

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Iowa Fur Farm Breaks Federal Law, Should be Fined \$13.75 Million;
Group Claims Government Inspections Find Hundreds of Raccoons
in 'Unconscionable' and Dangerous Extreme Heat Conditions**

DES MOINES, IA – A fur farm located about 50 miles from here should be fined \$13.75 million by federal regulators after a series of inspections revealed hundreds of raccoons were allowed to suffer in "unconscionable...extreme heat conditions."

According to a U.S. Dept. of Agriculture complaint filed by the Maryland-based Fur Free Society Inc., Ruby Fur Farm Inc. of New Sharon, IA violated the Animal Welfare Act numerous times in USDA inspections from the end of 2016 through July involving 1,375 animal incidents. The USDA can levy a fine of up to \$10,000 per animal affected, per violation.

Fur Free Society is demanding the USDA not only fine Ruby Fur Farm Inc., but immediately terminate any and all licenses held by Ruby Fur Farm Inc. The complaint and USDA inspection reports can be found here: http://www.furfree society.org/Official_Complaint_8.25.2017.pdf.

Fur Free Society released this statement:

"It is unconscionable that these animals were allowed to suffer from such extreme heat conditions and dangerous conditions, despite repeated USDA citations. These animals are no different from the dogs and cats who are left in hot cars, and the public should be equally outraged at the gross mistreatment of these animals.

"We demand justice for these animals, and justice requires that the USDA impose the maximum fine allowable against Ruby Fur Farm Inc. in the amount of \$13,750,000 (\$10,000 per infraction, per animal). We further demand that the USDA immediately terminate any and all licenses held by Ruby Fur Farm Inc."

Background: Repeated violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act by Ruby Fur Farms Inc., including animals in desperate need of veterinary care, dangerous enclosures (including broken wires that could inflict injury or permit escape), filthy and unsanitary conditions (including dead animals in enclosures with live animals and insect infestations), and most egregiously, the building in which animals were housed (constructed of metal and not insulated) had temperatures that exceeded 100 F degrees with dangerous heat indexes as high as 122 degrees on four separate dates.

On four (4) separate occasions, USDA inspectors discovered animals in severe heat distress, panting, drooling, elevated respiratory rates, lethargic, not responsive to activity around them, and unable to cool off. The USDA's inspection reports warned Ruby Fur Farms Inc. on four (4) occasions that "[A]n animal may never be subjected to any combination of temperature, humidity and time that is detrimental to the animal's health or well-being," yet despite such warning, on four (4) separate occasions, animals were found to be in severe heat distress. Justice demands that the USDA take action against Ruby Fur Farm Inc.

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