

Q3 2023 ANALYSIS



SHELTER
ANIMALS
COUNT

JANUARY - SEPTEMBER: 2021, 2022, 2023



Dear Animal Welfare Community,

As the end of Q3 brings cooler temperatures and begins to slow the influx of kittens and puppies into animal sheltering organizations, many of us have already turned our attention to the next surge in activity: Year-end fundraising and holiday adoptions. But before we dive into the chaos of this holiday season, let's take a step back and review the experiences and insights that have impacted our industry in the last quarter.

For those on the front lines, it will likely come as no surprise that the rise in stray intakes for dogs has continued, with numbers showing a 5% increase compared to 2022. At the same time, there were 3.5% fewer dogs reclaimed by their owners, further compounding the space crisis for dogs in shelters across the country.

The increase of cats entering animal welfare organizations as strays is also noteworthy, as there has been a 9% increase compared to 2021. This has contributed to a rise in the overall percentage of cats entering shelters as strays, from 50% (2021) to 52% (2023). And while July 2023 saw more live outcomes for cats than 2022, live outcomes have remained close to 2022 numbers since August. Dogs, on the other hand, are experiencing fewer live outcomes (-1.4% from 2022) and more non-live outcomes — up 30.9% compared to 2022.

Disappointingly, animal transfers in Q3 have continued to decrease, which contrasts with our earlier hope of alleviating the bottleneck we experienced in Q1. Figures now show a 9% decrease for dogs and cats combined compared to the same period in 2022. This trend is especially significant for foster-based rescues, as they experienced a 13% drop in animals being transfers in compared to 2022.

As we navigate these trends and challenges and work together to find solutions, your dedication and unwavering commitment to the welfare of animals are evident. Together, we will continue to adapt, collaborate, and innovate in our shared mission to provide the best possible care for animals in our communities.

Stephan Fille

Executive Director, Shelter Animals Count



HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY - SEPTEMBER, 2021 - 2023

1

The rising trend in stray intakes for dogs continues to cause concern, as the numbers have grown by 5% compared to 2022. There is a contrasting trend in dogs surrendered by their owners, however — surrenders are on the decline (-4% compared to 2022).

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2

The influx of cats entering animal welfare organizations as strays experienced a notable uptick this quarter (+9% from 2021). This rise has contributed to an overall increase in cat stray intake rates, which have escalated from 50% to 52%.

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3

2023 continues to see decreases in animal transfer trends, with figures now showing a 9% decrease for dogs and cats combined compared to the same period in 2022. This ongoing trend is especially significant for foster-based rescues, as they have seen a 13% drop of animals transfers in compared to 2022.

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4

Cat live outcomes have stayed close to 2022 numbers since August. Dogs, on the other hand, are experiencing fewer live outcomes than 2022 (almost -2%).

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5

Organizations of all types have continued to grapple with ongoing increases in non-live outcomes for dogs, which have risen by 30.9% compared to 2022.

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6

As intakes for dogs continue to rise, the number of dogs returned to their owners is decreasing — 3.5% less than 2022 and 0.4% less than 2021. Overall, RTO rates are lower than the past 2 years (19.4% in 2021 to 18.1% in 2023).

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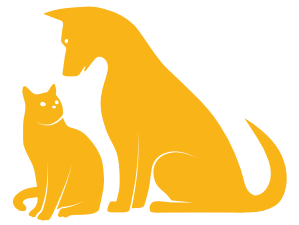


A veterinarian in blue scrubs is examining a small dog's ear. The veterinarian is wearing a stethoscope and is looking down at the dog. The dog is a small breed with black and white fur. The background is a light blue color.

INTAKES

SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT 2023 Q3 REPORT

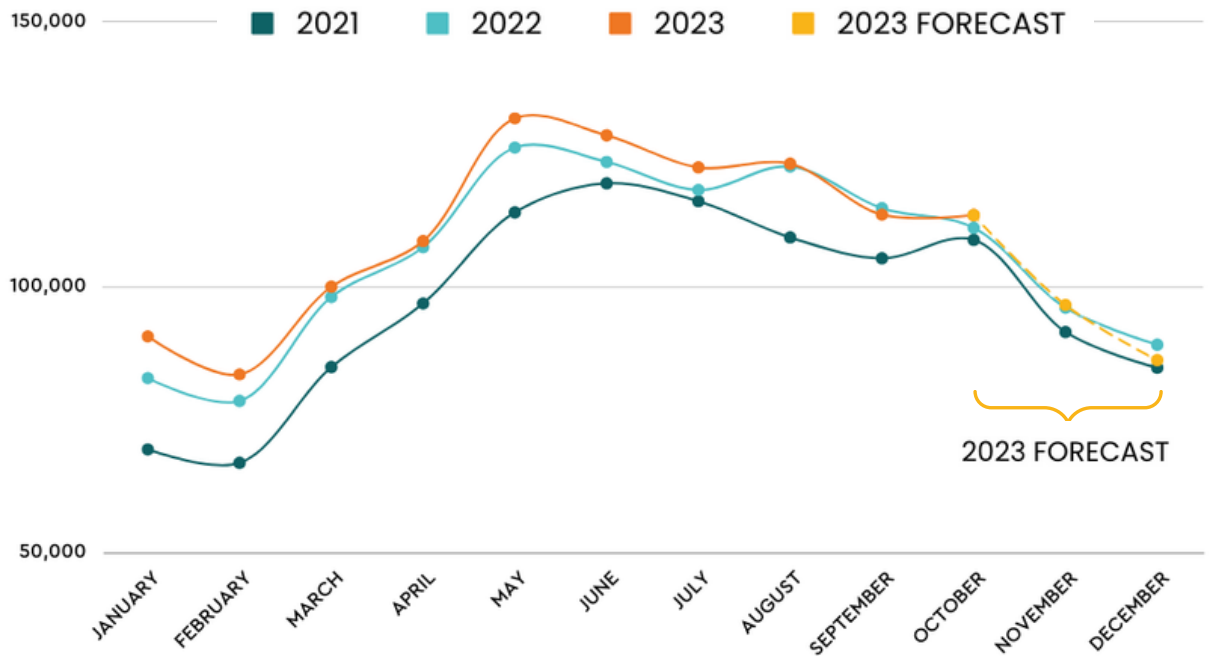
TOTALS



DOGS AND CATS COMBINED

↑ 2.0%
COMPARED TO
JAN - SEPT 2022

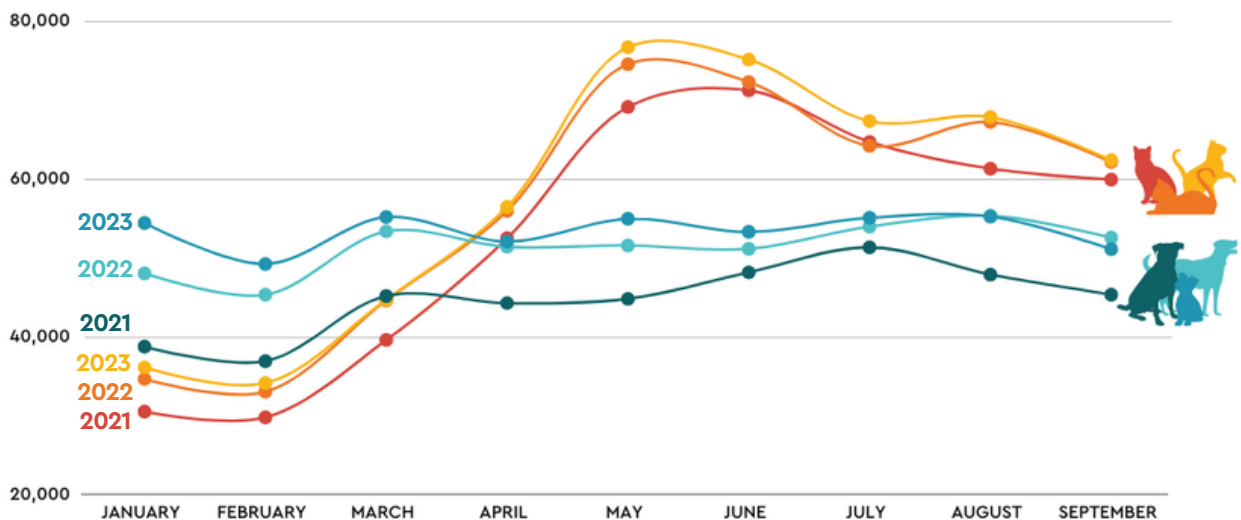
↑ 9.5%
COMPARED TO
JAN - SEPT 2021



SPECIES BREAKDOWN

↑ 2.5% FROM 2022
+14.2% FROM 2021

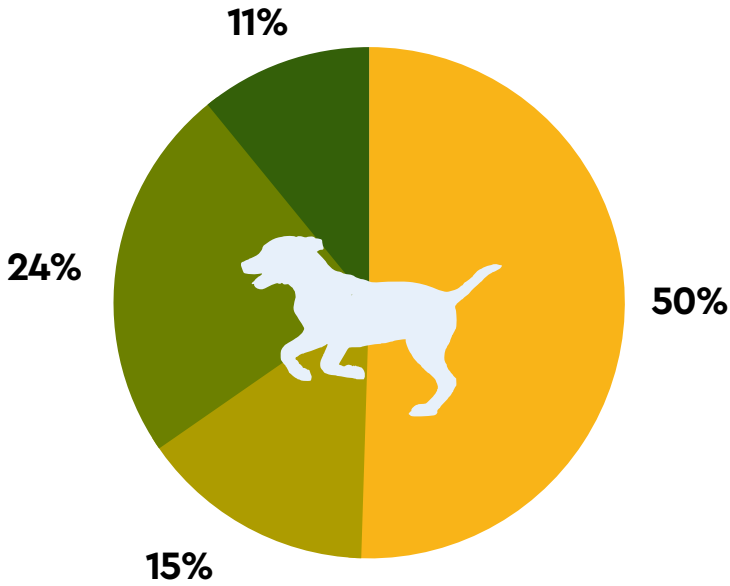
↑ 1.5% FROM 2022
+5.6% FROM 2021



CANINE INTAKE RATES

2023

AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKE THRU Q3
(JAN - SEPT 2023)

