



**CHOOSE
HEALTH**

SUPPORTED BY ROYAL CANIN

**6th IDHW In Person Meeting
1st June 2026**

What I'll share with you today

PURPOSE

- Update about Royal Canin Choose Health initiative and global Choose Health Coalition

OUTPUT

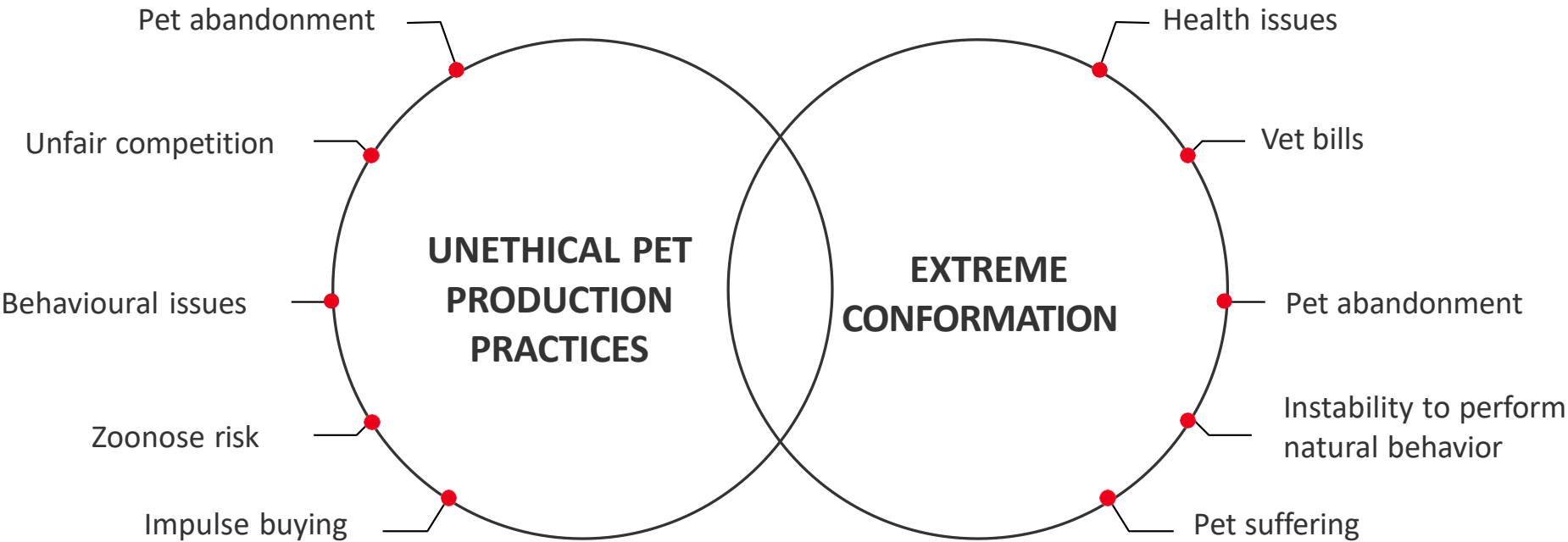
- Spark your interest in learning more and getting involved in driving this action forward



**FOR DECADES,
TRENDS HAVE BEEN INFLUENCING
HOW PETS LOOK AND
THEIR HEALTH CAN SUFFER.**



TODAY TWO BIG ISSUES ARE GROWING: WITH A HUGE COST FOR PET HEALTH



BEYOND THE TRAGIC COST FOR PETS THERE ARE IMPACTS ACROSS THE ENTIRE ECOSYSTEM



- Risk of breeds banned
- Poor welfare
- Pet homelessness



- Heavy regulations
- Lack of recognition
- Unfair competition
- Tarnished image



- Dealing with unnecessary issues
- Difficult conversation and ethical choices
- Difficult relationship with breeders



- Emotional & financial costs
- Mismatch and disappointment



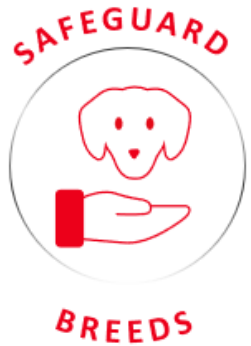
THAT'S WHY WE CREATED THE
CHOOSE HEALTH INITIATIVE

A COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE
TO SUPPORT A DECLINE IN **UNETHICAL**
PET PRODUCTION PRACTICES &
EXTREME CONFORMATION

