



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

Public Opinion Research with Canadians on Pet Trade 2022/2023

Integrated Report

Prepared for Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Supplier: EKOS Research Associates Inc.

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For more information on this report, please contact Canadian Food Inspection Agency at:

cfia.information.acia@inspection.gc.ca

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français

Canada 

Public Opinion Research with Canadians on Pet Trade 2022/2023

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Supplier name: EKOS Research Associates Inc.

Date: March 31 2023

This report presents the results of an online survey conducted by EKOS Research Associates Inc. on behalf of Canadian Food Inspection Agency. This research was conducted between January 23 to February 14, 2023. This research consisted of an online survey with 2,076 Canadians, as well as focus groups with the public and pet owners, and in-depth interviews with individuals involved in commercial dog imports (for example, breeders, veterinarians, and animal welfare organizations).

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Recherche sur l'opinion publique 2022-2023 auprès de Canadiens sur le commerce d'animaux.

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SUMMARY

A. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is responsible for mitigating the risk of introduction and spread of certain animal diseases that could negatively impact both human health and animal health. Animal imports are one avenue in which diseases can enter and spread in Canada. The CFIA has increased its focus on dog imports, as there has been an increase in significant issues related to dog imports, such as non-compliances with humane transportation requirements and cases of canine-variant rabies (dog rabies) being introduced into Canada. A new temporary measure that prohibits the importation of commercial dogs into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies came into effect on September 28, 2022, with plans for expansion to apply additional conditions for importing personal pet dogs and assistance dogs from these countries. This research will support the CFIA in identifying areas that are of concern to the public and opportunities to improve outreach related to both dog and pet imports, as the CFIA continues to evaluate options for long term strategies.

Based on the volume, frequency, and types of questions received by both the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the CFIA, there is also a need to expand on communications about pet¹ imports and exports as a whole. The objective of this research is to develop a better understanding of audiences who are involved in the pet trade (import/exports): such as an individual's decision-making journey when adopting or purchasing a pet from abroad; individuals who travel with their pets or bring their pets to Canada; and the role that commercial importers (such as breeders, resellers, and animal welfare organizations) play in this broader ecosystem. This research also helps the CFIA identify and test key messages for future communications products.

Results will aid in the development of future communications tools and outreach campaigns as well as inform future policy and programs related to pet imports and exports.

¹ For the purposes of this research, the term “pets” is used in replacement of the term “certain regulated non-livestock animals, which includes companion animal and exotic species”.

B. METHODOLOGY

This research involved an online survey of 2,076 Canadians, as well as focus groups with the public and pet owners, and in-depth interviews with individuals involved in commercial dog imports (for example, breeders, veterinarians, and animal welfare organizations). The survey results can be considered representative of the Canadian general public, and are valid within a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Following data collection, the data from this survey were statistically weighted by age, gender, region, education, and dog ownership to ensure the sample is representative of the Canadian population according to 2021 Census data.

Differences noted underneath charts are statistically significant differences.

For the qualitative wave (focus groups and in-depth interviews) it should be noted that qualitative results are not generalizable to the broader population. Qualitative research seeks to develop insight and direction rather than quantitatively projectable measures. The purpose is not to generate “statistics” but to hear the full range of opinions on a topic, understand the language participants use, gauge degrees of passion and engagement and leverage the power of the group to inspire ideas. Participants are encouraged to voice their opinions, irrespective of whether or not that view is supported by evidence or shared by others. In some instances language such as many, some, or few is used to help provide directional context for the reader. It is not intended to quantify the findings.

Due to the sample size, the special recruitment methods used, and the study objectives themselves, it is clearly understood that the work under discussion is exploratory in nature. The findings are not, nor were they intended to be, projectable to a larger population.

Specifically, it is inappropriate to suggest or to infer that few (or many) real-world users would behave in one way simply because few (or many) participants behaved in this way during the sessions. This kind of projection is strictly the prerogative of quantitative research.

Appendix A contains a detailed description of the methodology used in this study.

Appendix B contains the full survey questionnaire.

Appendix C contains the focus group screening questionnaire.

Appendix D contains the focus group guide.

Appendix E contains the in-depth interview guide.

C. QUANTITATIVE KEY FINDINGS

Outlined below are key findings from the online survey. The remainder of this report describes survey results in more detail.

Pet ownership

Results reveal that many Canadians own pets. 56% of survey respondents indicated they own a pet, while 44% said they did not. Those who own pets were asked what type of pet(s) they own. Most indicated that they own dogs (62%) or cats (53%).

Canadians who own pets were asked where they acquired their pet. 28% indicated a Canadian breeder, followed by an animal welfare/rescue organization (24%), or a Humane Society/Canadian shelter (21%).

Results suggest that Canadians undertake limited research before acquiring a pet. Just under half (49%) indicated they researched the organization/source from which they acquired their pet to a great extent, and 1 in 3 (33%) researched the organization/source to only a little extent.

Those who own a pet were asked the origin of their pet. Results suggest that most pets are born in Canada (83%), however a sizeable minority were born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by someone else (9%), or acquired directly from another country (6%).

Those who acquired their pet directly from another country were asked where they found information on requirements for bringing their pet(s) into Canada. Government websites were mentioned most often (57%), followed fairly distantly by a web search engine (20%), calling a government agency (18%), or an animal welfare/rescue organization (18%).

Consideration of a new pet

Respondents were asked if they were considering getting a pet in the next year. About 1 in 4 (23%) said yes, while two thirds (64%) indicated no. Those considering getting a pet in the next year were asked whether they think they will get a pet born in Canada, or one that is born in another country and then brought into Canada before adopting it. Most (74%) say they will get a Canadian born animal, however, a fairly large proportion (22%) are unsure.

Those who believe they will acquire their pet from outside the country were asked where they would look for information about bringing a pet into Canada. Most of these respondents indicated they would get this information from a government website or an animal welfare/rescue organization.

Travelling with pet(s)

All pet owners were asked if they had ever travelled outside of Canada with their pet(s). The majority of pet owners (83%) indicate they have not travelled abroad with their pet(s), while about 1 in 6 (17%) say they have.

Those who travelled outside Canada with their pet(s) were asked how often they travel with their pet(s). Most (41%) have only travelled once or twice since they have owned their pet(s), although a fairly large proportion (20%) say they travel more than 3 times per year with their pet(s), and a further 15% say they travel 2-3 times per year with their pet(s). The United States is mentioned most often (89%) as the country to which these respondents travelled, followed distantly by Mexico (5%), and the Bahamas (2%).

All pet owners were asked to rate their awareness of requirements regarding travelling with pet(s). Results suggest Canadian pet owners feel they are generally knowledgeable about these requirements. More than half (56%) say they are very aware that if they travel with a pet they will need to meet specific requirements to bring the animal into the country they are visiting, and 51% say they are very aware that they will also need to meet specific requirements when bringing the animal back into Canada.

Bringing pets into Canada

All respondents were asked to rate their understanding of the regulations and requirements for bringing pets into Canada. Results reveal limited awareness of these requirements (although awareness is significantly higher among pet/dog owners). Overall, only 1 in 4 (24%) indicate they understand these requirements, while 49% indicate little understanding of these requirements. However, 38% of dog owners, and a clear majority (72%) of those who acquired their pet directly from another country indicate awareness of these requirements.