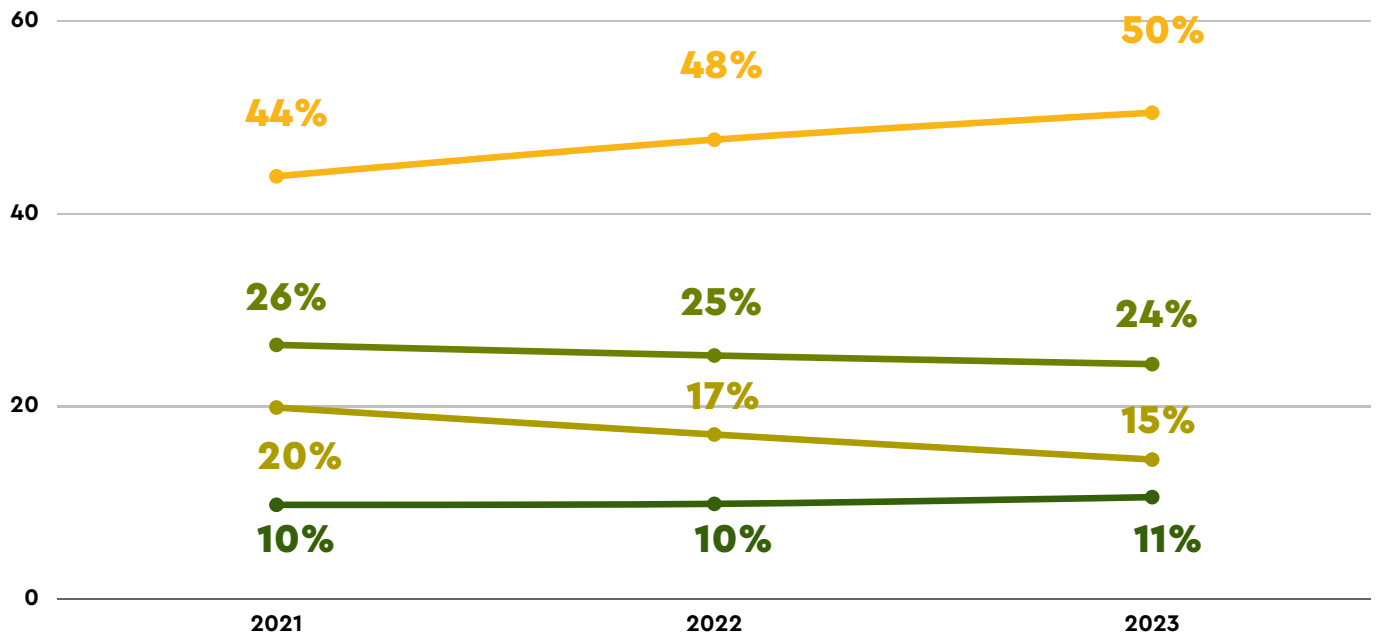


Stray intakes for dogs continue to rise (+5% from 2022, +23% from 2021).

Owner surrenders are decreasing as a % of total intake.



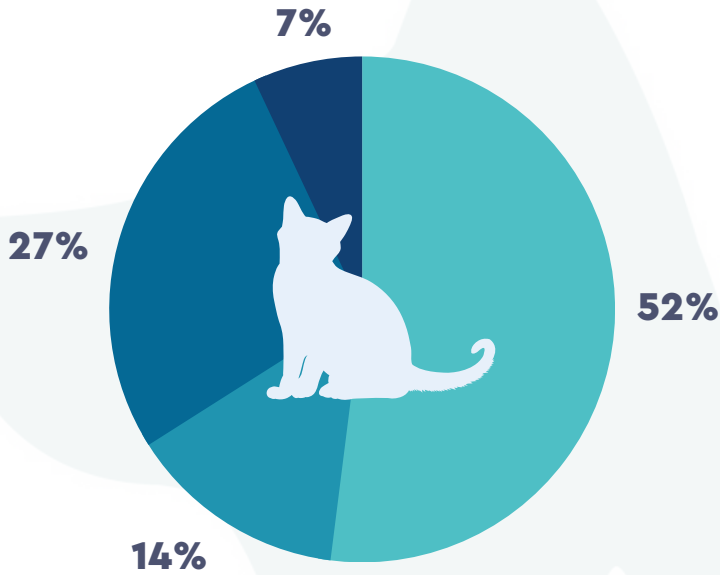
**CANINE
% OF TOTAL INTAKE**



FELINE INTAKE RATES

2023

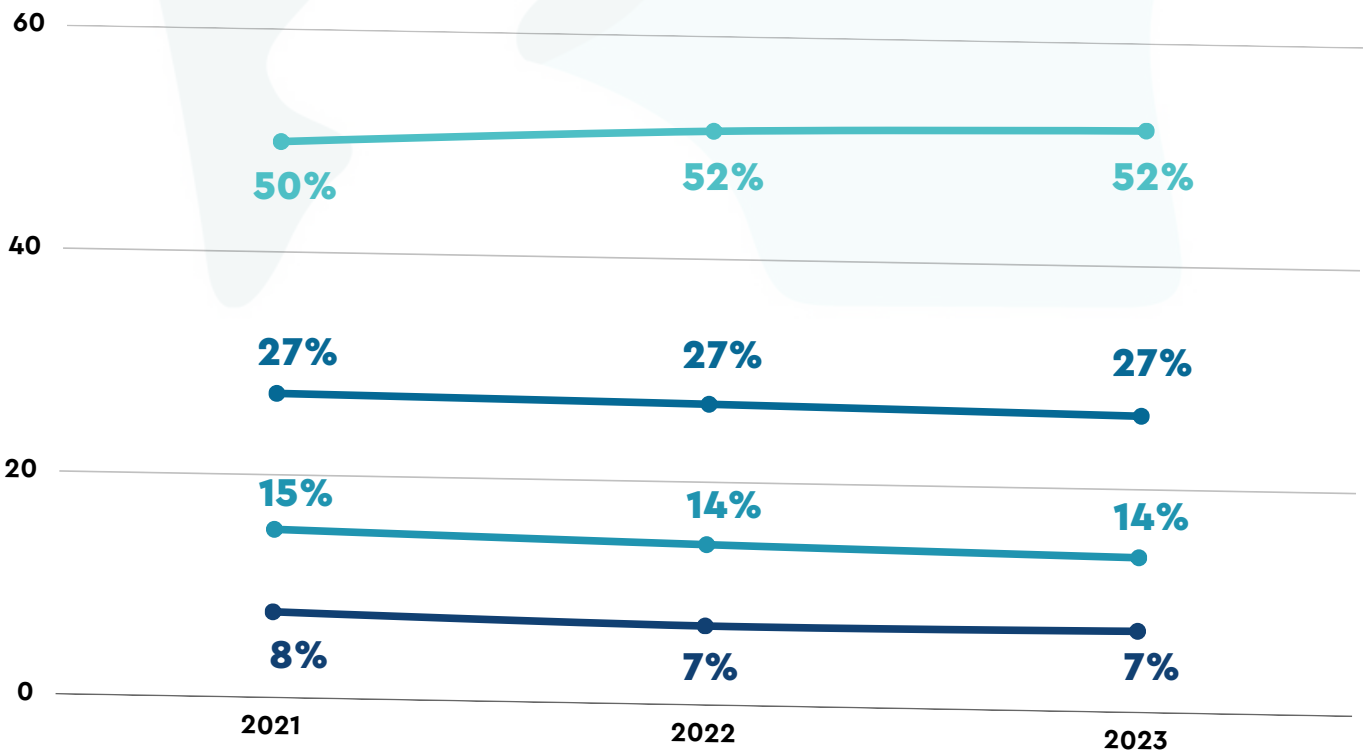
AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKE THRU Q3
(JAN - SEPT 2023)



More cats are entering orgs as strays (+9% from 2021), which has increased the cat stray intake rate from 50% to 52%.



FELINE % OF TOTAL INTAKE

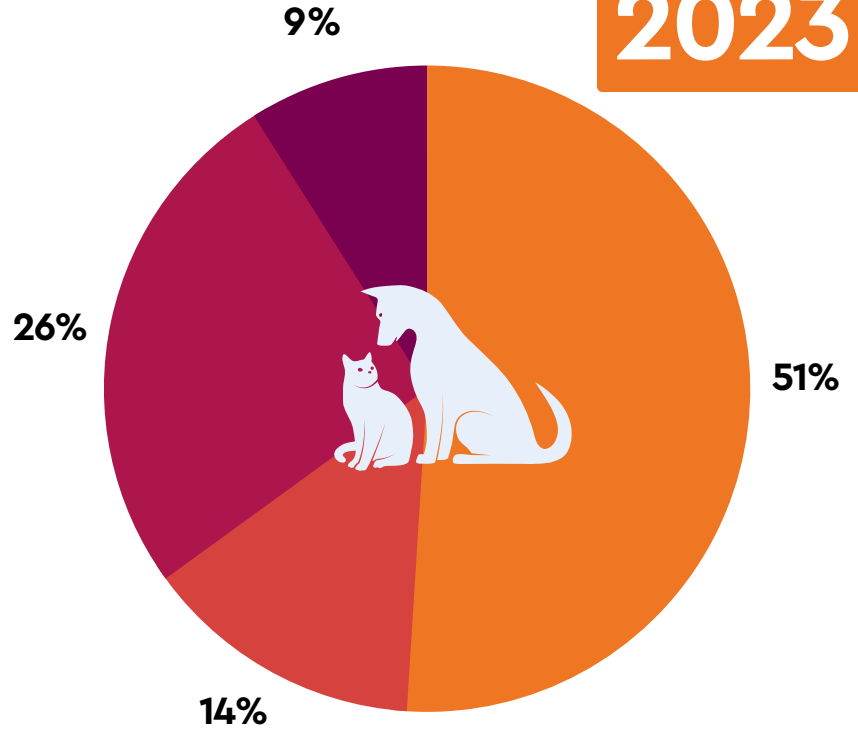


COMBINED INTAKE RATES

AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKE THRU Q2 (JAN - SEPT 2023)