BY PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE
BREEDING AND INCREASE
RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP



Structured around 3 pillars to drive change



Improve the health and welfare of breeds



Make the breeding profession sustainable and recognized



Promote responsible acquisition and educate on specific health sensitivities



A collaborative initiative bringing together the power of diverse representation



Our global Choose Health Coalition partners



ÉLODIE MOREL

Global Pro Ecosystem Lead



ISHTAR SCHNEIDER

Global External Comms Lead



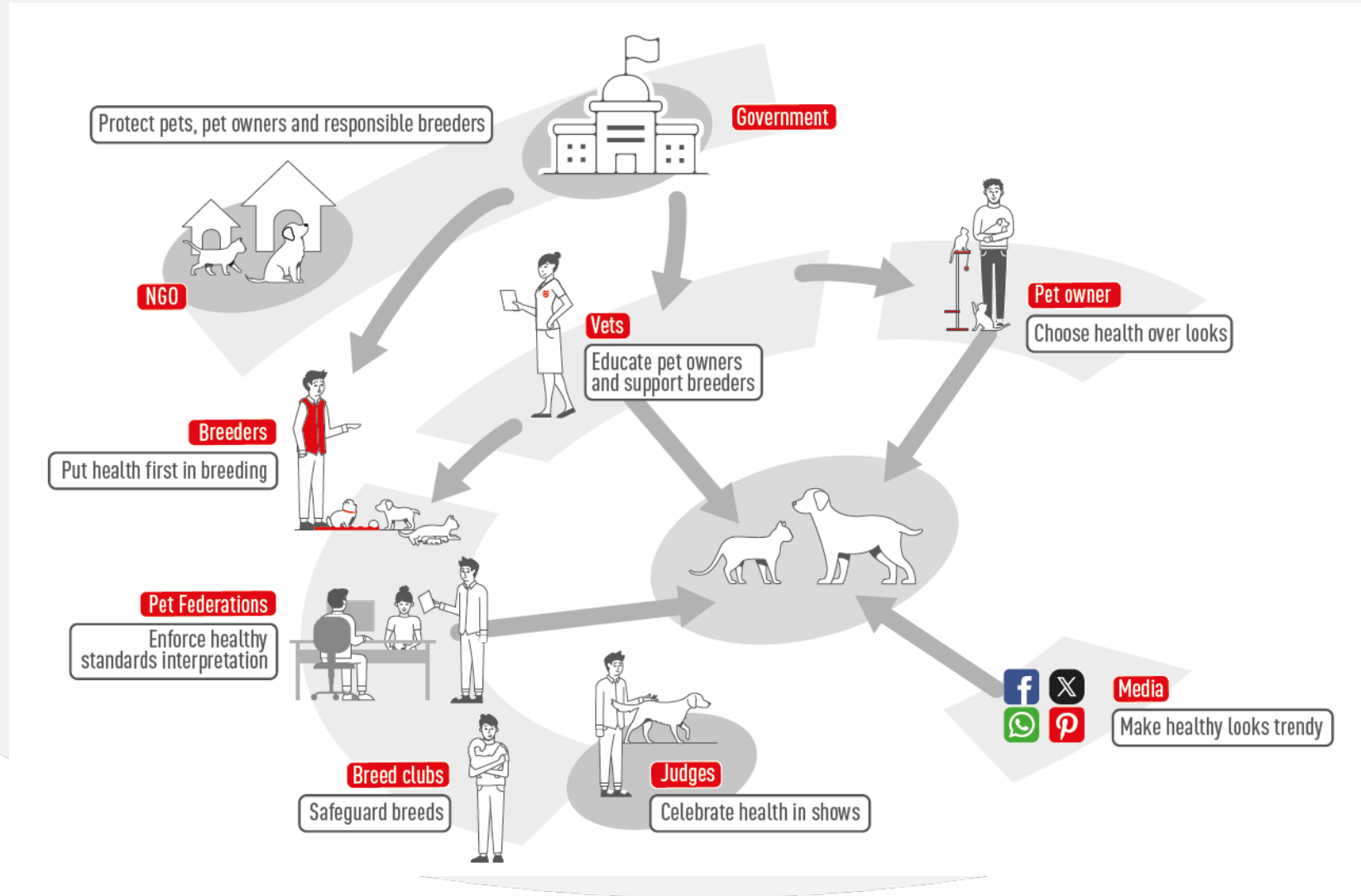
CHARLOTTE VENET

Global Brand Comms Lead

Our Royal Canin leads



An initiative involving the whole ecosystem



Issue is complex, but action needed now more than ever



**Royal Kennel Club
expands RFG scheme with
free health testing
available at Crufts 2026
for an additional 14 breeds**



Commission welcomes provisional agreement
on new rules to improve welfare of dogs and
cats

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**Petition to strip Crufts
2026 'Best in Show' winner
of title racks up 15,000
signatures in 24 hours**



