



*Make Mine Chocolate!*<sup>™</sup>

Campaign to  
Stop the Impulse Purchase of Rabbits

Information Pack

# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## Aims of the Campaign

Make Mine Chocolate!™ is a campaign with the aim of raising awareness of the plight of domestic rabbits bought on impulse, often as a child's gift for Easter. In the vast majority of cases of impulse purchase, when the novelty wears off the rabbit joins tens of thousands of others abandoned in rescue centers, or is doomed to a life of solitary confinement in a small hutch at the end of the garden.

The Make Mine Chocolate!™ campaign has 2 main aims:

- To discourage impulse purchases - particularly at Easter, but throughout the year too - and to encourage people to buy chocolate or soft toys as gifts instead.
- To educate people about the responsibilities involved in keeping a pet rabbit properly and to dispel the myth that rabbits are low maintenance, cheap and child friendly pets.

The campaign hopes to achieve these aims with the use of the feel-good factor of chocolate. Rather than spell out the message in a cold, shocking and factual way, we want people to engage, celebrate and enjoy it.

After all, who doesn't like chocolate?



# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## Why is there a need for Make Mine Chocolate!™?

Statistically, rabbits are the third most popular pet in Britain, but are unfortunately one of the most commonly abused - mostly through ignorance and neglect. The problem is that many people simply do not see anything wrong with keeping a rabbit in a small hutch in all weathers with little or no space to exercise.

Rabbits suffer due to their fluffy, toy-like appearance and 'pester-power'. They are cute and cuddly so children often pester their parents to buy them one; this is particularly common at Easter when the media is full of images of rabbits. Rabbits are relatively inexpensive to buy, and many pet shops sell small hutches cheaply, so it is seen as a small outlay – a cheap pet.

However, rabbits are a much bigger responsibility than many people realise.

The campaign points out that rabbits need plenty of space to exercise, incur costly vet bills as they require neutering, vaccination and regular check ups and treatment. They suffer stress easily (as prey animals, they do not like being picked up and played with) so they are not ideal as children's pets. They also need the companionship of their own kind, so keeping one alone is not acceptable. They require regular cleaning out, and need a varied diet including fresh vegetables and hay. They also live for much longer than most people realise, so are not the disposable pets that they are often thought to be.

Make Mine Chocolate!™ is not saying that rabbits should not be kept as pets, but it is trying to make people think carefully and see what is involved before taking on a rabbit - and make a considered decision.

The Dogs Trust successfully changed public opinion and made it socially unacceptable to buy a dog as a Christmas gift, and this campaign hopes to have a similar impact.



# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## How will it work?

The campaign aims to get its message heard in the following ways:

- **Media**

Through posters, advertising, articles in the press and on radio, Make Mine Chocolate!™ aims to raise its profile, and subsequently the message it's trying to deliver.

- **Merchandise**

The main merchandising item is the Make Mine Chocolate!™ pin badge, which is sold on a backing card which lists the aims of the campaign. The card also lists a few facts and figures to make people stop and think before buying a rabbit. The design of the badge is designed to prompt discussion and raise awareness. There are also Make Mine Chocolate!™ pens and numerous other items on the way.

- **Sponsorship and Partnerships**

We are keen to get sponsors and partners on board to help publicise the campaign and get our message into the mainstream. The most obvious example is chocolate manufacturers, and we are looking for a chocolatier to help with the development of the Make Mine Chocolate!™ chocolate rabbit. The sale of this product would be a win for both sides, as the more sales made, the more our message gets out. Toy retailers are another group who could benefit, as we are also encouraging people to buy toy rabbits as gifts rather than live pets.

Other sponsors and partners are more than welcome, and we are willing to talk to anybody about ideas. Please see the 'Resources and Contacts' page at the end of this pack.

- **'Celebrity' endorsement**

We have a number of recognisable faces from the world of media and television who are passionate about our message and our campaign. We are looking to harness the publicity from these well known names and are always on the look out for others – the more the merrier!



# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## Who is behind the Campaign?

Make Mine Chocolate!™ originated in the United States, through the Columbus House Rabbit Society.

The UK version, following the US model, was launched as a joint venture between two organisations, both with the welfare of domestic rabbits at their heart.

- **Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund (RWAFF) registered charity no. 1085689**

The largest UK domestic rabbit charity, launched in 1996 and working to educate the public about the needs of pet rabbits; namely that a hutch is not enough.

- **The Hay Experts**

Online retailer of nutrition and accessories for rabbits and other small pets. Products sold by the Hay Experts are aimed at maintaining and improving the health and welfare of the animals.

Neither of these organizations is looking to profit from this venture. All profits made from sales of merchandise or donations will go straight back into the campaign.

The RSPCA have also given their full endorsement to the campaign.



# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## How can you help?

The cause of raising the profile of domestic rabbit welfare has been championed for years by organisations like the RWF and the RSPCA but this is an opportunity to get the message into the mainstream.

- **Media**

If you are in television, radio, newspaper or magazines then this campaign will make great copy. As mentioned before, rabbits are the third popular pet in the UK, so there are a lot of people out there who are interested to hear about rabbits. The chocolate factor adds a nice spin to the issue, making it more saleable.

- **Sponsors and Partners**

The backers of the campaign have limited resources, so we are always on the lookout for sponsors where we can come to a mutually beneficial arrangement. We are not just looking into the pet food and accessories trade, but would welcome interest from chocolate manufacturers, toy shops or anybody else who thinks they can tie into the campaign.

- **Volunteering**

If you have a little spare time and would like to get behind the campaign then please do get in touch. The organisers of the campaign are volunteers and we can really do with any help on offer.



# Make Mine Chocolate!™

## Resources and Contacts

For more information on the Make Mine Chocolate!™ campaign, please see our website: [www.MakeMineChocolate.co.uk](http://www.MakeMineChocolate.co.uk)

### Contact Make Mine Chocolate!™

Make Mine Chocolate!™ is anxious to hear from anyone who wishes to support the campaign either through sponsorship, media links, or expressions of support.

For further information about the Make Mine Chocolate!™ campaign in the UK, please e-mail us at: [info@makeminechocolate.co.uk](mailto:info@makeminechocolate.co.uk).

- **Make Mine Chocolate!™ UK Partners**

Make Mine Chocolate!™ UK would like to offer a partnership opportunity to a chocolatier who is able to help with the development of the Make Mine Chocolate!™ UK Chocolate Bunny. We would also welcome other partners in other fields which may link into this campaign. If you can help, please e-mail us at: [partner@makeminechocolate.co.uk](mailto:partner@makeminechocolate.co.uk).

- **Make Mine Chocolate!™ UK Supporters**

If you would like to become a Make Mine Chocolate!™ Supporter in the UK, please e-mail us at: [supporter@makeminechocolate.co.uk](mailto:supporter@makeminechocolate.co.uk).

- **Make Mine Chocolate!™ Promotion**

If you are in the media and would like further information about the Make Mine Chocolate!™ campaign in the UK (including press releases and full media pack), please e-mail us at: [media@makeminechocolate.co.uk](mailto:media@makeminechocolate.co.uk).

- **Make Mine Chocolate!™ Merchandise**

If you would like to discuss Make Mine Chocolate!™ merchandising opportunities, please e-mail us at: [merchandise@makeminechocolate.co.uk](mailto:merchandise@makeminechocolate.co.uk).

For information on the care of domestic rabbits please contact the **Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund** (RWF) at [www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk](http://www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk), or call the RWF helpline on 0870 046 5249.



Make Mine Chocolate!

PO Box 603, Horsham, West Sussex. RH13 5WL

[MakeMineChocolate.co.uk](http://MakeMineChocolate.co.uk)

Tel: 0870 046 5249

[info@MakeMineChocolate.co.uk](mailto:info@MakeMineChocolate.co.uk)