



February 5, 2024

Poul Weihrauch  
CEO and Office of the President  
Mars Inc.

Doug Drew  
President of Global Corporate Affairs  
Mars Veterinary Health North America

Dear Messrs. Weihrauch and Drew:

I'm writing again on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding our [undercover investigation](#) into The Veterinarians' Blood Bank (TVBB) and the related findings of the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH). Despite being aware now for several weeks of inhumane and dangerous conditions and practices at this facility, your subsidiaries—BluePearl Pet Hospital and VCA Animal Hospitals—have apparently ignored serious animal welfare and potential blood product contamination issues at TVBB, which warehouses nearly 900 dogs and cats *for life* and has long been a supplier of blood products to both Mars-owned veterinary chains.

Since our last letter, a BOAH inspection found that **every dog at TVBB whose teeth were examined by a state veterinarian had apparently untreated dental disease, some of which was severe.** As VCA itself explains, when animals develop dental disease, “increasing numbers of bacteria reside within the mouth and the oral tissues. These bacteria can enter the bloodstream and travel to other areas within the body, causing distant or systemic effects ... especially [in] the heart, the liver, and the kidneys.” VCA and BluePearl clients' critically ill or injured animals depend on the safety and efficacy of the blood you obtain, which is surely part of the reason why the BOAH saw fit to refer this matter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for further assessment.

The BOAH veterinarian also found that dogs had thickened skin and hair loss and that many lacked even a resting platform to permit them an escape from constant confinement on hard kennel floors. TVBB also admitted to drawing blood from dogs **every 19 to 21 days—four times more often than the 12-week intervals recommended by [BluePearl's own blood banks](#).**

BluePearl operates nearly a dozen community-based blood banks nationwide, and VCA manages its own canine blood bank in Oregon. Both programs emphasize the importance of safe blood drawn from healthy animals, and both have age cutoffs for “donors”—**8 years** at BluePearl and **6 years** at VCA. However, at TVBB workers drew blood for sale from animals who were as old as 12 years, emaciated, injured, or sick with infections or even cancer. If those factors disqualify a dog or cat from being used as a blood donor at your own subsidiaries' hospitals, the same standards should apply to your suppliers.

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

Washington  
1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles  
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

Norfolk  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org  
PETA.org

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

As one of the largest privately held companies in the U.S., Mars obviously has the resources to open more community-based blood banks and to make cruel captive-colony operations like TVBB—and any dog and cat blood supply shortage—a thing of the past. It's time that you and your subsidiaries implemented a policy against obtaining blood from animals held captive and committed to using only blood drawn from healthy dogs and cats who live in homes with loving families.

Thank you for your time and attention. I can be reached at [REDACTED]. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Deffinger".

Sarah Deffinger  
Senior Evidence Analyst  
Cruelty Investigations Department