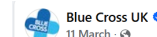
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Why You Should Never Buy a Clumber Spaniel



Polly Foreman

Published on 8 March, 2026



Blue Cross UK

11 March · 🌐

We are saddened to see that Crufts 2026 Best in Show has been awarded to Bruin, a Clumber Spaniel with extremely exaggerated features. ❤️

Traits such as severe drooping eyes are linked to irritation, which can lead to infection and chronic discomfort. It doesn't have to be this way.

Awarding top prizes to dogs with extreme features rewards breeding practices that directly cause health issues. Humans have the power to selectively breed healthy dogs, and it is our responsibility to our best friends to do this.

At Blue Cross, we love all dogs, and we don't believe any dog should be born to suffer.



The Coalition & baseline report

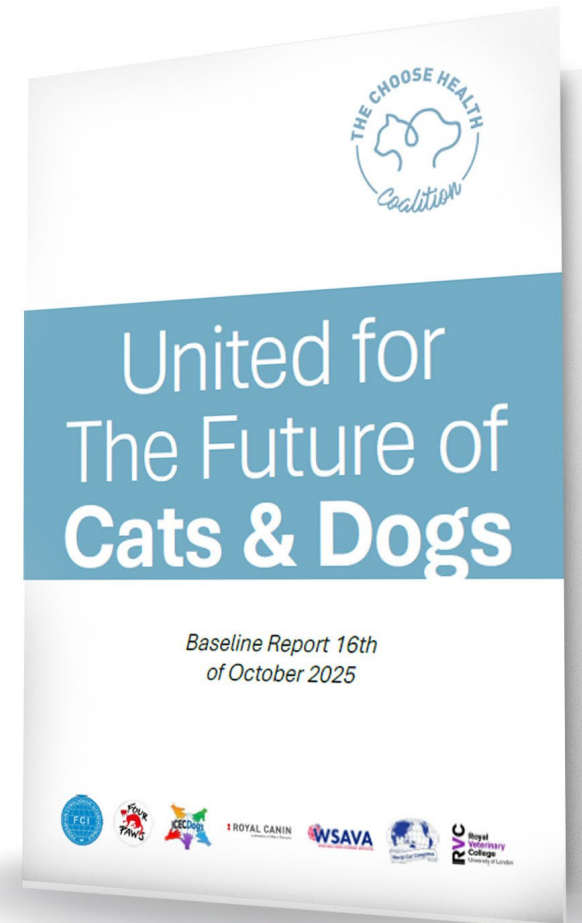
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What's in it?

- **Key findings from existing publications** on extreme conformation and low welfare pet production practices
- Our **position and ambition** as a coalition
- <https://www.royalcanin.com/uk/choosehealth>



