

Food Needed for Community Pet Pantry

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fort Myers, Florida, 8/5/2008– Help is being offered by Lee County Animal Services to assist pet owners suffering economic hardships. The shelter is collecting pet food donations to be distributed to owners that would need to surrender their pets due to their inability to provide food and care.

It is in the animals' best interest to remain in their current home with the family that loves them. It is also heartbreaking for families or individuals to lose their pets as a result of losing their jobs or homes. Owners not only face the loss of their pet but with most shelters severely overcrowded, the pet may be euthanized when the shelter cannot find it another home. Often space is not available to accept all owner surrendered pets as Animal Services' core level of service is for the sheltering of stray animals. The shelter ultimately would have to euthanize an animal in its care to make room for an owner-surrendered pet. Animal Services takes in over 16,000 animals each year. In 2007 more than 5,000 of those pets were owner-surrenders.

Pet owners who need assistance may contact Lee County Animal Services at 239-533-7387 (LEE-PETS) to be placed on an approved list to receive pet food. A low-cost spay/neuter program is also available. By offering these types of programs to the public it is Animal Services' goal to reduce the number of owned pets relinquished to area shelters. Animal Services feels this is a better solution to the problem than owners surrendering them or the shelter having to euthanize them.

For more information about Lee County Animal Services' Pet Pantry or Low-cost Spay/Neuter Programs contact the shelter at 239-533-7387 (LEE-PETS) or visit www.LeeLostPets.com. Anyone who can assist by donating pet food, cat litter, or other pet products may bring them to the shelter at 5600 Banner Drive, Fort Myers, next to the Lee County Sheriff's Office off Six Mile Cypress Pkwy. Donations may be left at the door any time the shelter is not open.

For these programs to be affective, Animal Services depends on the community's support in the form of food and supply donations as well as monetary contributions. All donations made to Lee County Animal Services go to the Animal Care Trust Fund. Funds in the Trust are restricted for the benefit of homeless, ill and injured pets or to assist disadvantaged pet owners in Lee County. All donations are tax deductible in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 170-c (1).