Canadians generally feel primary responsibility for ensuring that pets brought into Canada are healthy and free of animal disease rests with the individual/organization that brings the animal into Canada (48%). The government is seen as having somewhat lower responsibility (29%), and the individual adopting the pet is assigned lowest responsibility (18%).

When asked which government departments should be consulted when bringing pets into Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency is mentioned most often (81%), followed distantly by the Public Health Agency of Canada (32%), and provincial government departments (26%). Interestingly, the CFIA is fairly low on the list of departments to check (17%), however, this rises to 34% among those who acquired their pet directly from another country.

Views on rabies/animal diseases

Respondents were provided with information about rabies and then asked how concerned they were about dog rabies getting into Canada. Interestingly, despite being informed that globally dog rabies kills 59,000 people every year, and that it is prevalent in over 100 countries, fewer than half of Canadians (46%) are concerned about rabies entering the country, and 1 in 3 (32%) express little concern about this possibility.

Respondents were also informed that the Canadian government had recently introduced a new measure that prohibits commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies from entering Canada, and asked if they were aware of this new measure. Results reveal limited awareness of this new measure: 8 in 10 (79%) are not aware of it, while only 1 in 5 (20%) say they are aware.

Despite limited awareness of this new measure, when asked if they support or oppose this new measure 70% of Canadians support this regulation, and only 1 in 10 (9%) oppose it.

When asked to identify the reasons for supporting this measure, the health of pets, wildlife, and animals in general (14%), and protecting human health (13%) were mentioned most often.

All respondents were also asked how important they think it is that the Government of Canada prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada. Results reveal that the vast majority of Canadians (88%) assign high importance to this issue, and very few (3%) view this as being of little importance.

Results are more mixed in terms of belief in the government's ability to actually prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases into Canada. Only 4 in 10 (42%) express confidence in the government's ability to prevent the entry of serious animal diseases into Canada, and almost 3 in 10 (27%) express little confidence in the government's ability to do this.

Awareness and use of the CFIA website

When asked if they were aware that the CFIA's website has information for bringing animals/pets into Canada, three quarters of Canadians (73%) indicated they were unaware of the website. 1 in 5 (22%) indicated they were aware of the site but have never used it, and only 5% have used the website. However, awareness/use of the CFIA website is significantly higher among dog owners (36%), and those who acquired their pet directly (58%) or indirectly (36%) from another country.

Those who have used the CFIA website were asked to rate the usefulness of the site in helping find information about the requirements for importing animals/pets. The majority of these respondents (73%) indicated they found the site to be helpful, and only 14% thought the site was of little help in finding information about importing pets into Canada. And notably, 94% of those who acquired their pet from another country felt the CFIA website was helpful.

Awareness of Government of Canada advertising

All respondents were asked if they had seen, read, or heard any Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet. The vast majority of indicated they had not been exposed to this advertising (95%).

Among those who indicated they had seen Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet, most indicated they had seen the ads on television (38%), or Facebook (30%).

The majority of respondents who saw the ads indicated that they did not take action as a result of seeing the ads (87%), and only about 1 in 8 (13%) said they did take action as a result of the advertising.

Despite the limited reach and impact of the advertising, views on the ads are generally positive, with 8 in 10 indicating the ads talk about an important topic, and 7 in 10 agreeing that the ads provided new information, and caught their attention.

D. QUALITATIVE KEY FINDINGS

Outlined below are key findings from the focus groups and in-depth interviews. The remainder of this report describes qualitative results in more detail.

Focus groups

Focus group participants agree that it is important to consider where a dog is acquired, with a priority placed on obtaining a dog from local sources, and that prior to acquiring a dog, it is important to understand the dog's history, characteristics of the dog or breed, and health information. The opportunity to foster a dog, or talk to the dog's foster, is also seen as helpful before making a decision.

Many participants felt that there is less opportunity to investigate these factors when acquiring a dog from another country. The risk of disease, and travel stress for the dog, along with the abundant availability of dogs in Canada for rescue or adoption, were also mentioned as potential reasons for not acquiring a dog from abroad.

Very few focus group participants have experience with the requirements and procedures for bringing a dog into Canada. Few had accessed the CFIA website to look for information about requirements; however, those who had accessed the CFIA website were able to obtain the necessary information.

Some focus group participants were aware of recent cases of rabies but very few have heard about canine-variant rabies (dog rabies). There was limited concern about the spread of rabies as focus group participants felt that rabies is very rare. A few talked about government measures to distribute vaccination packets to wildlife or prevent dog rabies.

There is moderate awareness of recent measures to prevent dog rabies from entering Canada among focus group participants. Many participants support the measures to prohibit commercial dogs from entering Canada who originate from countries at high-risk for dog rabies. Some who supported it also offered modifications to these measures such as quarantining a dog or producing historical records of rabies vaccination, rather than an outright prohibition.

5 examples of advertisements were presented to focus group participants that were used in previous international dog adoption campaigns. Participants were asked to provide feedback on various attributes of the advertisements.

- Some focus group participants felt the ads were clear in conveying the message about risks and the need to be informed when bringing in dogs from other countries. However, it was deemed that the message needs to be strong and specific. For example, the message is more impactful when "rabies" is specifically mentioned rather than "disease". Further, these participants felt that the message must include a clear call to action.

- When the message was not strong or specific, many participants felt that the ad did not command attention. Focus group participants were divided on whether the associated images should show a healthy or sick dog.
- Many focus group participants felt that a specific messaging approach such as “Rabies kills 59,000 people a year” would garner attention, however, some felt that this approach needs to be more specific such as adding the context of “worldwide”, or indicating how people can be infected with rabies. A few felt there would be benefits to making a CFIA reference more prominent as the authority responsible for regulating the entry of dogs into Canada.
- Focus group participants tended to prefer the ads with examples of questions to ask, or generally have greater clarity of messaging and a call to action.

In-depth interviews

Interview participants indicated that the primary consideration when importing a dog to Canada is the health of the dog. This can be determined through proof of vaccination, health assessment by a veterinarian, and reputation of the welfare/rescue organization or breeder, according to participants. Information should also be obtained about the temperament of the dog, and potential health issues associated with the particular breed of dog.

When importing dogs from outside Canada, most participants were concerned about introducing diseases to other animals. Many participants agree that potential dog owners are apt to make emotional decisions when importing a dog from another country. Participants are divided on the need for importing dogs into Canada for adoption/rehoming; some feel the dogs may be living in poor conditions in other countries with few prospects so are in need of adoption, while others point out that there are many potential dogs in Canada in need of adoption, particularly in the North.

Many participants were familiar with canine variant rabies or dog rabies, along with the measure implemented in September 2022, to prohibit commercial dogs being imported into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies. Many interview participants support the measure; however, some feel that it is not necessary as long as there are certificates of health or vaccine records available.

Some felt that it is ineffective to apply the measure only to commercial dogs, when other dogs, presented as personal dogs, may enter Canada with rabies. Alternatively, many participants were comfortable with personal dogs entering from countries at high-risk for dog rabies, as long as sufficient health records were available. Some participants support the use of a quarantine for dogs coming into Canada from high-risk countries, rather than a prohibition.