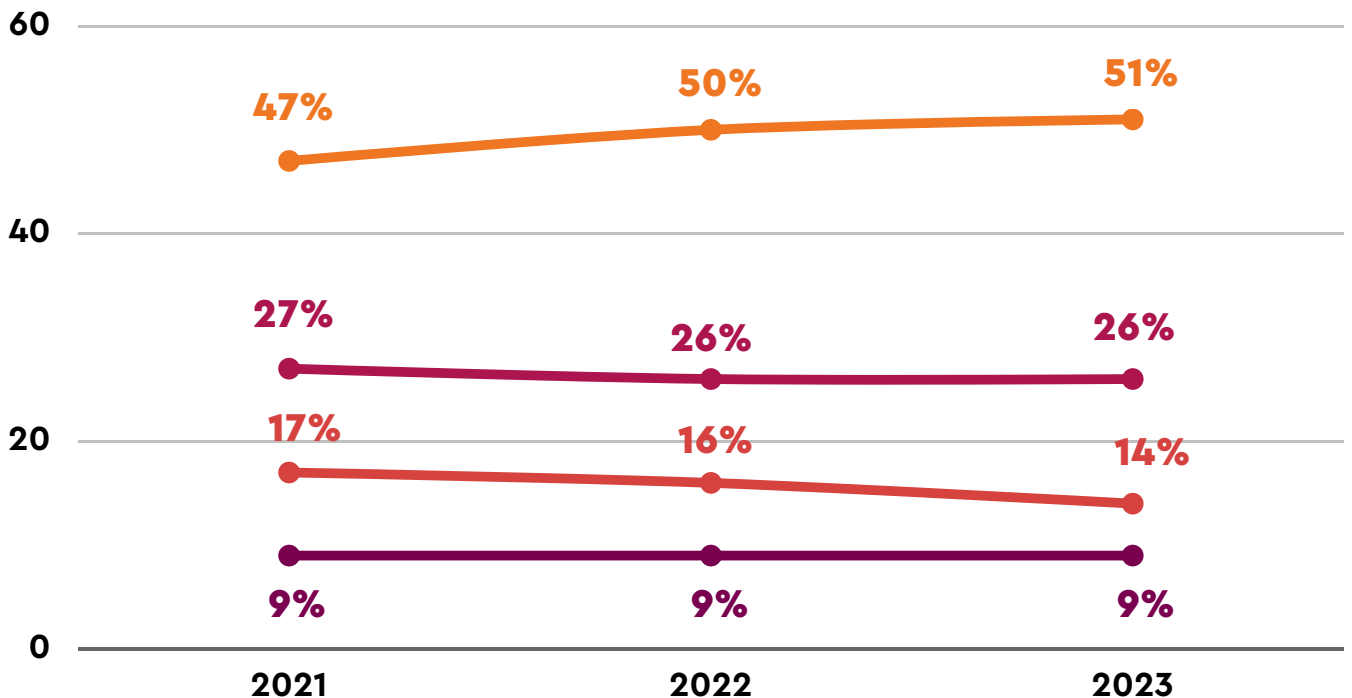
2023

Stray intakes are increasing, primarily from government-funded organizations.



STRAY TRANSFERRED IN RELINQUISHED BY OWNER OTHER

COMBINED SPECIES
% OF TOTAL INTAKE



INTAKES BY ORG TYPE, DOGS & CATS COMBINED



COMMUNITY & TRANSFERS

INTAKE CHANGES (2023 vs 2022)

COMMUNITY INTAKES
TRANSFERS IN

+2.6%
-7.9%



GOVERNMENT FUNDED AGENCIES

COMMUNITY INTAKES
TRANSFERS IN

-1.5%
-13.0%



RESCUES w/o GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

COMMUNITY INTAKES
TRANSFERS IN

+0.9%
-7.7%



SHELTERS w/o GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Transfers are 9% lower than 2022.

Cats are now seeing decreases in transfers compared to previous years, as well (2% less than 2022.)