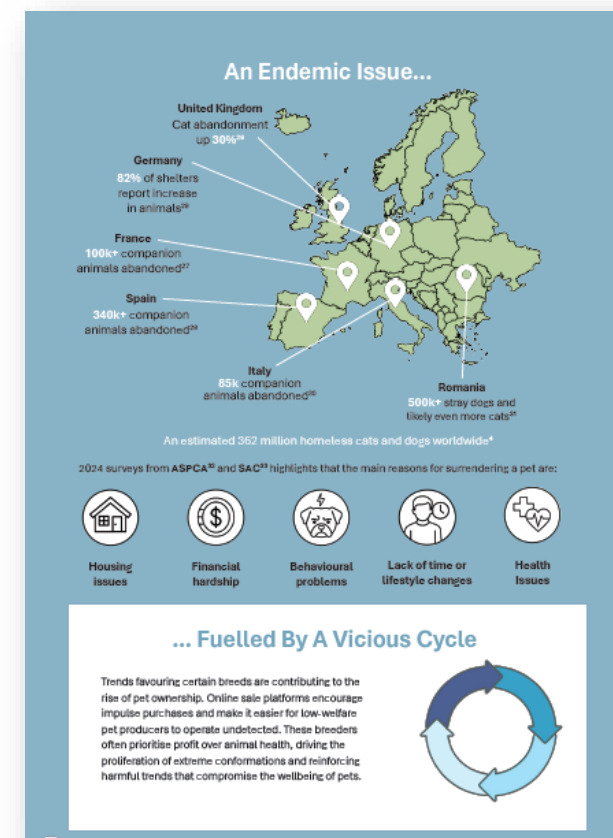
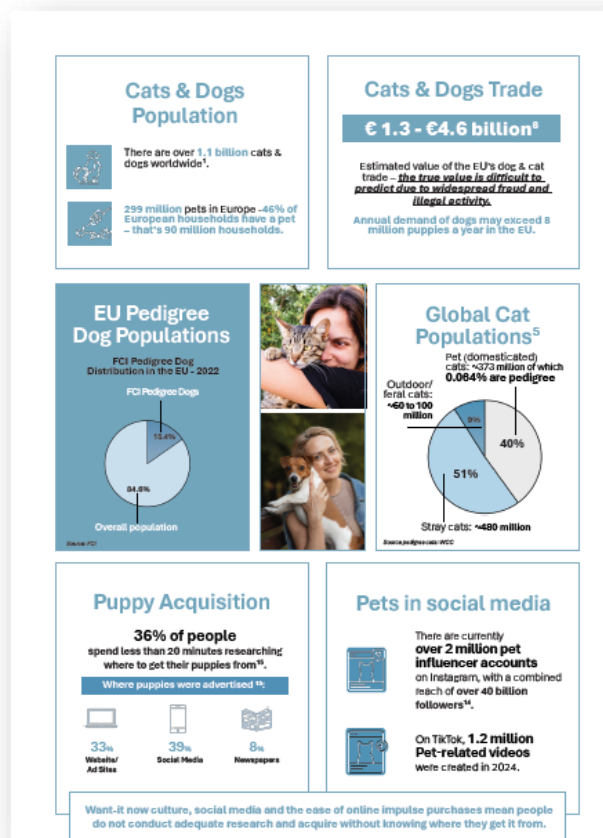
Baseline report content:

Visual snapshot of the context

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Key findings **from the report**

According to ICECDOgs, extreme conformations describe physical traits that **don't exist in nature but that are heavily shaped by human preferences** and that cause **significant health and welfare issues**.



Examples of Extreme Conformations & Affected Breeds



Brachycephaly

Description: Shortened skull leading to breathing difficulties and risk of brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome or BOAS

Examples of Breeds Affected: Pug, French Bulldog, English Bulldog, Boston Terrier, Boxer



Excessive Skin Folds

Description: Deep skin folds can cause infections, dermatitis and eye issues due to trapped moisture and debris

Examples of Breeds Affected: Shar Pei, English Bulldog, Neapolitan Mastiff



Protruding or Bulging Eyes

Description: Prominent eyes are prone to injury, ulcers, and dryness due to inadequate eyelid coverage

Examples of Breeds Affected: Pug, Shih Tzu, Pekingese, Boston Terrier



Sloped Back

Description: Exaggerated angulation can lead to hip dysplasia, arthritis and spinal problems

Examples of Breeds Affected: German Shepherd dog



Extreme Dwarfism or Gigantism

Description: Excessive size variation can result in joint problems, heart issues and shortened lifespan

Examples of Breeds Affected: St Bernard, Great Dane



Turned In or Out Eyelids

Description: Dogs are deliberately bred for abnormal eyelid conformation, leading to the turning in or out of eyelids

Examples of Breed Affected: Shar Pei, Chow Chow, Neapolitan Mastiff





Baseline report content: Coalition commitments and positions

Our Response as the Choose Health Coalition

This is why Royal Canin formed the Choose Health Coalition in November 2024, bringing together a select group of organizations: Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI), FOUR PAWS, ICECDogs (International Collaborative on Extreme Conformations in Dogs), Royal Veterinary College (RVC), World Cat Congress (WCC), and World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA).

