



Facts for the Fight

The Missouri Licensed Dog Breeding Industry Economic Contribution Study

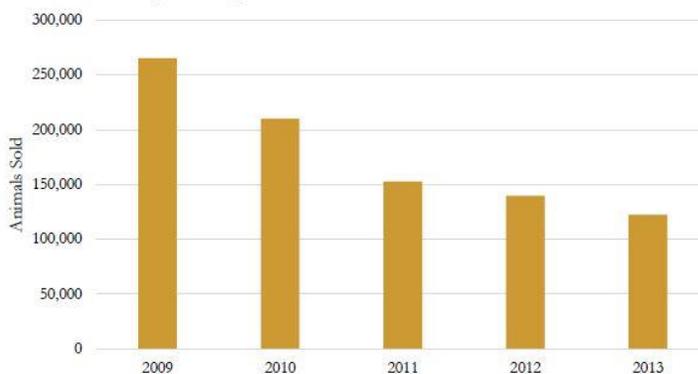
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We recently got an opportunity to review a **study** that was done on dog breeders in the State of Missouri. Has this been done in your state? When we would knock on doors at the state capitol to tell them why the initiatives of animal rights activists would be detrimental to our industry and our state's economy, those lawmakers would often respond with "Show me!" (Missouri is the Show Me State...**here's why.**) They wanted hard data on how we contributed to the Gross Domestic Product of Missouri and how these bills would affect our operations. Of course, we couldn't provide that information.

Partly due to this lack of data, the infamous Proposition B (The Missouri Dog Breeding Regulation Act) was narrowly passed by a 3% margin in Missouri in 2010, causing severe economic repercussions throughout the industry here. 44% of our breeders went out of business. 54% fewer dogs were sold from Missouri breeders in 2013 when compared to pre-Prop B sales.

Exhibit 3.3.2 – Dogs Sold by Missouri Commercial Breeders and Dealers, 2009 to 2013



Source: Missouri Department of Agriculture



Access to those figures is a grim benefit of the economic impact study. The study goes on to explain how Prop B caused the precipitous decline on the charts. It also includes data showing the steady increase in dog ownership in the US during the same period, proving that the decline in Missouri dog sales is NOT due to a dwindling market demand.

The report is based on 2013 data only, so some information has to be extrapolated. For example, it states that the dog breeding industry in Missouri generated tax revenue (local, state and federal) of over \$10 million in 2013. Since we had roughly half the sales that year as we did before Prop B in 2009, the unstated result is that the government is losing millions annually in tax revenue from this sector due their cooperation with animal rights activists.

To be realistic, lawmakers are not very motivated to pay attention to the needs of dog breeders. Here's why. This study reports that the total economic impact of the dog breeding industry in Missouri (direct, indirect and induced income) in 2013 was \$85 million. That represents 1.8% of the income from the agricultural sector of the state's economy. The agricultural sector, which includes agriculture, hunting, fishing, and forestry, accounts for only 2% of the state's gross domestic product of \$276 billion. So our share of the GDP is about .03%. That's not 3%, that's three hundredths of one percent.

So, we are not a big player in the state's economy. But we are a player. The animal rights movement is not a player. They are skilled at lobbying politicians, and seem to have plenty of time for the hobby. If pet breeders aren't organized and very vocal in our state legislative bodies, we WILL be legislated out of business.



If activists are taking aim at your state regulations, take heed. Get an economic impact study done now. Arm yourself with data for your lawmakers. Know your worth.



Missouri State Legislature at the start of a session...



And at the end of a session!

(That's Rep. Jim Viebrock giving a thumbs up to Karen Strange, President of Missouri Federation of Animal Owners and Barb York of the Missouri Pet Breeders Association)



Sadly, when this study was presented recently to a lawmaker in Missouri's state capitol, one who had supported Prop B, his surprised response was that he wasn't aware that we were such an active industry, contributing so much to the state's economy. Too late.

It took over a year of hard work in Missouri's senate, including various attempts at repeals, to finally get a compromise signed by the governor. The compromise, called the Missouri Solution, repealed two of the most onerous parts of Prop B: a limit on how many breeding dogs a business could have on their property, and a provision that would have sent first-time dog care violators to jail. But by the time these revisions were achieved, the damage had been done and many, many breeders were closing up shop.

To ensure that legislation generated by a voter petition (which naturally generates signatures mostly from city dwellers) could never strip Missouri's pet breeders, ranchers, and farmers of their right to raise animals, an amendment to the state's constitution was introduced in 2014. It simply stated that the right to farm and ranch was guaranteed by the Missouri constitution. It was another bitter battle, and it passed with only a 1% margin (and a recount was demanded) but it did pass.

The Economic Contribution Study has given us food for thought, data for use at the Capitol and with our local legislators, and a bunch of charts of numbers to put our industry's anguish of the past 5 years on paper in black and white. We are so grateful to all who worked on it and supported it.



Numerous agencies and organizations worked together to promote and fund the study, which was conducted by the University of Missouri Extension, Commercial Ag Division. The Missouri Farm Bureau summarized and distributed the findings, and has been our champion throughout it all.



A special thanks to over 100 pet breeders in Missouri who went to a lot of trouble to fill out the survey that resulted in this report.

With excellent leadership from the Missouri Pet Breeders Association and its chapters, the Missouri Animal Husbandry Association, the Cavalry Group, Missouri Federation of Animal Owners, the Missouri Professional Pet Association and many industry professionals tirelessly volunteering their time, breeders in Missouri are meeting the challenges of the animal rights movement.

What needs to happen where you live, to protect your rights as a pet breeder?