



December 2, 2024

Ken Hicks
President & CEO
PetSmart Inc.

Dear Mr. Hicks:

I'm writing to share with you the latest disturbing findings of chronic deprivation and suffering in PetSmart's supply chain, this time at Reptiles by Mack. We first exposed this supplier in 2016, when [investigators](#) found that thousands of animals were confined to filthy, cramped plastic tubs and denied veterinary care and much else. Your predecessors ignored offers to meet about these findings and how PetSmart could mitigate these animals' systemic suffering.

Eight years later, little has changed for animals at Mack. A whistleblower contacted PETA after repeatedly trying to improve conditions for the thousands of bearded dragons warehoused there. Despite pleas to management, the eyewitness found that dragons were denied even the most basic necessities—*including water*. Dehydrated lizards desperately attempted to drink droplets of water left behind after the tubs they were kept in were rinsed. Some of the animals were left to suffer from severe injuries, and others were found dead by the dozens.

Many dragons twitched violently from what a supervisor said was adenovirus—a highly contagious virus spread by poor sanitation—which he said that “every single” dragon there had. Mack took no measures to contain the virus, according to the whistleblower, **potentially shipping sick dragons or asymptomatic carriers out to your stores and others nationwide.** According to a supervisor, staff worked late to “deep clean” before your representatives' **announced** visits to the bearded dragon department. Otherwise, the plastic tubs that the dragons were confined to went up to a full week without being cleaned.

This marks the eighth time that PETA has exposed rampant suffering at animal dealers with ties to big-box pet store chains like yours. Why does a company reportedly valued recently at \$14 billion insist on subsidizing small animal factories' cruelty and misery, incurring related public relations nightmares and driving away caring consumers who would otherwise happily purchase supplies from PetSmart? **Please do the right thing by phasing out the sale of animals.** As a first step, please let us know that you will immediately end your sales of bearded dragons, whose complex needs most pet store customers are not prepared to meet.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Daniel Paden
Vice President of Legal Advocacy
Cruelty Investigations Department

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.)