Each of these partners is already engaged in initiatives aimed at promoting more welfare-friendly pet production practices and at reducing extreme conformation. Through the coalition, we will leverage the collective knowledge, experience, and ongoing activities of our members to create a cohesive program that will drive meaningful change for pet health and welfare and the wider pet ecosystem.

As a group, we will raise awareness of low welfare pet production practices and extreme conformation and use our shared networks and expertise to drive change among key audiences.



Our Ambition

Act together to raise awareness and ultimately achieve:

- A notable increase in high welfare pet production practices, within the following scope:
 - Dogs and cats only
 - Aspects related to acquisition and production
 - On a global scale.
- A notable global decrease (50% reduction within five years) in the proportion of dogs and cats with extreme conformations.

Our Commitments

1

Work together to promote the breeding and acquisition of dogs and cats with good innate health.

2

Amplify the global conversation on responsible behaviours around pet ownership & acquisition and around breeding.

3

Speak as one voice against extreme conformations and low welfare pet production practices.

4

Prioritise the health and welfare of cats and dogs in all our activities as separate organisations and together as a coalition and be challenged if we do not achieve this.

5

Raise awareness of, and inspire positive actions aimed at eliminating extreme conformation and low welfare pet production practices and to promote responsible acquisition.

Our picture of success



Protecting cats' and dogs' health and welfare is a primary concern shared by all coalition members.



Tangible improvements in the overall health, welfare and quality of life of cats and dogs.



New bans on cat or dog breeds not needed unless the breed is inherently and irreversibly defined by a phenotype or genotype that are incompatible with good health and welfare at a population level.



No new cat or dog breed have been created where the defining characteristics are based on phenotypic or genotypic abnormalities or other inherited traits, which give rise to health problems or impede the normal life of the dog or cat.



A culture of mutual understanding and collaboration that respects the diverse perspectives of coalition members and strengthens our collective impact for cats and dogs worldwide.



Unified, consistent messaging from coalition members that prioritizes cat and dog health and welfare.



Widespread public acceptance that extreme conformation in dogs and cats is no longer acceptable from a welfare, moral, legal or social perspective. A clear shift in perceptions of what makes a desirable dog or cat with greater emphasis on health, function and welfare.



Acknowledgement from owners, breeders and other primary audiences that meaningful change is necessary to improve the health and welfare of dogs and cats.



Our positions

- We believe that **cat and dog health and welfare should always come first**. These should be the primary criteria when judging or rewarding animals in shows and when making decisions about breeding, acquiring or owning any cat or dog.
- We recognize that both low-welfare breeding practices in pet production and extreme conformation are **complex, systemic issues**. Addressing them requires a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach in bringing together breeders, geneticists, media, owners, veterinarians, kennel clubs, cat fanciers' associations, animal welfare organisations, the academic and research communities, commercial partners, and policymakers.
- We believe that **physical diversity across dogs and cat breeds can be promoted** within the limits of good animal health and welfare standards. We support balanced, evidence-based regulations that promotes both physical and genetic diversity and high standards of health and welfare within breeds.
- We only support bans on cat or dog breeds when the breed is unavoidably defined by phenotypic or genotypic traits incompatible with good health and welfare in the general breed population.
- We do not support the creation of new cat or dog breeds defined by characteristics based on phenotypic or genotypic abnormalities or other inherited traits that cause health problems or prevent cats and dogs from living a normal, healthy life.
- We endorse the ICECDogs definition of 'innate healthy' as a solid foundation for identifying instances of extreme conformation:



Our research-driven **aligned pledges**

1

Animal Health & Welfare First

Prioritize the health and welfare of cats and dogs in all decisions - breeding, shows, acquisitions and owning.

2

Addressing Systemic Challenges

Tackle complex issues like low-welfare pet production and extreme conformation through coordinated efforts.

3

Promoting Diversity Responsibly

Support breed diversity that aligns with high health standards, using evidence-based approaches to balance variety and welfare.



Our research-driven **aligned pledges**

4

A Measured Approach

We oppose breeding cats and dogs based on harmful genetic or physical traits.

5

Defining Innate Health

Ensure conformation does not restrict normal, healthy activities—such as breathing, movement, reproduction, and communication.

