

animals are good for us
be good to them
we care





Our pets are companion animals.

They bring joy to people, they are part of our families, they teach us to care, they keep us active, they assist us and can even save lives.

Cats and dogs are the most popular companion animals, but there are others you might not have thought of:

- small mammals: such as rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, ferrets, etc.
- fish: either tropical or cold water
- birds: such as parrots, monk parakeets, domestic canaries, etc.
- exotic species: such as reptiles, etc.

However, more often than not companion animals are so much more than just pets.....







They are family

They are a member of the family and, like a fun-loving little brother or a comforting mother, they bring joy to their owners, provide emotional support, reduce feelings of stress or loneliness, and increase social contact.

They teach us to care

Pets can help children and adults alike to learn to be responsible and have a sense of caring for others. Looking after pets develops good self-esteem and leads to positive emotional development.

They keep us active and well

Taking our dogs for regular walks not only keeps them healthy but it provides us with a daily exercise routine. Studies¹ show that pet owners require fewer visits to the doctor and generally have lower blood pressure levels.

They assist us

Trained assistance dogs help people such as the physically disabled, blind and deaf, as well as autistic children to gain more freedom and independence. They help with any number of daily tasks such as opening and closing doors, helping people undress, and even emptying the washing machine.

They save lives

Rescue dogs are trained to perform a number of highly specialised tasks such as searching for survivors and victims in disasters, e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, avalanches, etc. Every year rescue dogs save thousands of lives across the world

These are just some of the ways in which animals are good for us, but how can we be good to them?

Keep them well-nourished

Provide pets with a suitable diet. Nearly 50%² of all dogs and cats have excess weight and obesity can be as deadly as malnutrition. Appropriate veterinary treatment – including weight management – is often the only way to prevent irreversible harm such as diabetes or arthritis.

Keep them fit

Ensure your pet gets regular exercise. This is not only important for their physical



development but it helps ward off obesity and also allows pets to express their normal instinctive behavioural traits such as exploration, using their senses and greeting members of the same species. Don't forget they need mental stimulation too – they like to play!

Keep reproduction under control

Spay or neuter your pets. There are too many homeless animals who often end up malnourished or maltreated. The best way to curb this issue is to spay and neuter your cats and dogs.

Keep them safe

Your pet needs a suitable and safe environment in which to live. Find out what is appropriate for your pet. Keep an identification tag on your pet. When travelling with pets preparations must, of course, include immunisations required by law but where required these details should also be entered in an EU Pet Passport. Your vet will be able to provide you with comprehensive information on this topic.

Keep them healthy

Provide veterinary care for your pet. Keep their vaccinations up to date and make sure they have regular checkups. Some diseases may be incurable but with a timely diagnosis by a veterinarian and appropriate treatment, our pets can have a longer and better life.

No matter how well they are cared for, animals can still get sick and need medicines. Prevention programmes, including vaccination, protect pets ahead of time from a number of diseases, which in turn protect people too. One such example is rabies, which has already been eradicated in a number of European countries through effective vaccination.

Maintaining the ability to care for our pets through the responsible use of medicines ensures good health for our pets and helps ensure better health for us, their caregivers. The animal health industry is dedicated to continuous innovation to identify new solutions to ensure better health for pets and for us, and to the active promotion of responsible pet ownership for a healthier world.

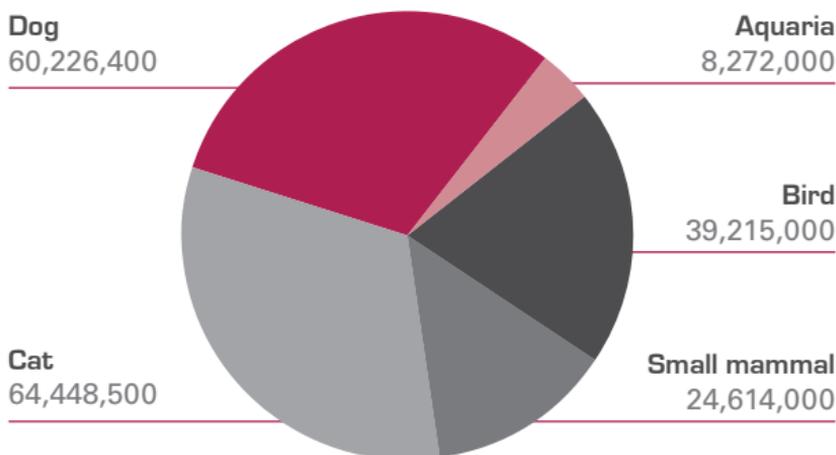
1. Source: FECAVA - www.fecava.org
2. Source: BfT (Germany)



Companion animals in numbers:

- 70 million homes in the EU have at least one companion animal

Total European Union: 196,775,900



Source: FEDIAF facts & figures 2010

- In the EU there are more than 195 million companion animals, including:
 - 64 million cats;
 - 60 million dogs;
 - 39 million cage birds;
 - 24 million small mammals;
 - 8 million ornamental fish (number of aquaria).

Worldwide, there are **223** million dogs and **220** million cats. (These figures exclude strays).

Source: Vetnosis Ltd.

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