TRANSFER IN % TOTAL INTAKES



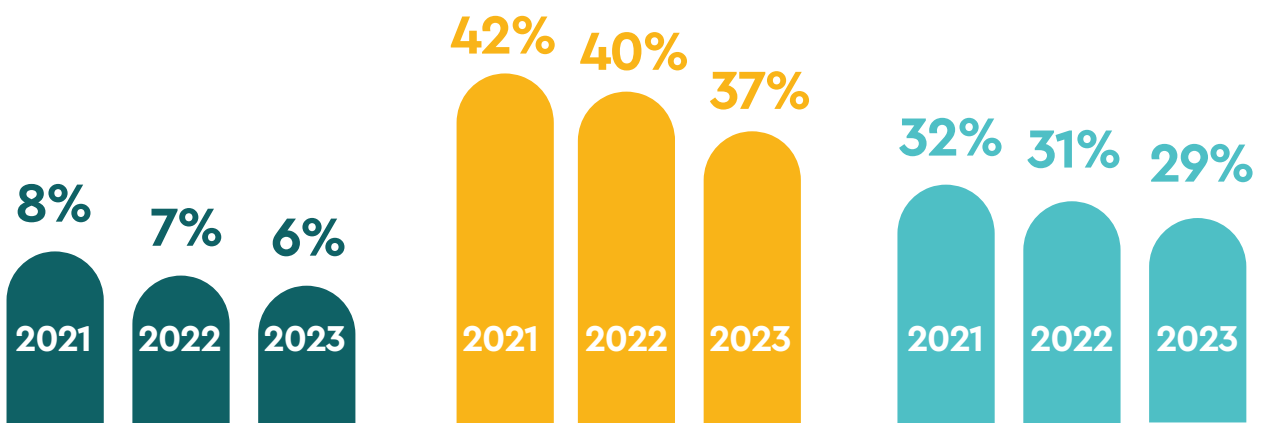
GOVERNMENT FUNDED AGENCIES



RESCUES w/o GOVERNMENT CONTRACT



SHELTERS w/o GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

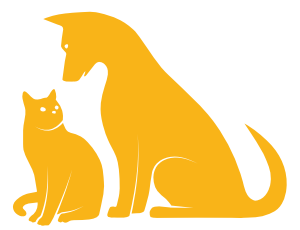




OUTCOMES

SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT 2023 Q3 REPORT

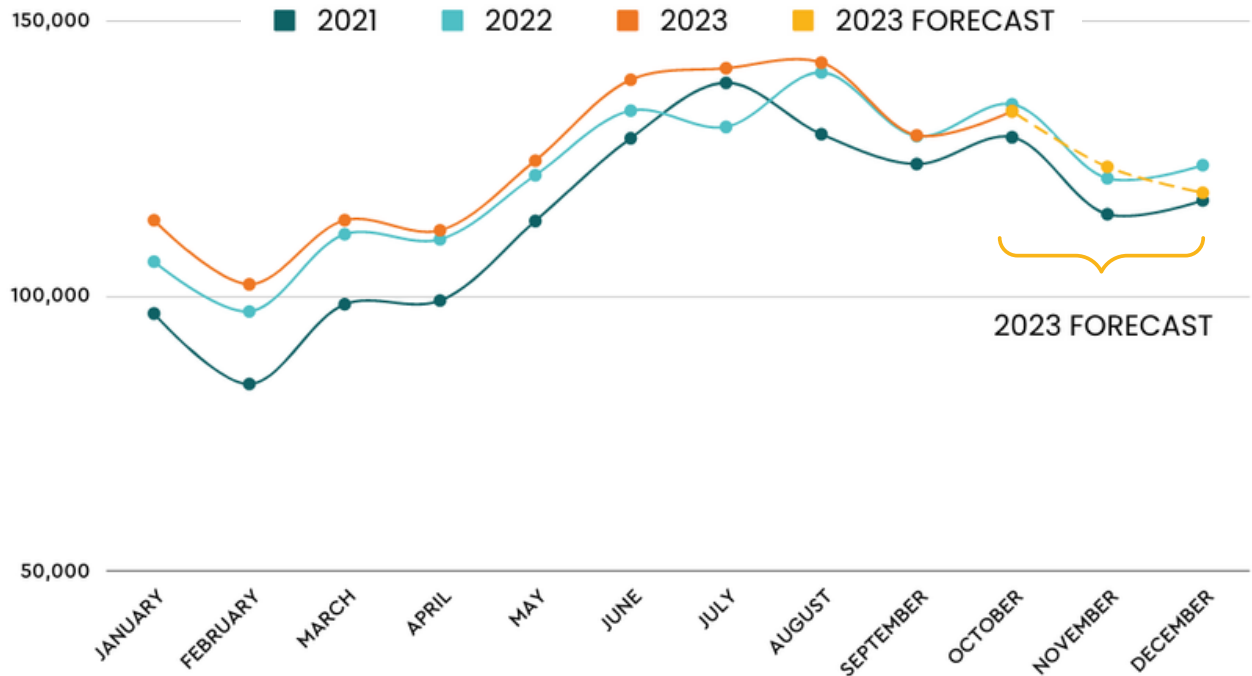
TOTALS



DOGS AND CATS COMBINED

↑ 2.5%
 COMPARED TO
 JAN - SEPT 2022

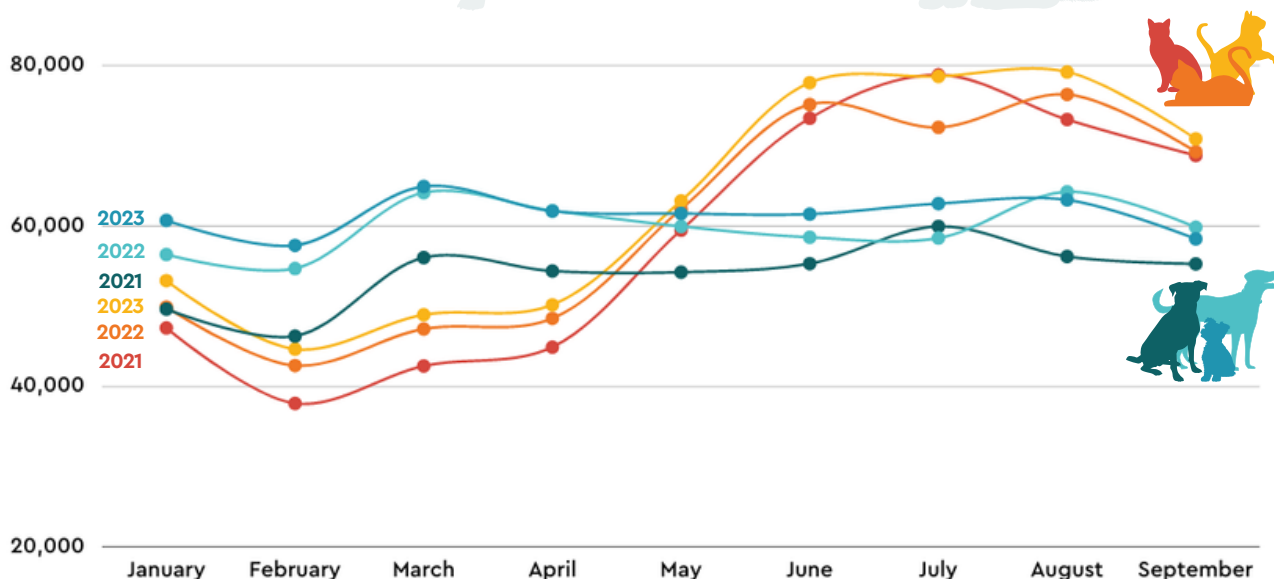
↑ 6.1%
 COMPARED TO
 JAN - SEPT 2021



SPECIES BREAKDOWN

↑ 1.5% FROM 2022
 +8.4% FROM 2021

↑ 3.4% FROM 2022
 +4.0% FROM 2021

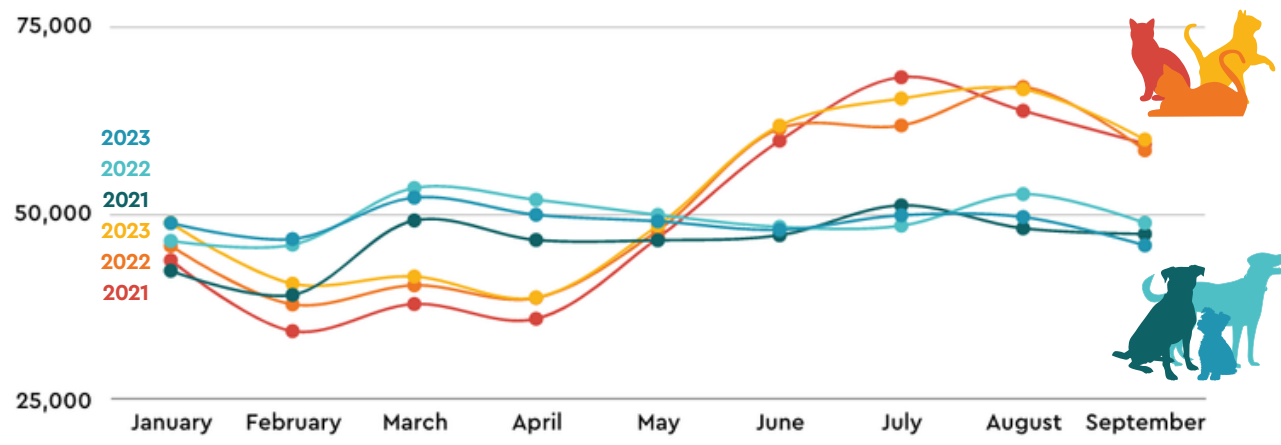


TOTAL OUTCOME TYPES LIVE VS. NON-LIVE



COMMUNITY LIVE OUTCOMES

Cats have stayed close to 2022 numbers for the last couple of months. Dogs are experiencing fewer live outcomes than 2022.

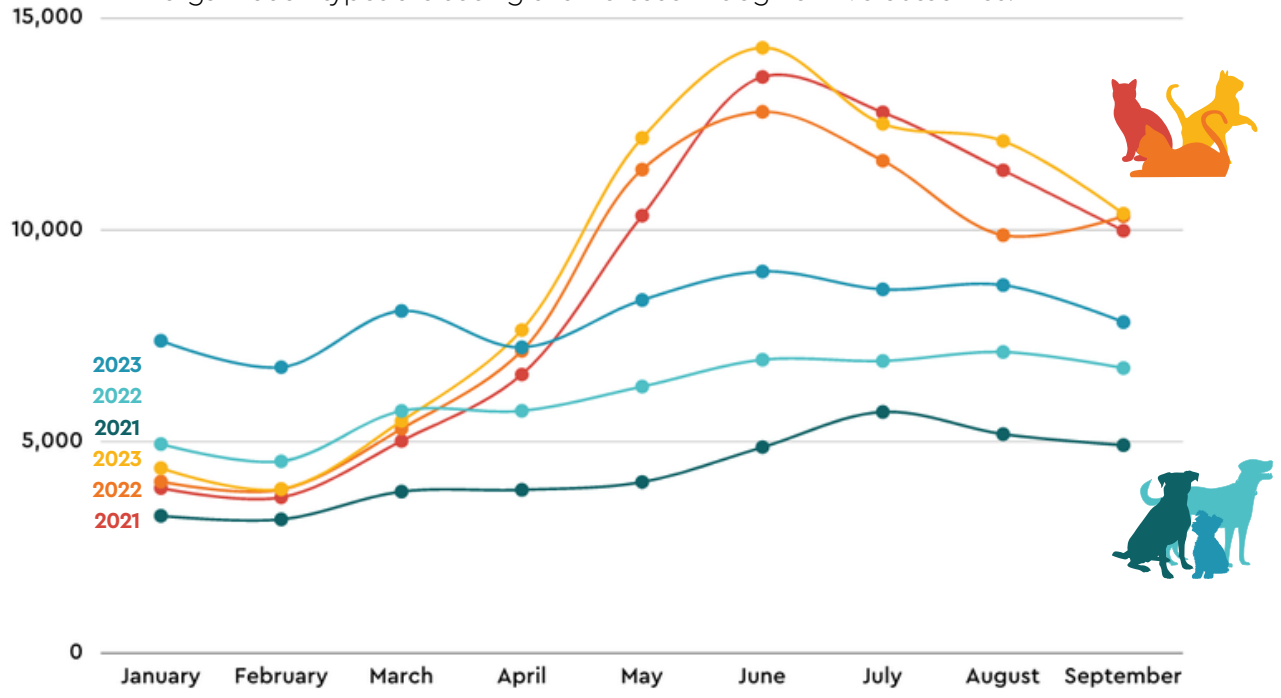


	CATS	DOGS	TOTAL
COMPARED TO 2022	↑ 2.8%	↓ 1.4%	↑ 0.7%
COMPARED TO 2021	↑ 4.9%	↑ 5.3%	↑ 5.1%



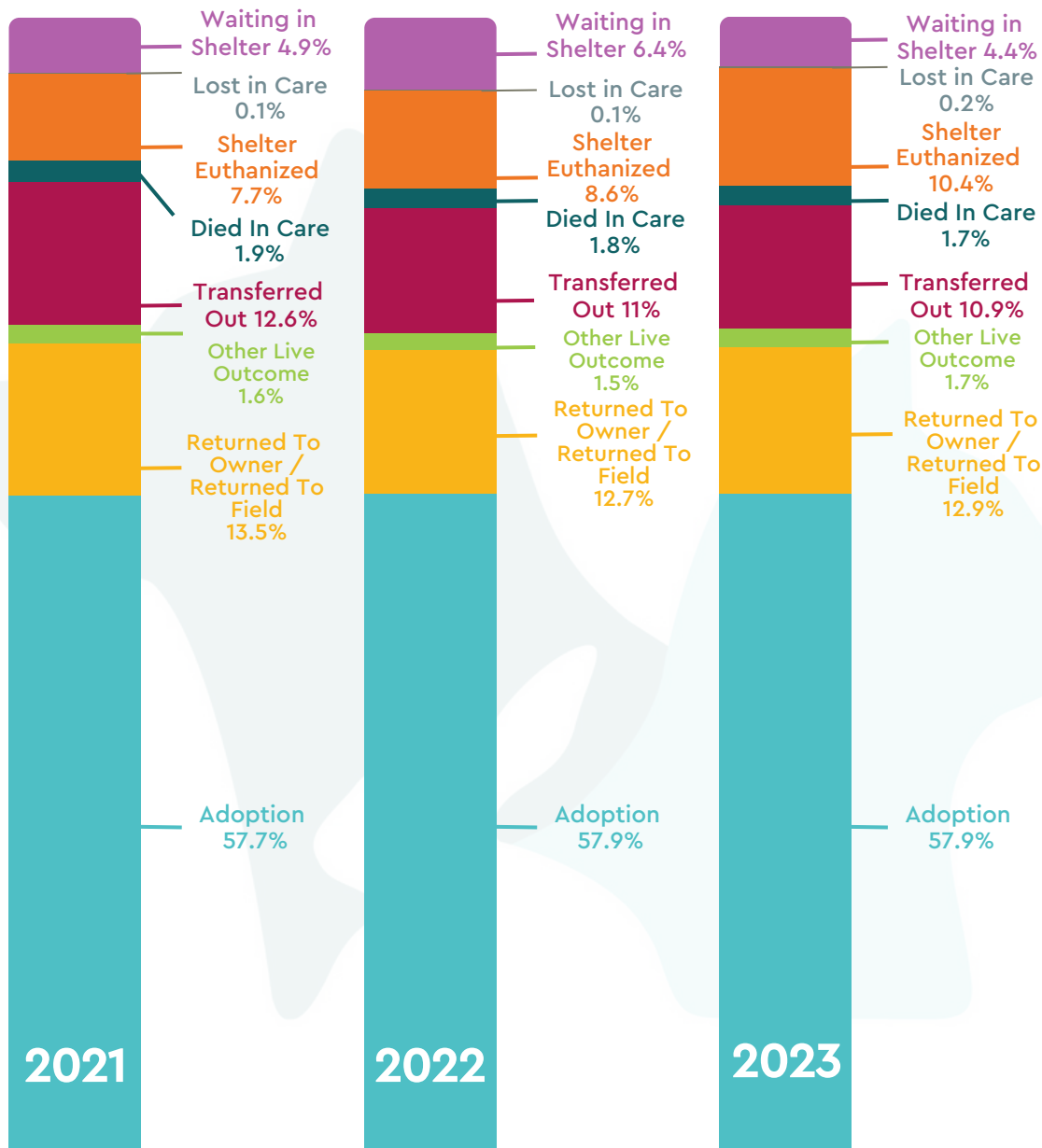
NON-LIVE OUTCOMES

Dogs are currently experiencing higher increases in non-live outcomes than cats. All organization types are seeing this increase in dog non-live outcomes.



