

# JUST-DO-SOMETHING.org

## APHIS - GENERAL COMMENTS

- There is a misconception that USDA APHIS can do anything, at any time, to "help the animals". APHIS is perceived as the "go to" entity to make things right for animals.
  - Many do not understand that APHIS has to follow guidelines and processes, and they cannot just magically make something better because there is an obvious need for it.
- People are angry that when they call to report an issue or complain about an issue, feeling that they are responded to with condescension and "soothing" remarks rather than just telling it like it is and/or putting a plan in place to look into a situation..
  - As a result, APHIS has a reputation for "glossing" over things rather than having a vested interest in the situation.
- Many feel that APHIS is easily swayed by money to make decisions or NOT to act on a situation in favor of money and politics, which is why so many abuse and neglect situations are not acted on, or rationalized so that nothing is done.
- There is the belief that there are more AWA Licensed facilities than APHIS can regularly monitor, so abuse and neglect is often overlooked or ignored by APHIS, even with proof submitted to APHIS when reporting an issue.
  - Hand in hand with that, there is obvious and blatant disregard for APHIS regulations, which is easy for dealers to skirt-around because of this.
- People want to know why APHIS is not working harder to enforce the AWA regulations. People see a need for that.
- Many well meaning individuals and organizations find it very difficult to wade through the verbiage of the Animal Welfare Act. Although many agree that it probably needs to be written a specific way for legal purposes, that doesn't help the average concerned person understand it - sometimes it is these direct misunderstandings that cause so much anger when they are referred to it.
  - Maybe APHIS would receive less calls asking for explanations if you could point them to a version of the AWA that is easier to understand.
- Many are not aware they can receive regular APHIS updates by signing up for them through the APHIS Registry.
  - Many did not even know what this was.
- In general, the USDA website is not user or consumer-friendly. Regarding APHIS specifically, more people would probably utilize it more if it was easier to navigate, and it was more "people" approachable. Quick examples:
  - Many concerned with animals want to see "good news" on occasion, right up front.
  - Provide an update on a weekly basis of a current, hot-topic. I know right now in animal forums, Nosey The Elephant is a strong discussion. Maybe you can write up a small paragraph on where APHIS is with the Nosey situation so people see that immediately upon hitting your Home page.

Thank you,

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[www.just-do-something.org](http://www.just-do-something.org)