6

Comprehensive Testing & Screening

Advocate for appropriate testing before breeding to safeguard animal health.



Our research-driven **aligned pledges**

7

Tailored Strategies

Acknowledge local circumstances, recognizing regional differences in pet populations and issues.

8

Supporting EU Regulation

Support EU efforts for welfare, traceability, and combating unregulated pet trade.

9

Responsible Pet Ownership

Promote long-term responsible ownership through regulations, education, and engagement across the pet ecosystem.





Baseline report content

The coalition call to action

CHOOSE HEALTH: JOIN THE MOVEMENT FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR CATS AND DOGS

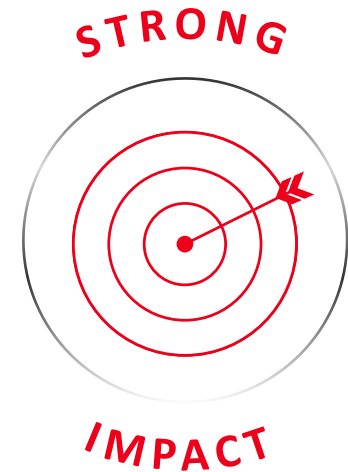
The Choose Health Coalition calls on all stakeholders in cat and dog health and welfare — including breeders, breed institutions, authorities, owners, veterinarians, influencers, marketers and the general public — to recognize and embrace the vital responsibility each holds in improving the health and welfare of cats and dogs. This means breeding, acquiring responsibly cats and dog and not promoting, breeding, selling, or purposely adopting pets with extreme conformations that compromise their welfare. We all share responsibility for the welfare of cats and dogs. Whether we are breeding, owning, caring for pets, or even only engaging with pet-related content, we have the power to make choices that **prioritize health and contribute to a better future for cats and dogs.**



11



Establish and cement the partnerships needed to have the **credibility** and capability to take action



Ignite the conversation, generate **support for change** in order to engage & educate pet lovers



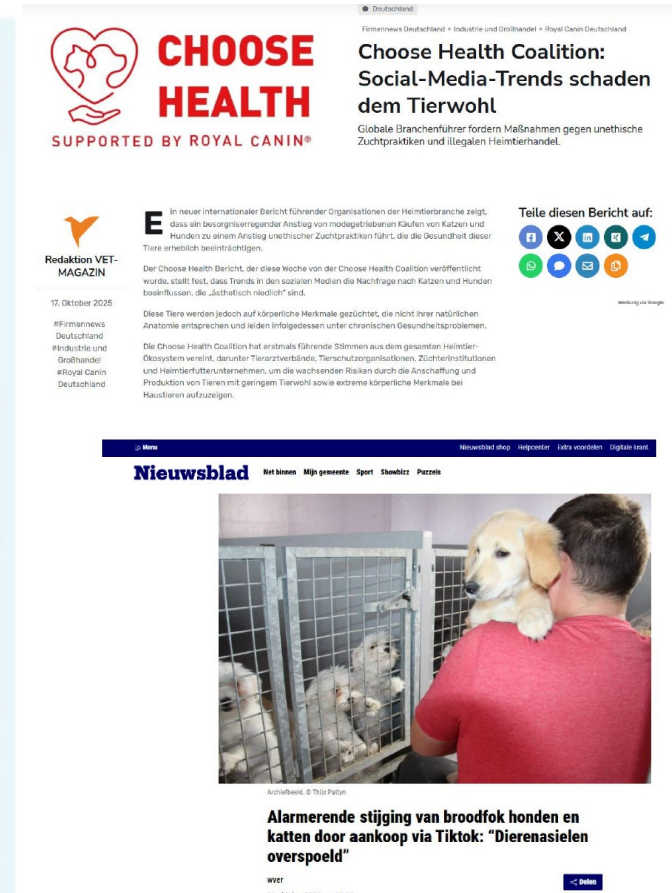
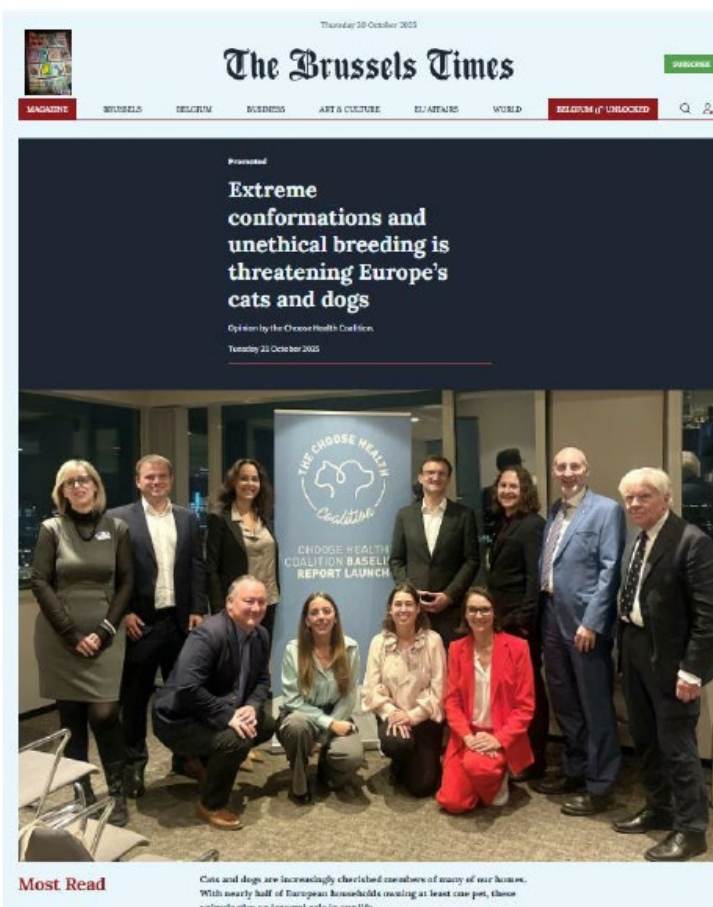
Raising awareness to spark change