	CATS	DOGS	TOTAL
COMPARED TO 2022	↑ 8.4%	↑ 30.9%	↑ 17.8%
COMPARED TO 2021	↑ 7.2%	↑ 85.3%	↑ 33.3%

TOTAL OUTCOME TYPES FOR DOGS AND CATS COMBINED, AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKES

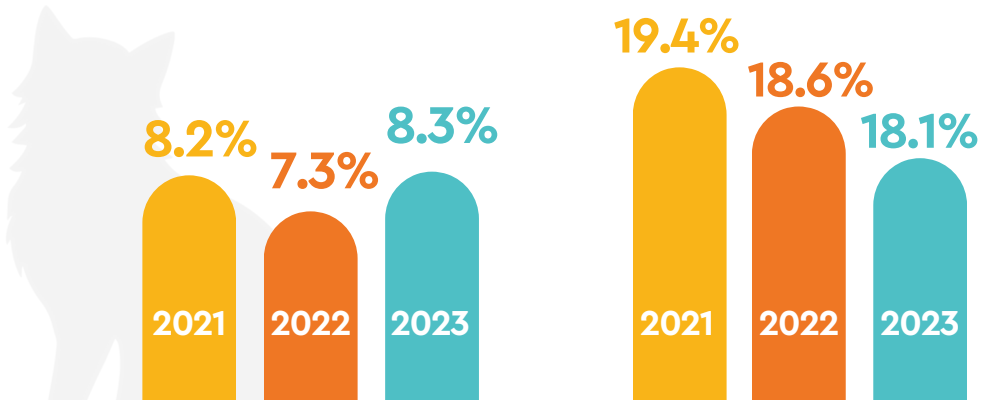


As intakes for dogs continue to rise, the number of dogs returned to their owners is decreasing (3.5% less than 2022 and 0.4% less than 2021). Overall, RTO rates are lower than the past 2 years (19.4% in 2021 to 18.1% in 2023).

RETURN TO FIELD/OWNER CATS

RETURN TO OWNER DOGS

Because dogs are not "returned to field" under normal circumstances, cat RTO rates artificially appear lower than dog RTO rates. For this reason, we have combined RTF and RTO rates for cats.



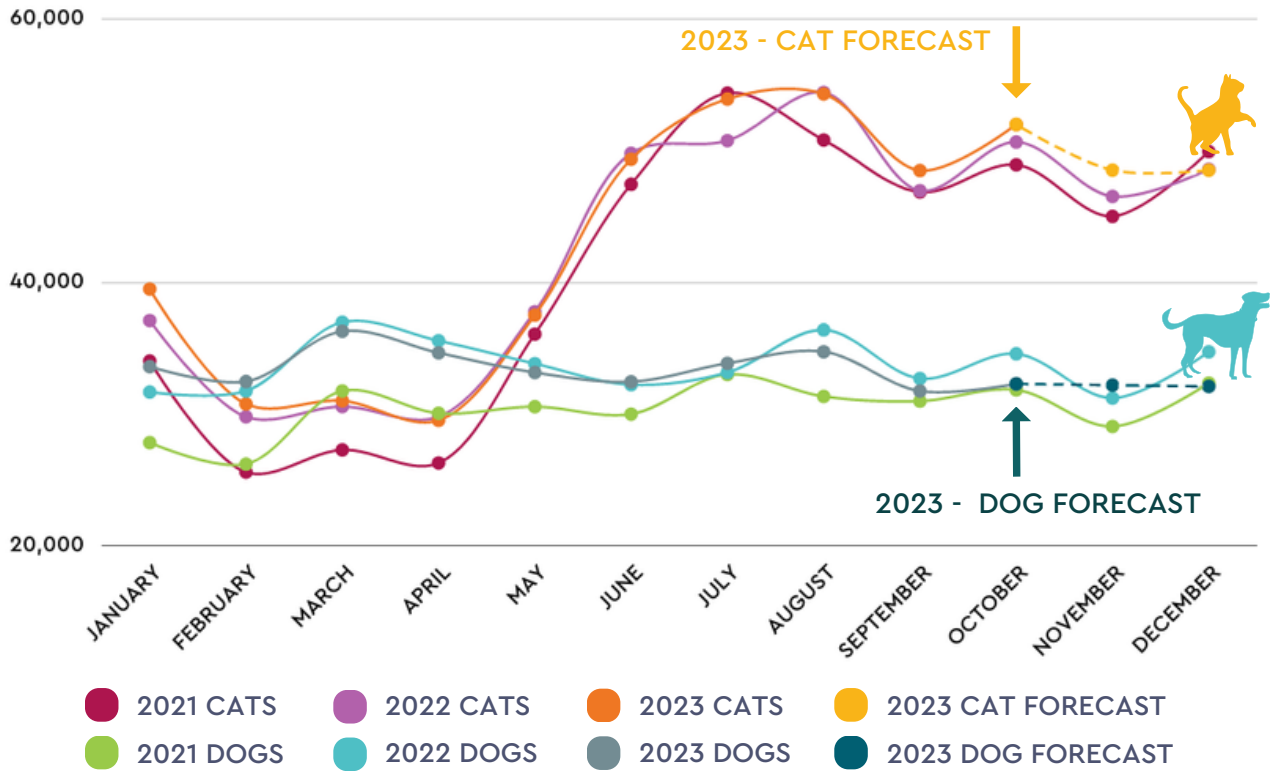
TOTAL OUTCOME TYPES AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKES IN Q3

ADOPTIONS

↑ 0.3%
 COMPARED TO
 JAN - SEPT 2022

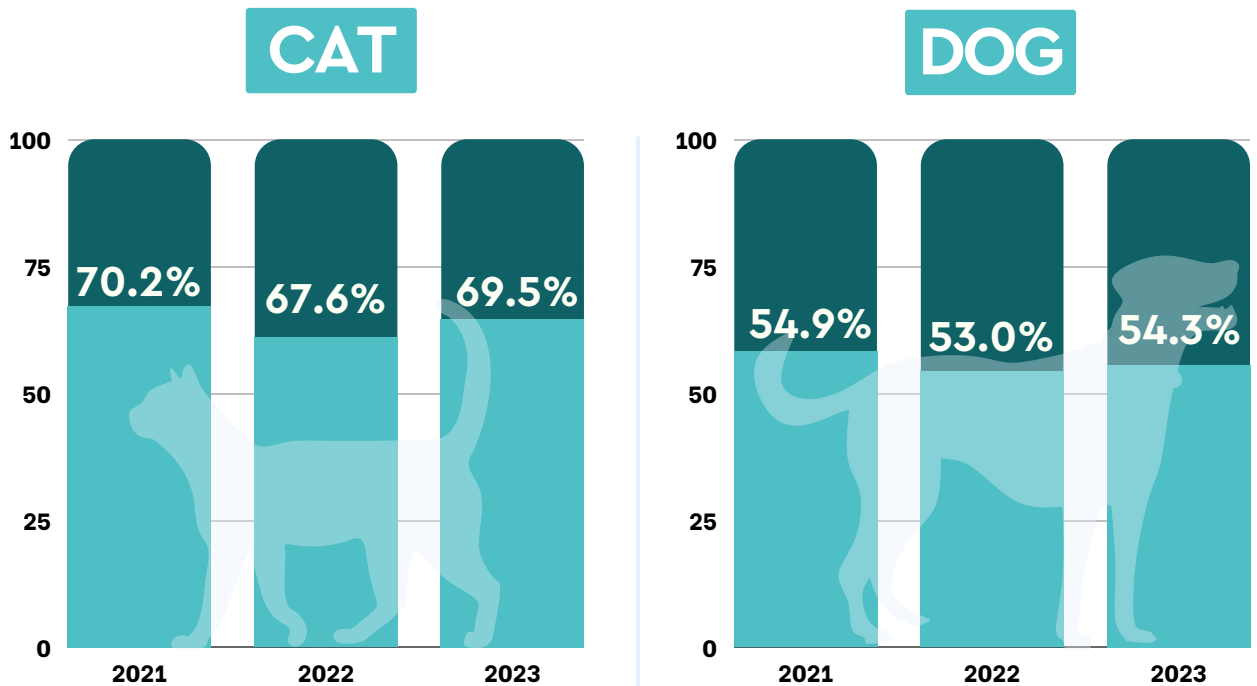


↑ 5.8%
 COMPARED TO
 JAN - SEPT 2021



Dog adoptions are down 1.2% from 2022, while cat adoption rates have rebounded from Q2.