Some participants also pointed out that there are diseases prevalent in dogs in other countries aside from rabies that are of concern when bringing a dog to Canada.

Interview participants felt that the CFIA may help provide education, tools and information to the industry and pet owners regarding factors to consider when bringing an animal to Canada. Most participants felt that fraudulent paperwork is a concern, although difficult to mitigate. Suggestions to address this included the creation of standardized documentation and a microchip requirement for all dogs. Individuals presenting non-compliant animals at a border should be denied entry, according to most interview participants, with many supporting a ban to the importer on future attempts to enter Canada, along with a fine. Most interview participants support the use of a classification system to identify reputable importers, allowing them to bring dogs into the country, even from higher risk countries.

Conclusions

Results from this study point to a need for public education given that many pet owners acquire (or may acquire) dogs from outside of Canada, yet Canadians have limited understanding of the requirements for bringing pets into Canada (although understanding of these requirements is higher among those who acquired their pet from outside the country).

Survey results reveal limited awareness and use of the CFIA website containing information for bringing animals/pets into Canada. However, awareness/use of the CFIA website is significantly higher among those who acquired their pet directly or indirectly from another country. Findings also reveal that the majority of those who have used the website found the site to be helpful, with 94% of those who acquired their pet from another country indicating the CFIA website was helpful. Qualitative findings reinforce these survey results. While few focus group participants had accessed the CFIA website to look for information about requirements, those who had accessed the website said they were able to obtain necessary information from the site.

Survey results reveal limited public concern about dog rabies entering Canada, and little awareness of a new Government of Canada measure prohibiting commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies from entering Canada. However, despite limited concern about rabies entering the country, or awareness of this new measure, results reveal strong support for the measure. Qualitative results generally reinforce these survey findings. Most focus group and in-depth interview participants express limited concern about rabies, but support the measures to prohibit commercial dogs from entering Canada who originate from countries at high-risk for dog rabies. However, qualitative findings also reveal that some participants feel that a prohibition is not necessary as long as there are health certificates or

vaccine records available; while others prefer the use of a quarantine for dogs coming to Canada from high-risk countries, rather than an outright prohibition. A number of stakeholders argued for a focus on a broader array of diseases, rather than an exclusive focus on rabies.

Survey findings also indicate that Canadians strongly believe it is important that the Government of Canada prevent the entry of animal diseases into Canada, but express more mixed views in terms of belief in the government's ability to actually achieve this.

Survey results suggest that the CFIA is reaching its most important target audience (i.e., those who acquire their pets/dogs directly or indirectly from outside the country) with needed information about the requirements for bringing pets into Canada, but that the public as a whole, and pet owners whose pets were born in Canada, are less aware of this information. Given that a fairly large proportion of Canadians are considering getting a pet in the next year, and that many are unsure if they will acquire this pet from outside Canada, it is important to broaden the reach of this information and better communicate the resources CFIA has to help when bringing pets into Canada. This increased communication about requirements and resources for importing pets into the country might also help improve Canadians' confidence in government efforts to prevent serious animal diseases from entering Canada.

Increased communication from government is also mentioned by focus group and interview participants. Several focus group participants emphasized the need for education efforts to inform the public, and in particular dog owners and prospective dog owners, of the issues and considerations with regard to the various risks when bringing a dog into the country. And many in-depth interview participants felt the CFIA is well positioned to help provide education, tools and information to the industry and pet owners regarding factors to consider when bringing an animal to Canada. A few interview participants also felt the government should do a better job of consulting with industry before implementing new measures such as the recent prohibition on importing commercial dogs into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies.

E. CONTRACT VALUE

The contract value for the POR project is \$98,084.00 (including HST).

Supplier Name: EKOS Research Associates

PWGSC Contract Number: CW2252930

Contract Award Date: December 7, 2022

To obtain more information on this study, please contact CFIA at cfia.inquiries-demanded@enseignements.acia@canada.ca

F. POLITICAL NEUTRALITY CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of EKOS Research Associates Inc. that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Directive on the Management of Communications.

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed by: 
Derek Jansen (Vice President)

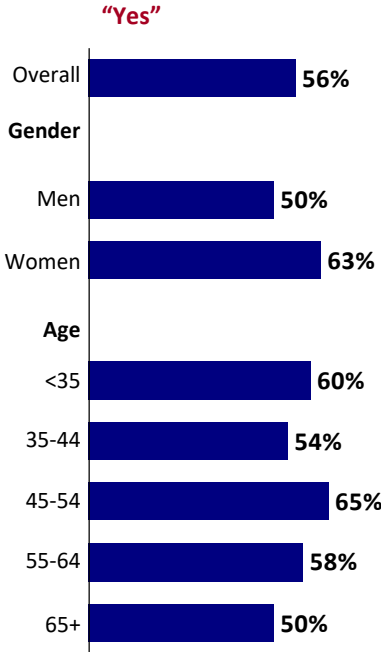
QUANTITATIVE DETAILED FINDINGS

A. PET OWNERSHIP

Pet ownership (i)

Respondents were first asked if they owned any pets. 56% indicated they did, while 44% said they did not.

Chart 1: Pet Ownership (i)



Q1. Do you own any pets?

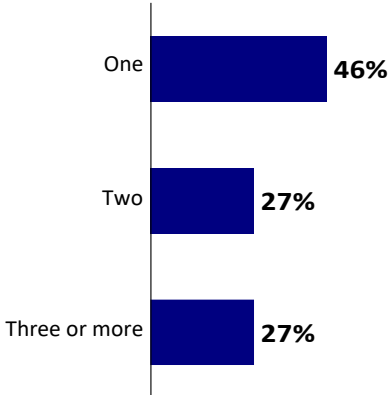
Base: n=2076

- Quebec residents (67%), women (63%), those 45-64 years of age (65%), those with high school education (61%), and those with children (62%) are particularly likely to indicate they own a pet.

Pet ownership (ii)

Those who indicated they own pets were asked how many animals they owned. Most indicated just one (46%), however, about 1 in 4 of these respondents said they owned 2 pets (27%), or 3 or more pets (27%).

Chart 2: Pet Ownership (ii)



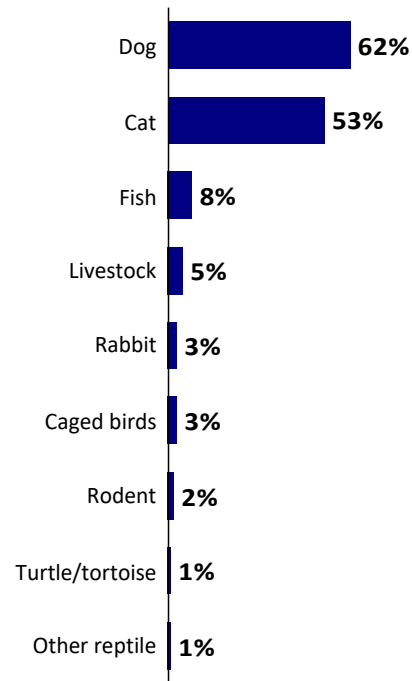
Q2. How many pets do you own?

Base: n=1286

Type of pets owned

Those who own pets were asked what type of pet(s) they own. Most own dogs (62%) or cats (53%). About 1 in 10 (8%) say they own fish.

