

New Research Shows Rabbits Are The Surprise Winners of UK's Lockdown - Rabbit Awareness Week 2020

Submitted by: Fred Marketing

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Media release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Survey Shows Rabbits Are The Surprise Winners of Lockdown

To mark the start of this year's Virtual Rabbit Awareness Week campaign, new research shows the positive impact of lockdown on the UK's pet rabbit population

This year's Rabbit Awareness Week takes place Aug 10–23 to help educate owners on how they can provide better levels of care for their rabbits.

There are nearly one million pet rabbits living in the UK but research continues to highlight rabbits are the UK's most neglected pet.

49% of pet rabbits live alone and 25% of rabbits live in adequate conditions, according to the PDSA's Animal Welbeing (PAW) Report.

LONDON, 10th August 2020 – New research published today by the organisers of Rabbit Awareness Week (RAW), the UK's largest welfare campaign for rabbits taking place Aug 10–23, has found that rabbits, widely regarded as the UK's most neglected pet, have been living happier and healthier lives as a result of lockdown.

The Pets in Lockdown survey heard from hundreds of pet owners across the UK and found that 88% of rabbit owners have been spending more time playing with their rabbits throughout lockdown, while 99% of rabbit owners said they enjoyed the extra time that they've been able to spend with their animals.

Many rabbit owners have also been using their spare time during lockdown to treat their animals and enhance their quality of life. 26% of rabbit owners have spent more money on improving their rabbits' accommodation during lockdown and 47% of owners said they'd splashed out more money on toys and boredom breakers to keep their rabbits stimulated.

Dr Suzanne Moyes MVB MRCVS from Burgess Pet Care said:

"Veterinary research consistently shows rabbits as being one of the UK's most neglected pets so it's amazing to see that so many rabbits are living happier and healthier lives as a result of lockdown. In addition to ensuring their rabbits are kept in pairs and have constant access to high quality feeding hay, it's a positive sign that rabbit owners are making all of the right moves to address poor quality accommodation and lack of regular interaction – two of the key contributors to unhappy bunnies!

"Rabbits make fantastic pets but it's important for owners to do their research in advance of

welcoming rabbits into their home so they can understand the responsibilities that are involved. While social distancing measures mean we've had to take a digital approach for this year's RAW campaign, rabbit owners can learn everything they need to know about rabbits from the UK's leading animal welfare experts by taking part in this year's campaign online."

RAW was created by Burgess Pet Care fourteen years ago to improve the lives of rabbits in the UK. Research from the 2019 PDSA PAW Report found that 25% of the UK's pet rabbits are kept in inadequate housing conditions, 21% are being fed unhealthy muesli diets and 49% of rabbits live alone, despite veterinary advice recommending that rabbits should always be kept in suitably bonded pairs as rabbits are social creatures.

To help address these issues, this year's RAW campaign will take place digitally as a two-week virtual festival, featuring live Q&As and educational videos from the UK's leading animal welfare organisations and charities, such as the RSPCA, PDSA, Wood Green the Animals Charity, the Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund, CEVA, Blue Cross and more. All of this content is free and can be accessed through the Rabbit Awareness Week Facebook page.

Topics covered by RAW's rabbit experts will cover the five animal welfare needs, with specialist advice provided on the following areas:

- How to feed rabbits the correct diet
- How to keep rabbits mentally stimulated
- How to rabbit-proof your garden
- How to protect rabbits against the deadly RVHD2 viral outbreak
- How to bond rabbits and turn them into best buddies
- Why high-sugar snacks like carrots should be avoided
- The risks associated with feeding muesli style diets

Rabbit owners can also visit the Rabbit Awareness Week website to download their free RAW packs, which contain rabbit care guides and a four-week Better Bunny programme to help owners spend more quality time with their rabbits.

For more information on this year's Rabbit Awareness Week campaign and for a full rundown of activities, please visit www.rabbitawarenessweek.co.uk

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NOTE TO EDITORS

For more information and expert advice from small animal experts in the veterinary profession or interview opportunities with RAW spokespersons, please contact (on behalf of Burgess Pet Care) Mat Ombler, Marketing Manager at Fred Marketing on +44 (0)1482 227227 or email mat@fredmarketing.co.uk

The Pets in Lockdown survey had 191 respondents, 109 of which were rabbit owners.

All of the assets related to this year's Rabbit Awareness Week campaign can be downloaded here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/toh8xnal0cpzepk/AAA8G-9WnEcRztXXTKhq7deXa?dl=0>

About Rabbit Awareness Week (RAW)

<http://www.rabbitawarenessweek.co.uk/>

<http://www.facebook.com/rabbitawarenessweek/>

<https://www.facebook.com/burgesspetcare/>

The RAW partners are a coalition of experts, organisations and welfare charities who actively campaign to improve the lives of UK rabbits. RAW is organised by Burgess Pet Care, and RAW partners include the RSPCA, Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund (RWAF), CEVA Animal Health, Scottish SPA, Wood Green The Animals Charity, PDSA and Blue Cross.

Social media users can join the conversation online using #RAWfest2020

For more information on RAW, please visit the RAW website: rabbitawarenessweek.co.uk

About Burgess Pet Care

www.burgesspetcare.com

Burgess Pet Care is a national animal feed and pet food supplier and manufacturer. As a family-owned business with over 300 years of history, the health and wellbeing of animals is Burgess Pet Care's number one goal. They actively work with a number of leading charities to help educate and raise awareness around animal welfare needs and are proud to be the main organisers of Rabbit Awareness Week.