JUL - SEPT ADOPTIONS AS A % OF TOTAL INTAKE

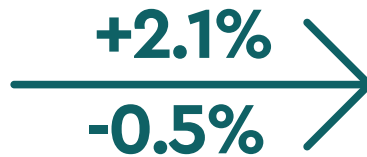


OUTCOMES BY ORG TYPE, DOGS & CATS COMBINED

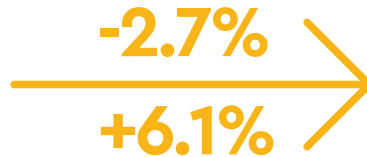


COMMUNITY & TRANSFERS

OUTCOMES CHANGES (2023 vs 2022)



COMMUNITY LIVE OUTCOMES
TRANSFERS OUT



COMMUNITY LIVE OUTCOMES
TRANSFERS OUT

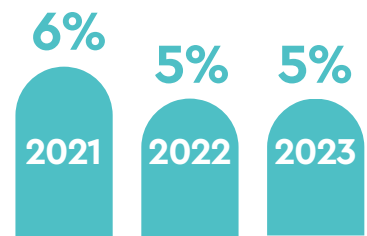
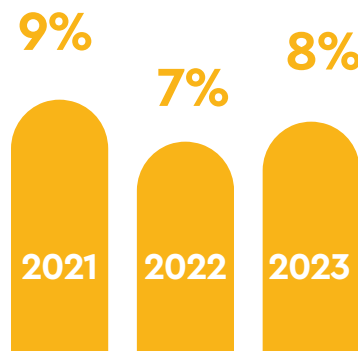
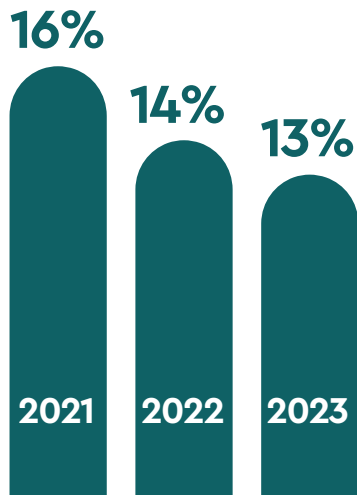


COMMUNITY LIVE OUTCOMES
TRANSFERS OUT

Government organizations transferred out roughly the same number of animals as 2022, but with increasing intake, the rate is still decreasing.

Rescues are experiencing fewer live outcomes than last year.

TRANSFER OUT % TOTAL INTAKES



A close-up photograph of a dog's face, likely a pit bull mix, with its tongue hanging out. The dog is looking directly at the camera. In the foreground, the dog's front paws are visible, holding a blue, textured ball. The background is slightly blurred, showing a carpeted floor. The entire image has a teal overlay.

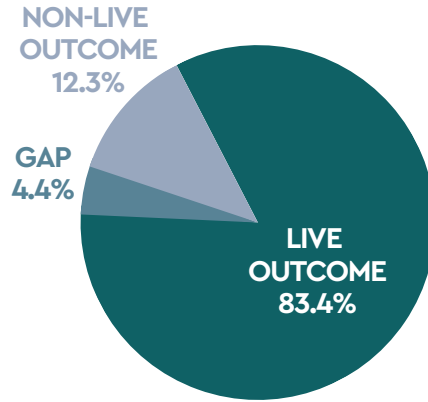
PBC

(POPULATION BALANCE CALCULATION)

SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT 2023 Q3 REPORT

2023 YEARLY COMPARISON AND 2023 FORECAST

POPULATION BALANCE CALCULATION



96% COMBINED SPECIES PBC THRU Q3

Population > 100% = More animals LEAVING than ENTERING

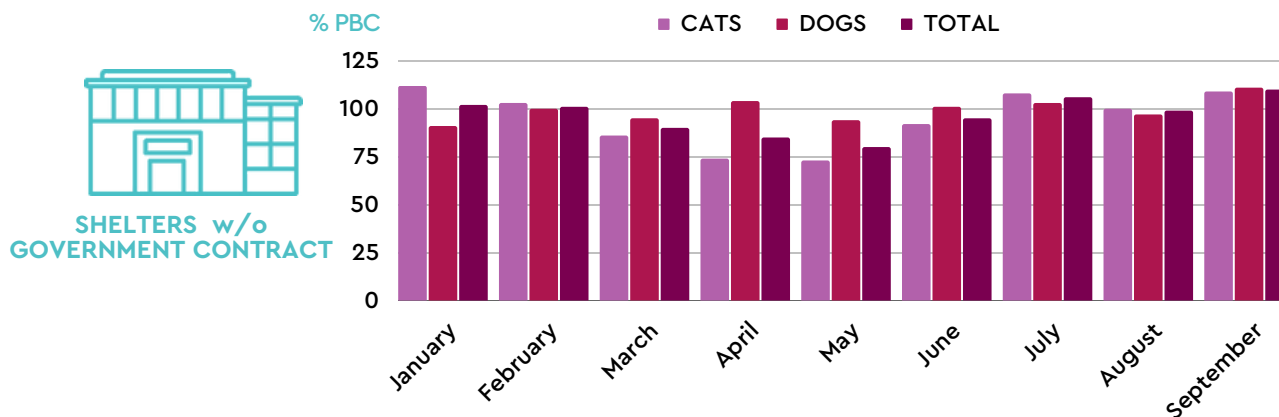
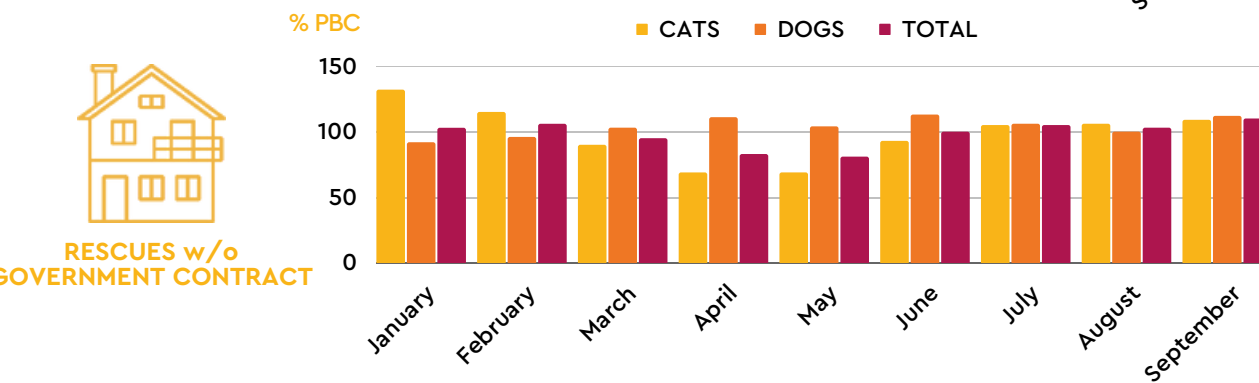
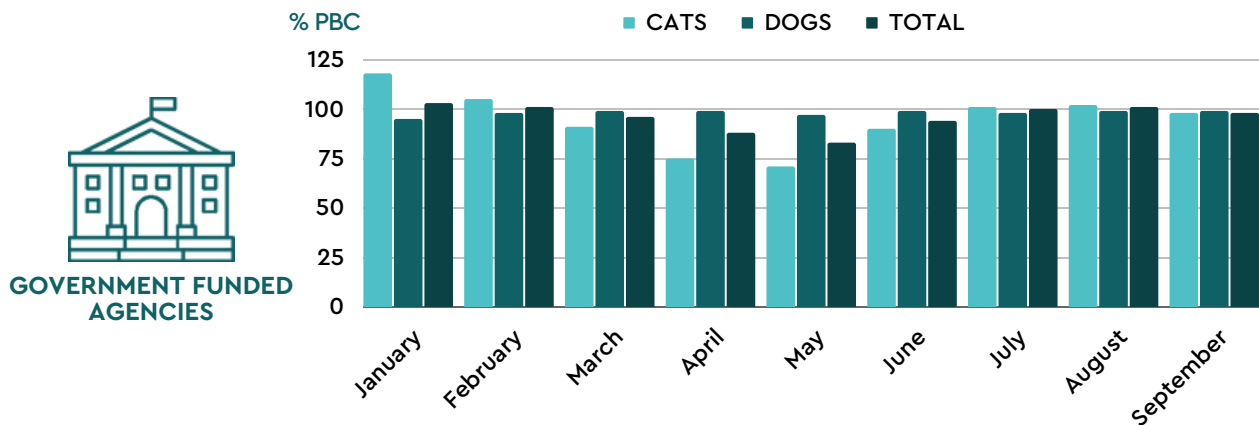
This could mean shelters have available kennel space, there was a successful large adoption event, etc.

Population = 100% = Stable

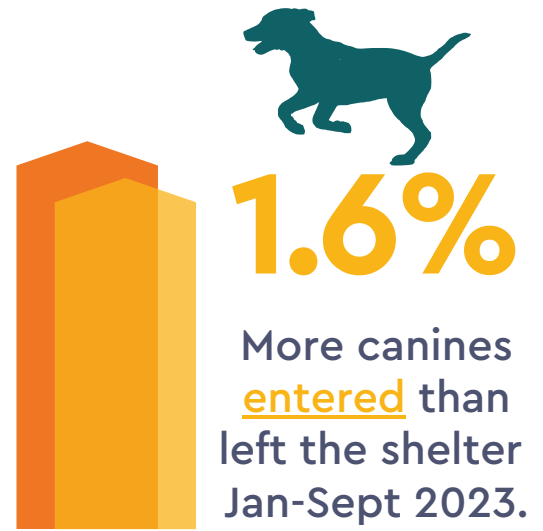
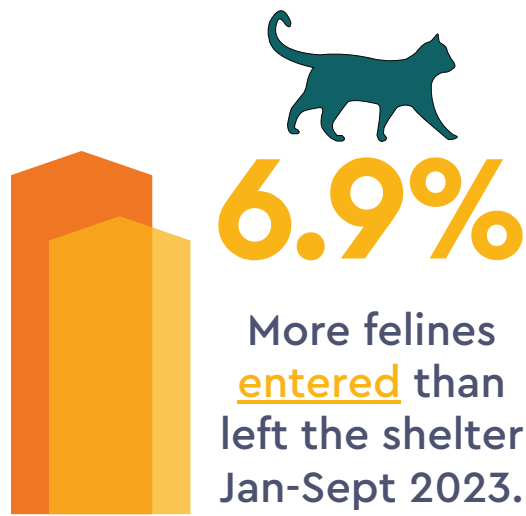
This could mean shelters have reached equilibrium, are working to correct after being over or under capacity, etc.