Chart 3: Type of Pets Owned



Q3b. What type of pet(s) do you own? [Select all that apply]

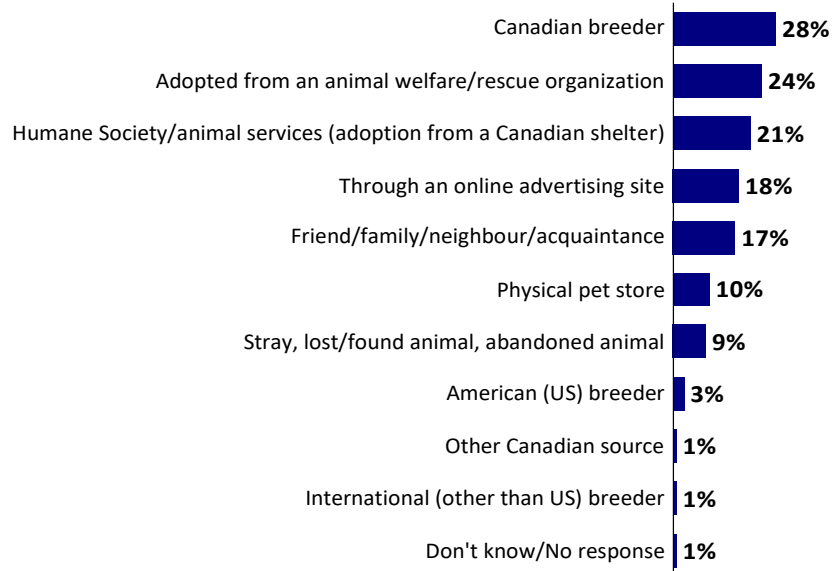
Base: n=1286

- Saskatchewan/Manitoba residents (80%), men (66%), those 55 years of age and older (73%), and higher income earners are more likely to indicate they own a dog.

Source for acquiring pet

Canadians who own pets were also asked where they acquired their pet. 20% indicated a Canadian breeder, followed by an animal welfare/rescue organization (24%), and a Humane Society/Canadian shelter (21%).

Chart 4: Source for Acquiring a Pet



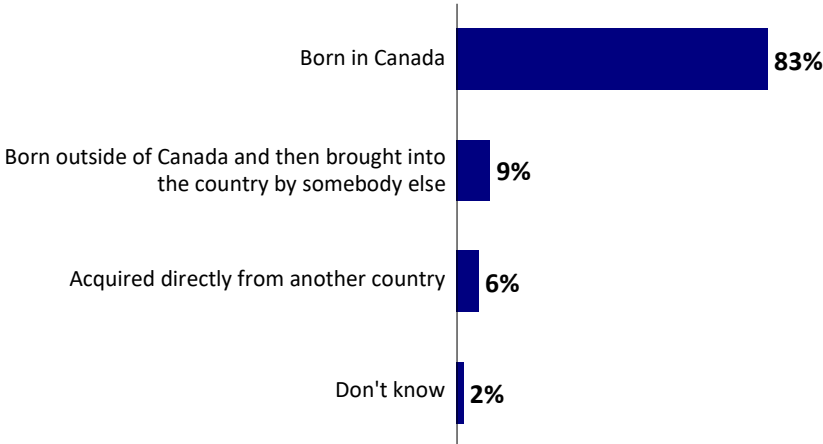
Q4. Where did you get your pet(s)? [Select all that apply]

Base: n=1268

Origin of pet(s)

Those who own pet(s) were asked the origin of their pet. Results suggest that most pets are born in Canada (83%), while a sizeable minority were born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by someone else (9%), or acquired by the owner directly from another country (6%).

Chart 5: Origin of Pet(s)



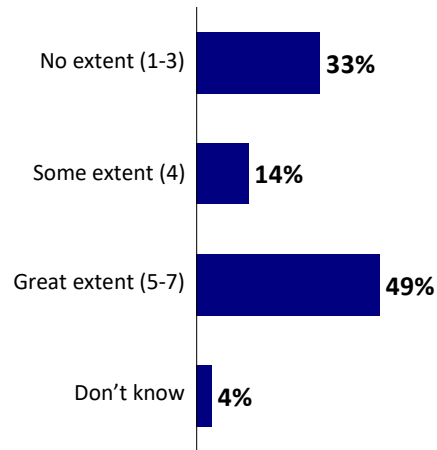
Q6a. Regardless of where you obtained your pet, to the best of your knowledge, was your pet born in Canada, brought into Canada from another country (i.e. was born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else), or did you acquire the pet directly from another country?

Base: n=1286

Extent of researching source

Pet owners were asked the extent to which they researched the organization/source from which they acquired their pet. Results reveal that Canadians undertake limited research before acquiring a pet. Just under half (49%) indicated they researched the organization/source from which they acquired their pet to a great extent, and 1 in 3 of these respondents (33%) researched the organization/source to only a little extent.

Chart 6: Extent of Researching Source



Q5. To what extent did you research the organization/source from which you acquired your pet(s)? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means to no extent, 7 means to a great extent, and 4 means to some extent.

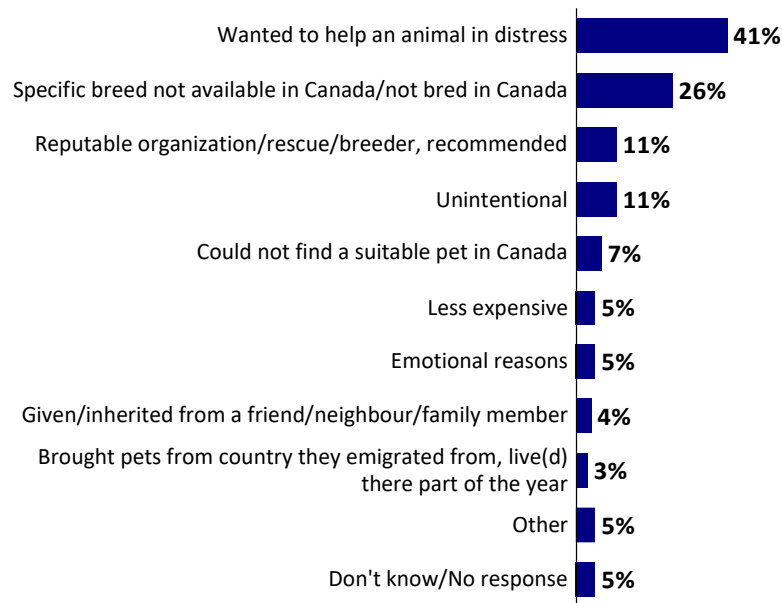
Base: n=1268

- Ontario residents (56%), women (52%), those with university education (54%), dog owners (55%), and those who acquired their pet directly (61%) or indirectly (77%) from another country are particularly likely to indicate they researched the organization/source from which they acquired their pet.

Reasons for acquiring a pet from outside Canada

Those who acquired their pet directly from another country or chose a pet that was born outside Canada and then brought into the country were asked, unprompted, why they did this. Most of these respondents indicated they wanted to help an animal in distress (41%), or that the breed they desired was not available in Canada (26%).