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Launched in Brussels

Panel representing the Choose Health coalition and EU Commission

- 7 key news stories in Germany, NL & Belgium
- 546,000+ reach



2025 Achievements at a glance



Advocate to safeguard breeds

- Engaged with EU Commission
- Created video to **onboard pet professionals**



Oct 2025

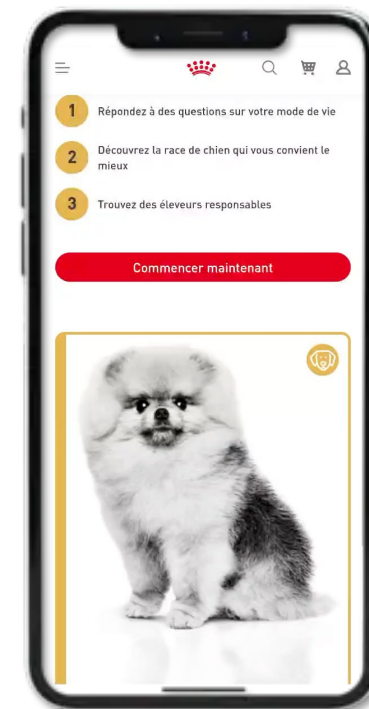
Professionalise Breeding

- Deployed DNA testing (EU)
9 live countries



Raise awareness on responsible acquisition and health breeds

- Educated pet owners through **breed match tool**



- **PEF 2025:** feb 2025



April
2026





The work continues

As the Choose Health Coalition we are:

- Aligning on **content showing examples of what extreme conformation looks like in cats and dogs** to help educate owners and encourage responsible acquisition
- **Continuing to engage with the EU commission** (sharing baseline report findings and work on 26 June)
- Expanding focus to **support policy engagement at national levels and beyond EU alone**
- Continuing to find ways to **elevate conversation and engage professional communities** at major events (Crufts, World Cat Congress etc) and to **amplify messaging and spark action** across all audiences.





The work continues

As Royal Canin we:

- **Audited our website** and picture library to delete all hypertypes
- Include a Choose Health dedicated area in all global shows
- Continue to educate pet owners through our **breed match tool**
- Are working to **update our packaging emblematics** to remove hypertypes in partnership with Jane Ladlow
- Leveraged our **RC.com** to showcase our position (About us)
- Are working with our markets and regions to activate Choose Health around the globe



Thank you

Any questions or if you'd
like to chat
please reach out!

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A Better 
World For Pets