Population < 100% = More animals ENTERING than LEAVING

This could mean shelters are struggling with overcrowding issues, have just assisted with large intake cases, etc.



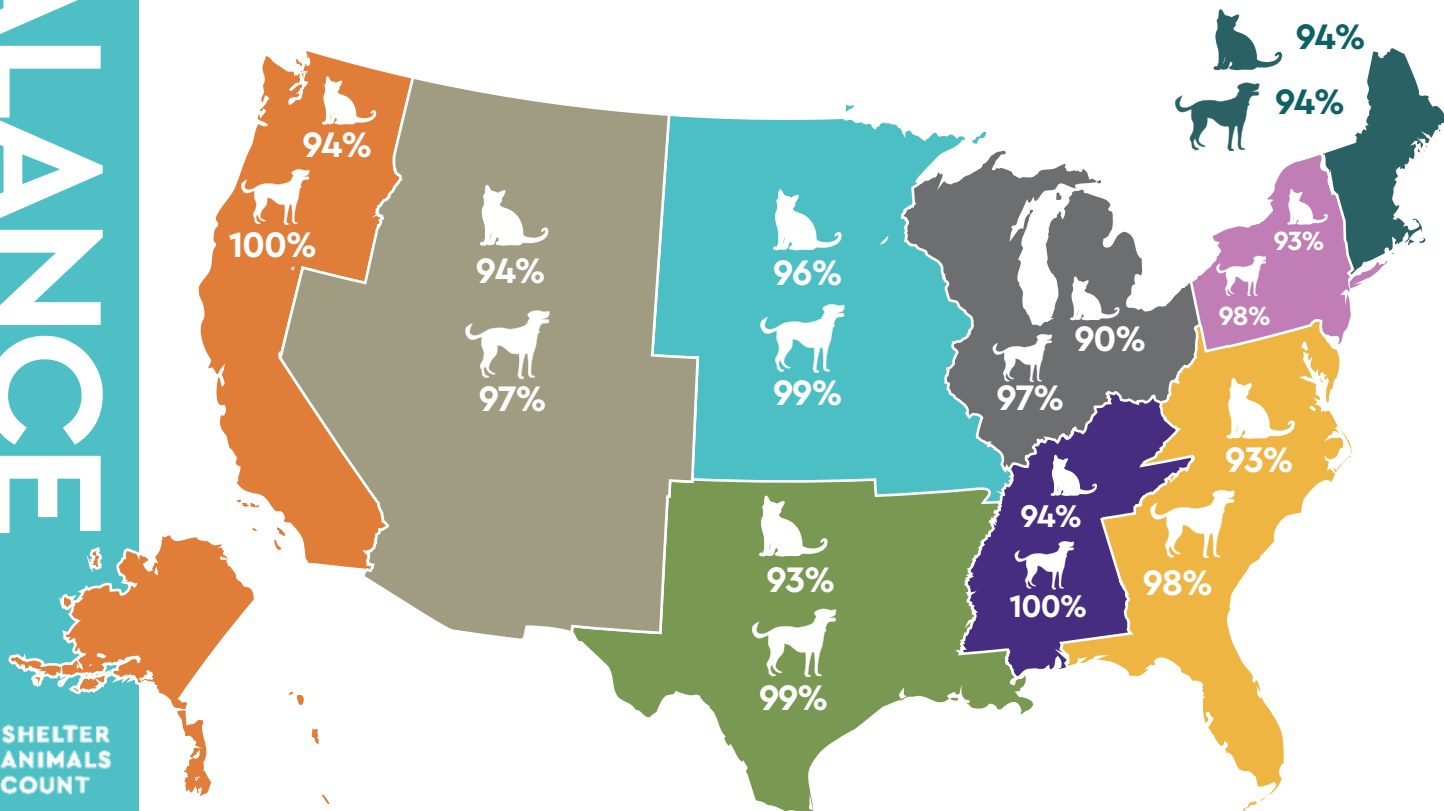
POPULATION BALANCE CALCULATION



2023 SPECIES PBC BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

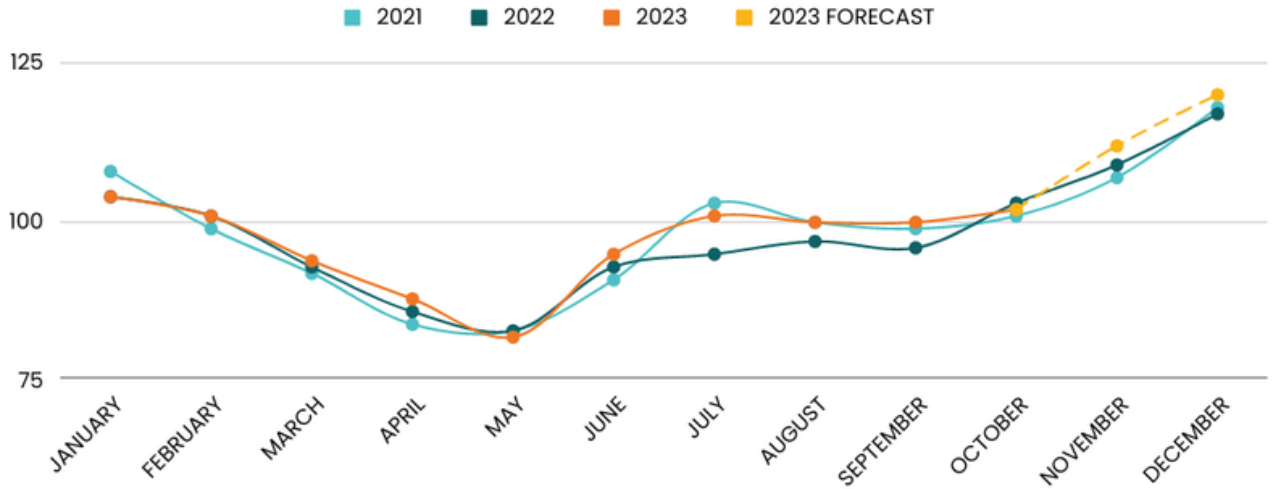


LOOKING FOR 2022 OR OLDER?
 Visit our Industry Trends dashboard at shelteranimalscount.org/data-dashboards.



FORECAST

COMBINED SPECIES PBC MONTH-BY-MONTH



After the first half of 2023, the projected forecast for total PBC in 2023 is now 99%.

2023 FULL YEAR FORECAST



2022



2021



2020



2019



Based on full-year 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and the first half of 2023, a forecast for community intakes, adoptions and the population balance calculation was developed for the remainder of 2023. This forecast is an estimate only.

DEFINITIONS

GROSS INTAKES

Stray, relinquished by owner, transfers in, other intakes (born in care, seized, etc.).

COMMUNITY (NET) INTAKES

Total intakes but does not include transfers in as an effort to show actual community intakes and to avoid double counting intakes when aggregating.

INTAKE TYPES % OF INTAKE

The percentage of total intakes that were a certain intake type.

TOTAL OUTCOMES

Includes all live outcomes and non-live outcomes.

LIVE OUTCOMES

Adoption, return to owner (RTO), return to field, transfer, and other live outcomes.

COMMUNITY (NET) LIVE OUTCOMES

Total outcomes excluding transfers out.

OTHER OUTCOMES/NON-LIVE OUTCOMES

Died in care, lost in care, and shelter euthanasia.

OUTCOME TYPES % OF INTAKE

The percentage of total intakes that resulted in certain outcomes.

POPULATION BALANCE CALCULATION

The formula SAC uses to determine if a shelter's population is increasing, decreasing, or staying the same. It simply takes the total outcomes divided by the total intakes for a time period.



100% EQUILIBRIUM

100% means that animals are leaving at the exact same rate that they're coming in, so the total number of animals is unchanged (equilibrium).

↑ ABOVE 100%

Over 100% means the population is decreasing (i.e. 107% means 7% more animals left than entered the shelter).

↓ BELOW 100%

Under 100% means the population is increasing (i.e. 97% means 3% of animals that entered stayed in the shelter).



SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT

THE NATIONAL DATABASE

2023
Q1 - Q3: JANUARY - SEPT

This report shows comparative data on sheltered animals from January - September for 2021 - 2023. Only organizations that reported complete data for the time period are included in the analysis.

Since there is no national requirement for reporting, all data is self-reported and contains natural under and over sampling biases in both the geographic and organization type dimensions.

Based on full-year 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and the first three quarters of 2023, a forecast for community intakes, adoptions and the population balance calculation was developed for the remainder of 2023.

This forecast is an estimate only.

16%

MORE REPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

compared to the 2022 Q3 report. 862 organizations contributed complete data for felines and canines in the Intake and Outcome Database for all 27 months of Jan - September 2021, 2022 and 2023.