Chart 7: Reasons for Acquiring a Pet from outside Canada



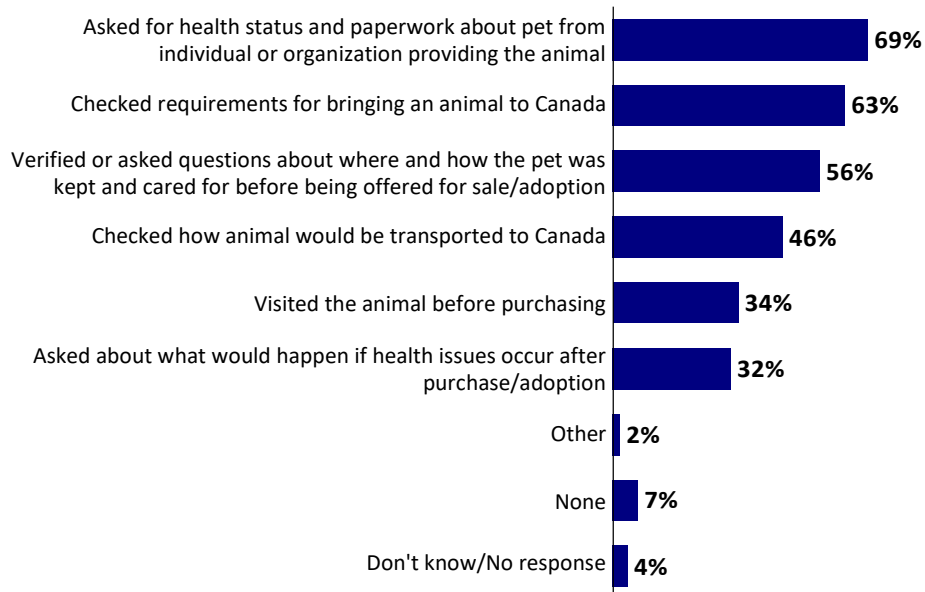
Q7. Why did you acquire your pet(s) from/choose a pet that was born outside Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else? [OPEN ENDED]

Base: n=356

Actions taken before acquiring a pet

Those who acquired their pet directly from another country were asked what action they took before acquiring the pet. Most of these respondents indicated that they asked for the health status and paperwork about the pet from the individual/organization providing the animal (69%), checked requirements for bringing an animal into Canada (63%), and/or asked questions about where the pet was kept and cared for before being offered for adoption (56%).

Chart 8: Actions Taken Before Acquiring a Pet



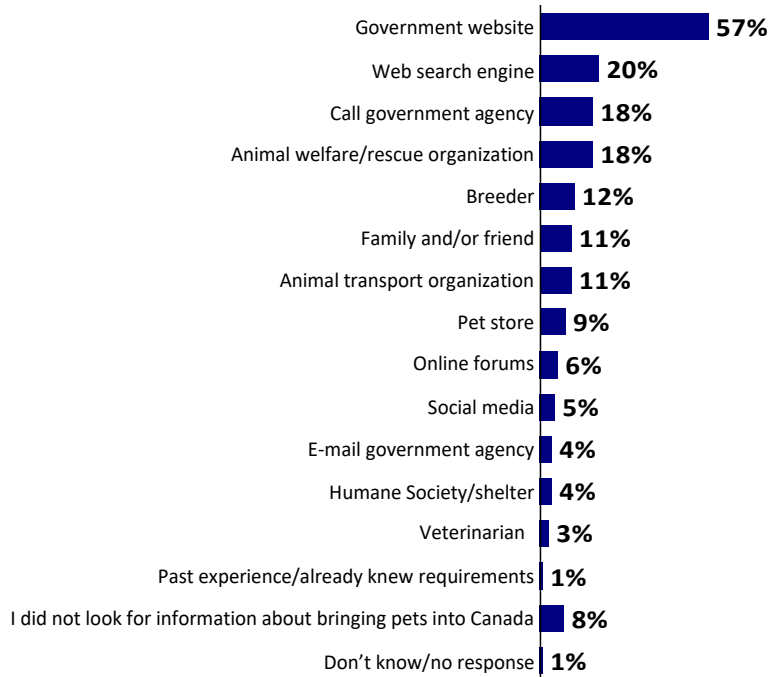
Q8. What actions did you take before acquiring your pet? [Select all that apply]

Base: n=145

Source of information about bringing pets to Canada

Those who acquired their pet directly from another country were also asked where they found information on requirements for bringing their pet(s) into Canada. Government websites were mentioned most often (57%), followed fairly distantly by a web search engine (20%), calling a government department/agency (18%), or an animal welfare/rescue organization (18%).

Chart 9: Source of Information about Bringing Pets to Canada



Q9. How did you find information on the requirements to bring your pet(s) into Canada? [Select all that apply]

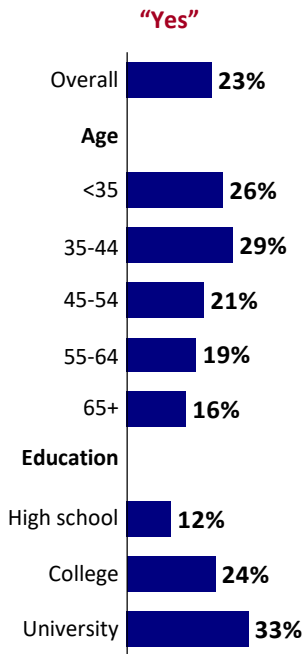
Base: n=145

B. CONSIDERATION OF A NEW PET

Consideration of getting a pet in the next year

All respondents were asked if they were considering getting a pet in the next year. About 1 in 4 (23%) said yes, while two thirds (64%) indicated no. Just over 1 in 10 (13%) were unsure.

Chart 10: Consideration of Getting a Pet in the Next Year



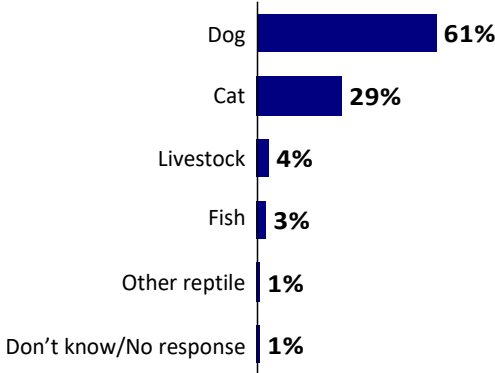
Q10. Are you considering getting a pet in the next year?
Base: n=2055

- Alberta (31%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (30%) residents, those 35-44 years of age (29%), those with university education (33%), and those earning \$150,000 or more in household income (30%) are most likely to indicate they are considering getting a pet in the next year.

Type of pet considered

Those who indicated they were considering getting a pet within the next year were asked what kind of pet they were thinking of getting. Dogs were mentioned most often (61%), followed by cats (29%).

