

SETTING PUPPY MILL

DOGS FREE



RICKY BOBBY GOT A NEW LIFE—and wheels—when an HSUS team rescued him and 57 other dogs from a North Carolina puppy mill. The rescuers initially found the miniature dachshund dragging himself around by his front legs in a filthy kennel. His adopter built him a cart that allows him to run and romp in the grass.

In 2013, the Animal Rescue Team freed 724 dogs and puppies from the squalor, sickness and neglect of mass breeding operations. To reduce demand for puppy mill dogs, an HSUS investigation exposed the perils of buying animals at flea markets and pet stores, where many puppies look healthy but actually carry diseases. At the same time, we helped Polly's Pet Shop in Texas and

three other stores switch from selling dogs to offering animals from local shelters.

Years of work by The HSUS led to a major breakthrough in September, when the USDA issued a rule requiring large-scale breeders who sell animals online to be licensed and federally inspected. A previous loophole had allowed unlicensed mill operators to sell puppies over the Internet to buyers who often assumed they were dealing with small family breeders. Now puppy mills can't so easily evade federal oversight, says Kathleen Summers, director of outreach and research for The HSUS's Stop Puppy Mills Campaign. "Hopefully this will enable them to get the big dealers who dropped their USDA licenses but still sell online."