3,128,984

CATS & DOGS COUNTED

2023: 1,081,210
2022: 1,060,164
2021: 987,610

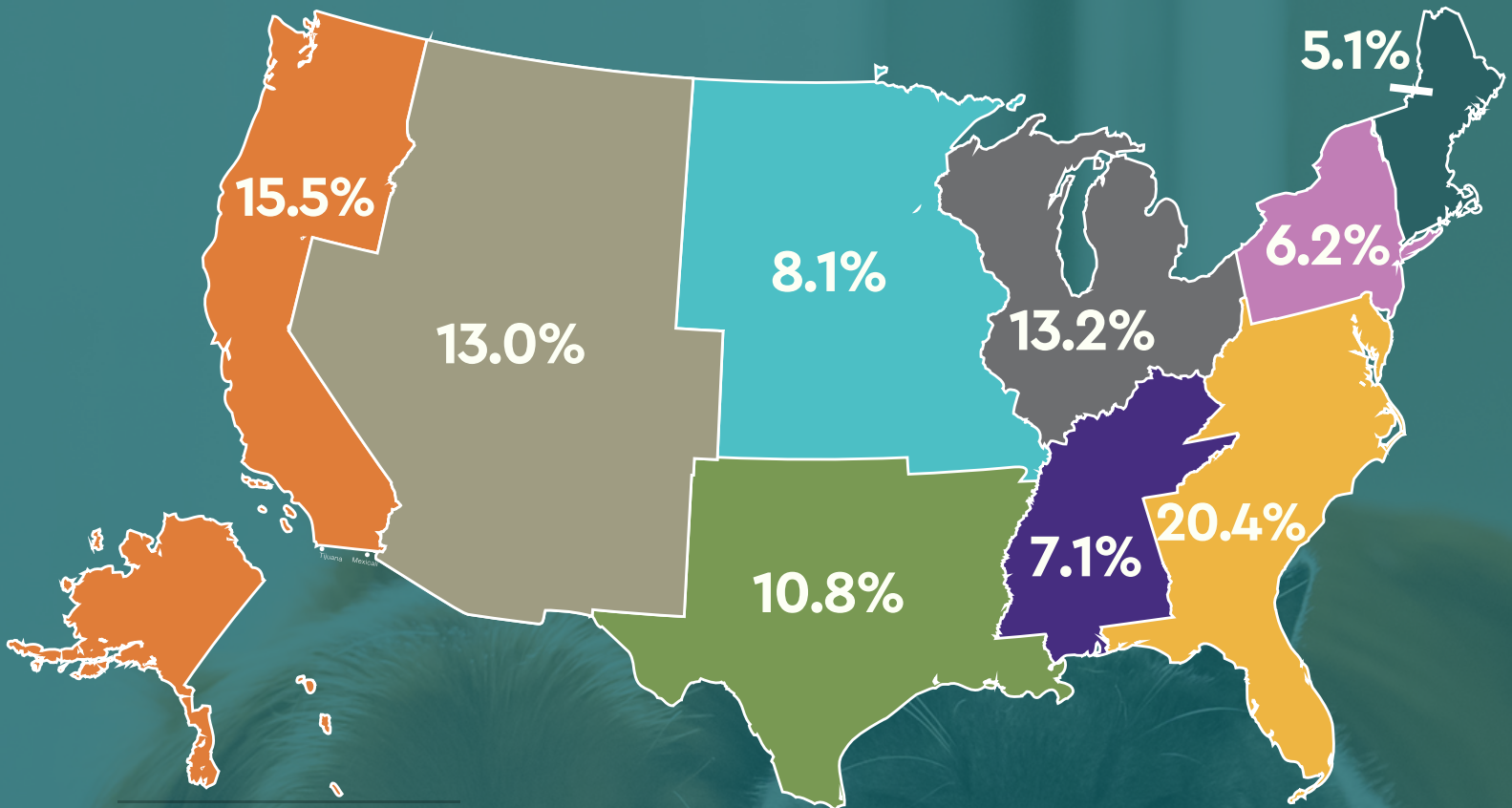


Find data for additional species, including rabbits, equines, small mammals, farm animals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, on our website at

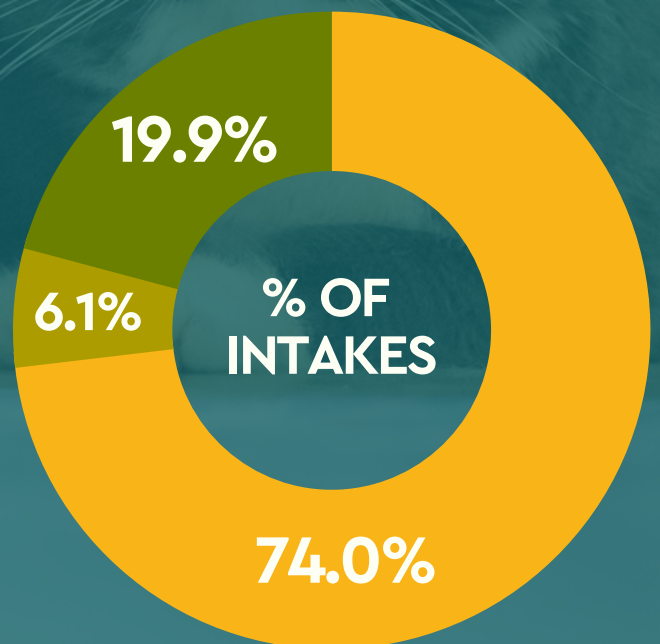
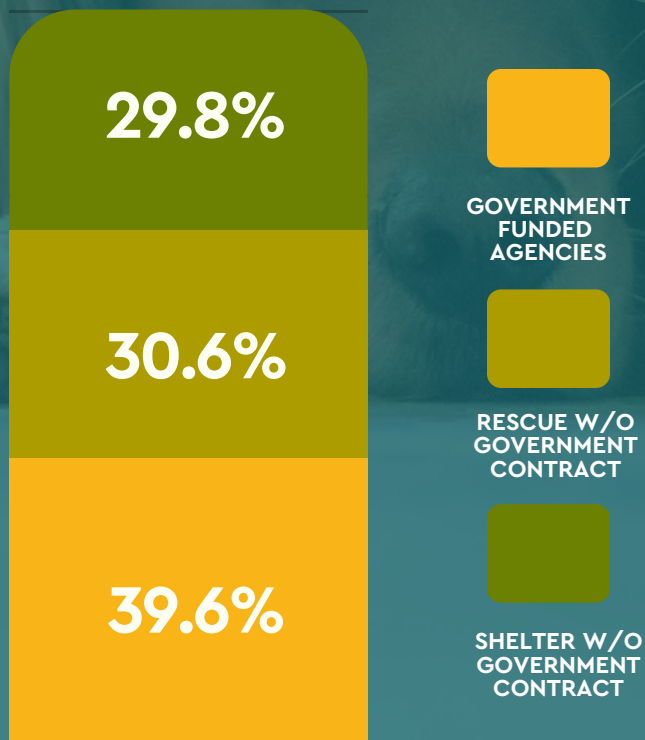
www.ShelterAnimalsCount.org

ORGANIZATIONS

% OF ORGANIZATIONS IN INTAKE/OUTCOME DATA BY REGION



% OF ORGANIZATIONS BY TYPE



ABOUT THE

NATIONAL DATABASE

24M

ANIMALS COUNTED

6,936

PARTICIPATING
ORGANIZATIONS

172

DATA POINTS
COLLECTED

53

REPORTING STATES
& US TERRITORIES

ABOUT SHELTER ANIMALS COUNT

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE FOR ANIMAL SHELTERING STATISTICS

Over the past few decades, several attempts were made to create a platform for shelter data reporting in the animal welfare industry. Shelter Animals Count was founded in 2012 by a diverse group of animal welfare agencies with the desire to come together as an industry and finally create a standardized database.

Their partnership and collaboration led to the development of The National Database, which aims to measure progress in animal welfare, foster collaboration, and address the issue of pet homelessness. Shelter Animals Count is a neutral, independent non-profit organization entrusted with analyzing and sharing animal sheltering data to provide crucial information and insights to save lives.

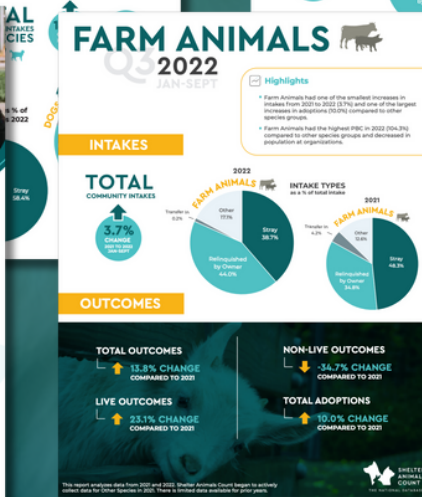
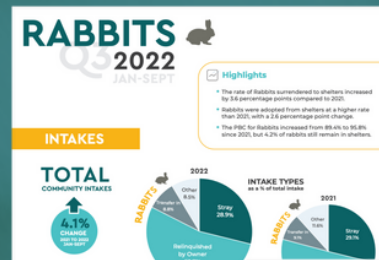
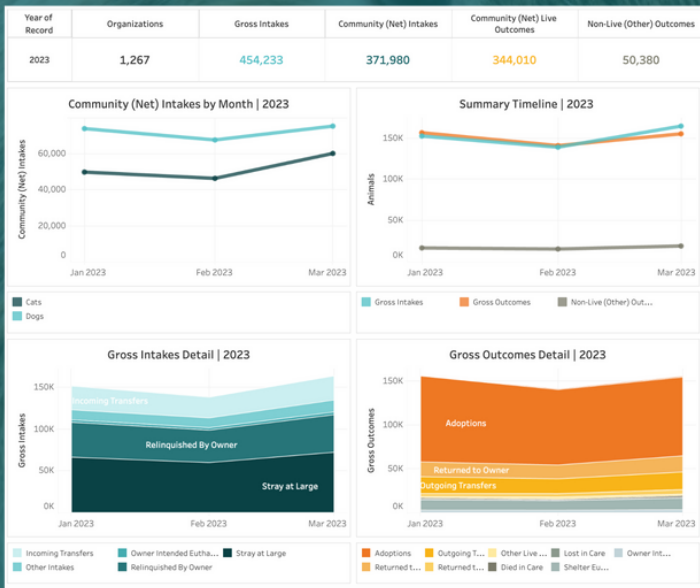
Data collection began in 2016 and has grown to include intake and outcome data from all organization types (without any minimum intake requirements), all species (beyond just cats and dogs), and community services (for owned pets) in all 50 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The database is continuing to grow with planned expansions into Canada, the collection of additional data points — including field services and more detailed intake and outcome data categories (animal-level data).

Shelter Animals Count operates as a 501(c)(3) organization, relying on grants, sponsorships and donations to fund their efforts.

ALL THIS...

AND SO MUCH MORE!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG](https://shelteranimalscount.org) TO VIEW OUR INTERACTIVE DASHBOARDS AND ADDITIONAL REPORTS





WWW.SHELTERANIMALSCOUNT.ORG

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