Chart 11: Type of Pet Considered



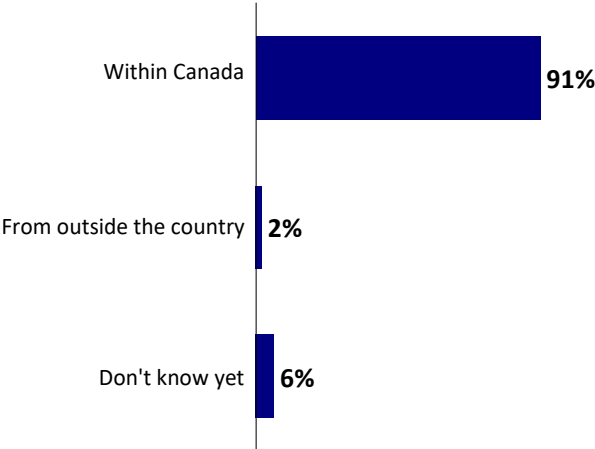
Q11. What kind of pet are you thinking of getting?
Base: n=764

- Men (65%), those 65 years of age and older (66%), those with university education (66%), those earning \$150,000 or more in income (70%), and those without children (64%) are more likely to indicate they plan on getting a dog.

Origin of source of pet being considered

Survey results reveal that the vast majority of those considering getting a pet in the next year plan to acquire the animal from an organization/source within Canada (91%).

Chart 12: Origin of Source of Pet being Considered



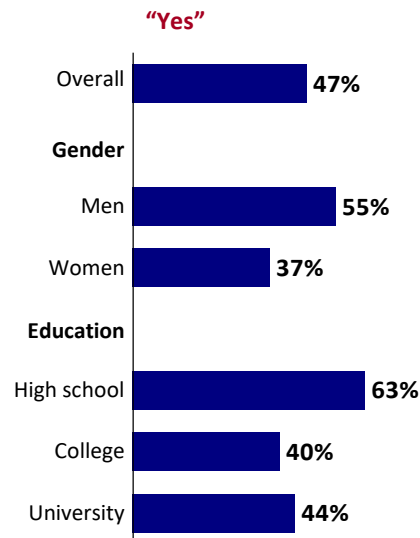
Q12. Do you think you will get a pet from an organization/source within Canada or from outside the country?

Base: n=717

Impact of origin of a pet

Those who were planning on getting a dog within the next year, and who indicated they would acquire their pet from within Canada were asked if they knew the animal was from another country before it came to Canada would they still want to adopt the animal. Results to this question are mixed: 47% indicated they would still follow through with the adoption, however, 21% indicated no, and 32% were unsure.

Chart 13: Impact of Origin of a Pet



Q13. If you knew that the animal was from another country before it came to Canada, would you still want to follow through with the purchase/adoption?

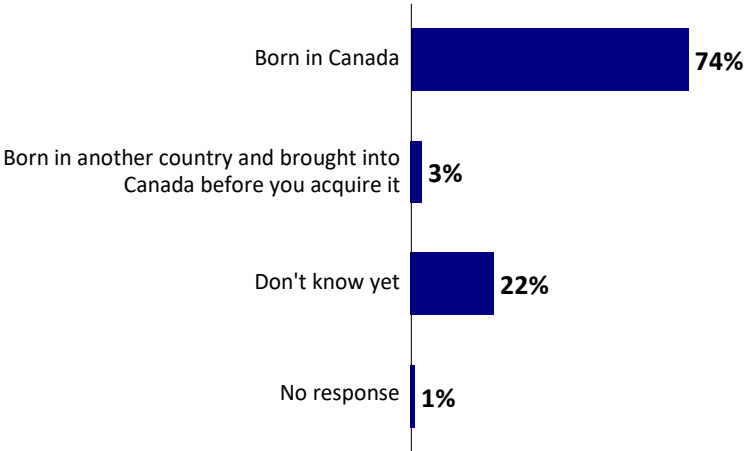
Base: n=459

- Ontario residents (54%), men (55%), those under 35 years of age (60%), and those with high school education (63%) are more likely to indicate they would follow through with the adoption.

Origin of pet being considered

Those considering getting a pet in the next year were also asked whether they think they will get a pet born in Canada, or one that is born in another country and then brought into Canada before adopting it. Most (74%) say they will get a Canadian born animal, however, a fairly large proportion (22%) are unsure.

Chart 14: Origin of Pet being Considered



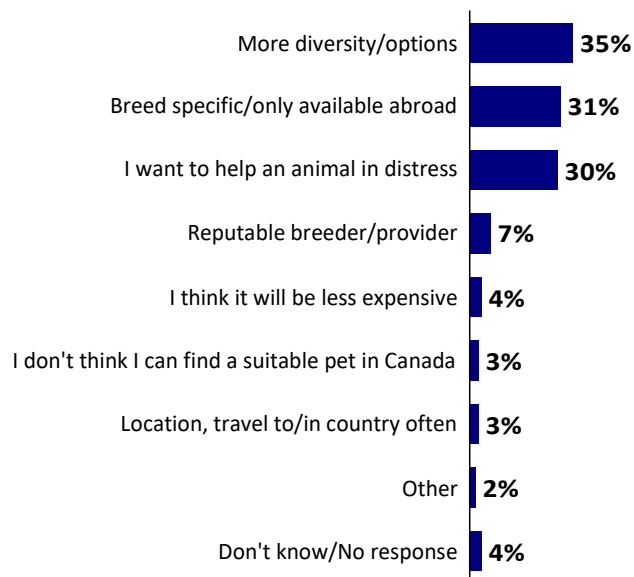
Q14. Do you think you will get a pet that is born in Canada or born in another country and then brought into Canada before you acquire it?

Base: n=717

Reasons for acquiring a pet from outside Canada²

Those who indicated they will acquire a pet born outside Canada were asked, unprompted, why they would do this. Most of these respondents indicated they felt they would have more options in terms of the pets available, that the breed of animal is only available outside of Canada, or that they want to help an animal in distress.

Chart 15: Reasons for Acquiring a Pet from outside Canada



Q15a. Why do you think you will acquire a pet from outside Canada? [OPEN ENDED]

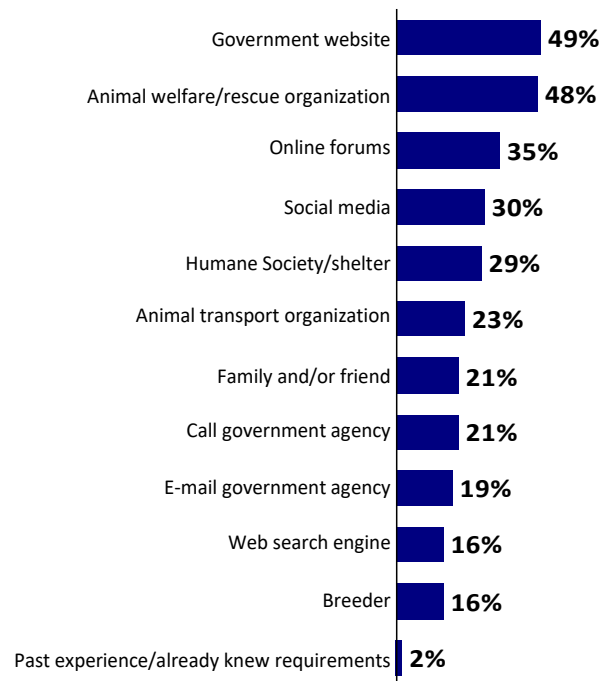
Base: n=27

² Please note these results are based on a small sample size, therefore results should be interpreted with caution.

