

CALLING ON WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP) TO REVOKE RIDGLAN FARMS' COMMERCIAL DOG BREEDER LICENSE AND PLACE DOGS IN CUSTODIAL CARE DURING ONGOING INVESTIGATION

Ridglan Farms, a Wisconsin-based company founded in 1966 and located in Dane County, breeds beagles primarily for scientific research. The facility houses roughly 3,000 dogs and has been subject to scrutiny regarding animal welfare and compliance with state laws governing the treatment of animals.

Two animal advocate groups, Dane4Dogs and Alliance for Animals, petitioned the Dane County Circuit Court to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate allegations that Ridglan Farms, Inc. violated Wisconsin's animal cruelty laws.

On January 9, 2025, the Dane County Circuit Court found probable cause that Ridglan Farms committed criminal acts, including the mutilation of dogs' vocal cords and cherry eye surgeries without anesthesia or veterinary supervision, in violation of Wisconsin Statutes § 951.02 and § 951.14. Dane County Circuit Court Judge Rhonda Lanford ordered the appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate allegations of criminal animal cruelty offenses and inhumane treatment in violation of Wisconsin's animal cruelty laws.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) also has been investigating charges of animal cruelty in violation of Wis. Stats. §951 at Ridglan Farms. Per Wis. Stats. §173.41(5), DATCP may, "by written notice, without prior notice or hearing, suspend a license issued under §173.41(5) if, upon inspection of the licensed premises, the department finds any condition that imminently threatens the health, safety, or welfare of any animal on the licensed premises or there is evidence that an act of animal cruelty in violation of Ch. 951 has been committed by the licensee or has occurred on the licensed premises." To date, DATCP has not taken action to revoke Ridglan Farms' facility breeding license. However, their inspection reports as late as September 2024 found deficiencies in the care of the animals' welfare. On March 5, 2025, the DATCP Disciplinary Counsel for Wisconsin Veterinary Examining Board petitioned the board to suspend Ridglan Farms' staff veterinarian's license.

Concerned residents and animal advocates are now calling on the Dane County Board of Supervisors to act to safeguard the welfare of voiceless animals and the approximately 3,000 dogs at Ridglan Farms that are the subject of criminal animal cruelty allegations currently under investigation by both a special prosecutor and the State of Wisconsin.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, based on the findings of probable cause of criminal animal cruelty by the Dane County Circuit Court, the Dane County Board of Supervisors calls on DATCP to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of the animals at Ridglan Farms by immediately revoking Ridglan Farms' commercial dog breeder license and placing the dogs currently located at the facility in the custodial care of the State of Wisconsin while the ongoing investigations of animal cruelty allegations are conducted and completed.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), Governor Tony Evers, the Dane County delegation of the Wisconsin Legislature.