Council

^{xviii} "Economic Benefits of the Greyhound Racing Industry in the United States." Racing Resource Group, Inc. 1998

^{xix} Greyhound Protection League

^{xx} National Greyhound Association

^{xxi} *National Gambling Impact Study Commission Final Report*, 2-5