Source of information about importing a pet into Canada³

Those who believe they will acquire their pet directly from another country were asked, unprompted, where they would look for information about bringing a pet into Canada. Most of these respondents indicated they would get this information from a government website or an animal welfare/rescue organization.

Chart 16: Source of Information about Importing Pet into Canada



Q16. Where would you look for information about importing/bringing a pet into Canada? [Select all that apply]

Base: n=22

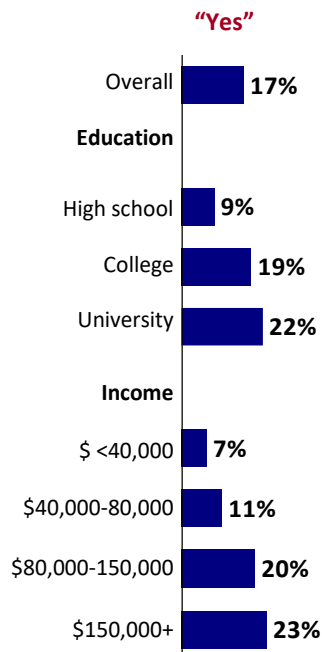
³ Please note these results are based on a small sample size, therefore results should be interpreted with caution.

C. TRAVELLING WITH PET(S)

Travelling outside Canada with pet

All pet owners were asked if they had ever travelled outside of Canada with their pet(s). The majority of pet owners (83%) have not travelled outside of Canada with their pet(s), while about 1 in 6 (17%) say they have.

Chart 17: Travelling outside Canada with Pet



Q17. Thinking of the pet(s) you have now, have you ever travelled outside of Canada with your pet(s) (for vacation, moving abroad, etc.)?

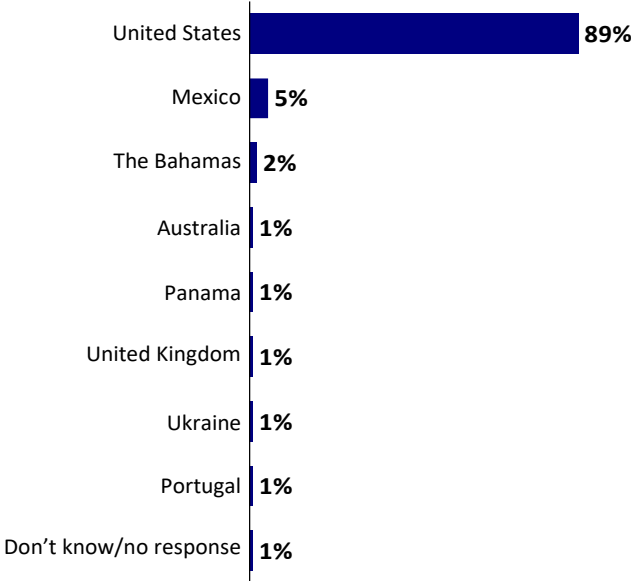
Base: n=1244

- B.C. residents (30%), those 45-54 years of age (27%), those with university education (22%), those earning \$150,000 and more in household income (23%), and dog owners (24%) are more likely to have travelled outside Canada with their pets.

Countries travelled with pet

Those who indicate they have travelled outside of Canada with their pet(s) were asked to identify the countries to which they travelled. The United States is mentioned most often (89%), followed distantly by Mexico (5%), and the Bahamas (2%).

Chart 18: Countries Travelled with Pet



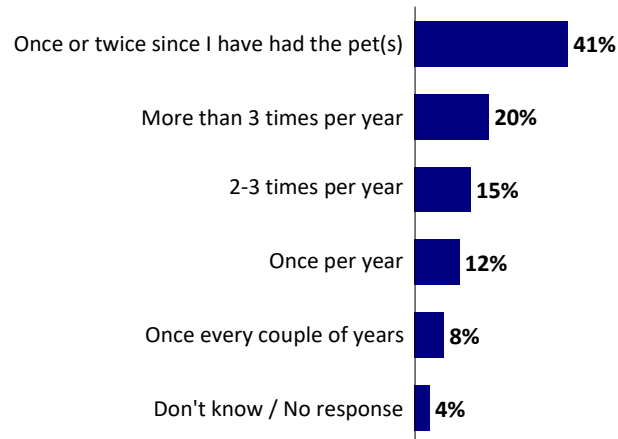
Q18. Which country/countries did you travel with your pet(s)? [Select all that apply]

Base: n=311

Frequency of travel with pet

Those who travelled outside of Canada with their pet(s) were also asked how often they travel with their pet(s). Most (41%) have only travelled once or twice since they have owned their pet(s), although a fairly large proportion (20%) say they travel more than 3 times per year with their pet(s), and a further 15% say they travel 2-3 times per year with their pet(s).

Chart 19: Frequency of Travel with Pet



Q19. How often do you travel with your pet(s)?

Base: n=311

Awareness of requirements regarding travelling with pet

All pet owners were asked to rate their awareness of requirements regarding traveling with pet(s) or importing a pet from abroad. Results suggest Canadians feel they are generally knowledgeable about these requirements. More than half of Canadian pet owners (56%) say they are very aware that if they travel with a pet they will need to meet specific requirements to bring the animal into the country they are visiting, and 51% say they are very aware that they will also need to meet specific requirements when bringing the animal back into Canada. And almost half of Canadian pet owners (48%) claim to be very aware of requirements related to the purchase or adoption of a pet from abroad.

Chart 20: Awareness of Requirements Regarding Travelling with Pet

If you are travelling with a pet, you will need to meet specific requirements for each pet to bring it into the country that you're visiting



If you are travelling with a pet, you will need to meet specific requirements for each pet you bring back into Canada



If you are planning to purchase or adopt a pet from abroad, you will need to meet specific requirements to bring it into Canada



■ Not at all aware ■ Not very aware ■ Somewhat aware ■ Very aware

Q20a-c. Would you say you are very aware, somewhat aware, not very aware or not at all aware of each of the following?

Base: n=1244

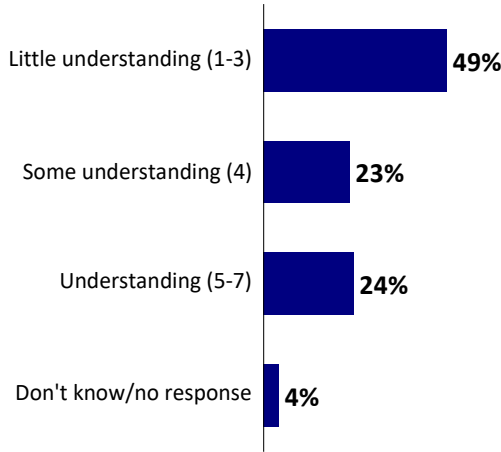
- Quebec residents indicate lower awareness of all these requirements than residents from the rest of the country. Conversely, those who acquired their pet directly or indirectly from another country indicate higher awareness of these requirements.

D. BRINGING PETS INTO CANADA

Understanding of regulations and requirements for bringing pets into Canada

All respondents were asked to rate their understanding of the current regulations and requirements for bringing pets into Canada. Not surprisingly, when the question includes non-pet owners understanding of these regulations and requirements decreases. Only 1 in 4 (24%) indicate they understand these regulations and requirements, while 49% indicate little understanding of them.

Chart 21: Understanding of Regulations and Requirements for Bringing Pets into Canada



Q23. How would you rate your understanding of current regulations and the requirements for bringing pets into Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means little understanding, 7 means a great deal of understanding, and 4 means some understanding.

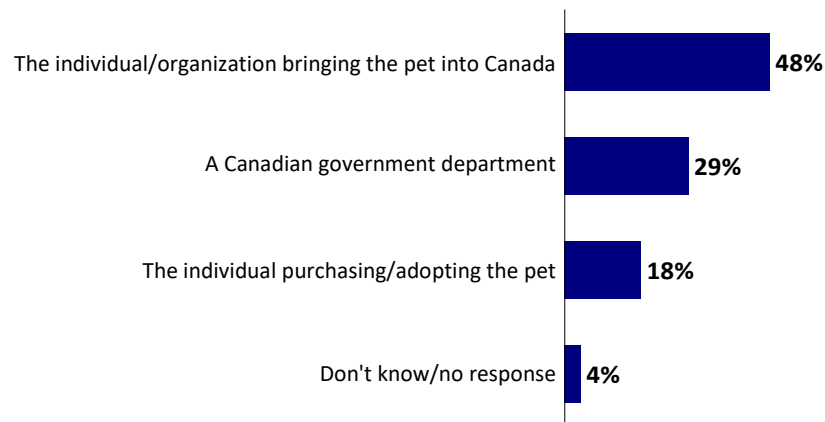
Base: n=2076

- Women (29%), those 65 years of age and older (30%), those with university education (27%), dog owners (38%), and those who acquired their pet directly (72%) or indirectly (53%) from another country indicate greater understanding of current regulations and requirements for bringing pets into Canada.

Primary responsibility to ensure pets brought into Canada are healthy

Survey results reveal Canadians feel that primary responsibility for ensuring that pets brought into Canada are healthy and free of animal disease rests with the individual/ organization that brings the animal into Canada (48%). The government is seen as having somewhat lower responsibility (29%), and the individual adopting the pet is assigned lowest responsibility (18%).

Chart 22: Primary Responsibility to Ensure Pets Brought to Canada Are Healthy



Q24. Who do you think should have the most responsibility in ensuring that the pets brought into Canada are healthy and free of animal diseases?

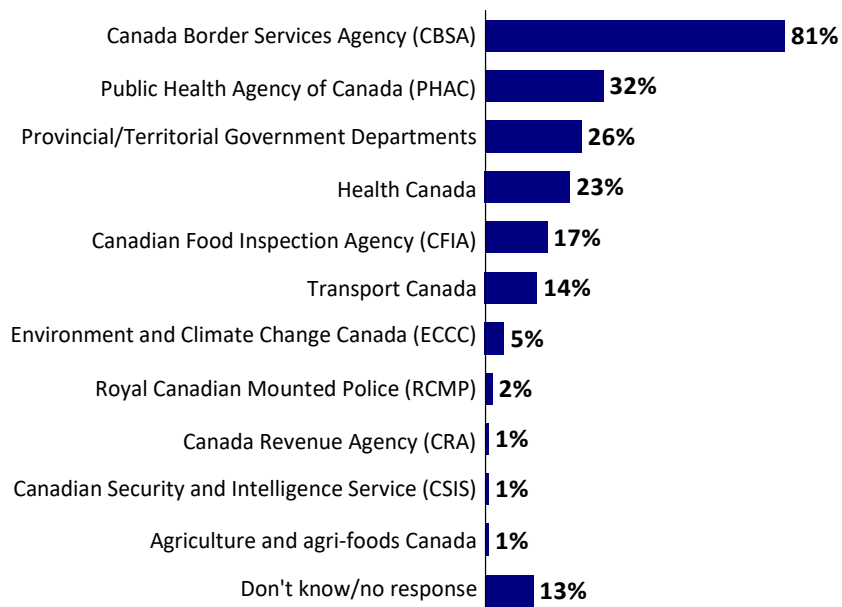
Base: n=2076

- Those 35-54 years of age (53%), those with university education (52%), and those earning \$80,000-\$150,000 in household income (54%) are particularly likely to feel the organization bringing the pets to Canada is most responsible for ensuring it is healthy.

Knowledge of government departments to check about requirements

When asked which government departments should be checked with when bringing pets into Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency is mentioned most often (81%), followed distantly by the Public Health Agency of Canada (32%), and provincial government departments (26%). Interestingly, the CFIA is fairly low on the list of government departments/agencies to check (17%).

Chart 23: Knowledge of Government' Departments to Check about Requirements



Q25. To the best of your knowledge, when bringing pets into Canada, which government departments would you need to check with to ensure you are following all necessary laws and regulations? [Select all that apply]

Base: n= 2076

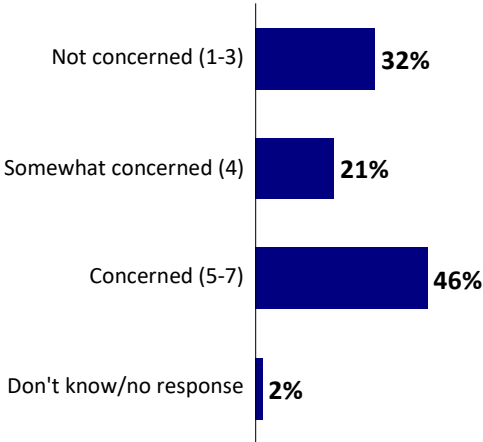
- Those 45-54 years of age (22%), those with university education (21%), dog owners (20%), and those who acquired their pet directly from another country (34%) are particularly likely to indicate that the CFIA is the government department/agency to check with to ensure all laws and regulations are followed.

E. VIEWS ON RABIES/ANIMAL DISEASES

Concern about dog rabies entering Canada

Respondents were provided with information about dog rabies and then asked how concerned they were about dog rabies getting into Canada. Interestingly, despite being informed that globally dog rabies kills 59,000 people every year, and that it is prevalent in over 100 countries, fewer than half of Canadians (46%) are concerned about dog rabies entering the country, and 1 in 3 (32%) express little concern about this possibility.

Chart 24: Concern about Dog Rabies Entering Canada



Q26. How concerned are you about dog rabies getting into Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all concerned, 7 means very concerned and 4 means somewhat concerned.

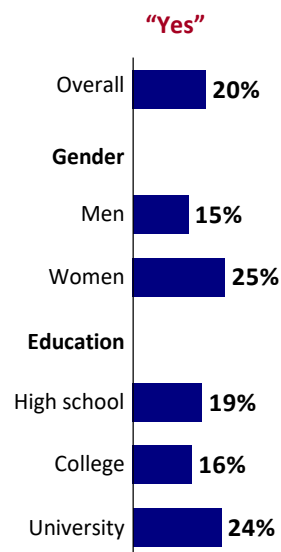
Base: n=2076

- Women (50%), those 65 years and older (64%), and those earning less than \$80,000 in household income (49%) are most concerned about dog rabies entering Canada.

Awareness of government measure to prevent dog rabies entering Canada

Respondents were also informed that the Canadian government had recently introduced a new measure that prohibits commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies from entering Canada. They were then asked if they were aware of this new measure. Results reveal limited awareness of this new measure: 8 in 10 (79%) are not aware of this measure, while 1 in 5 (20%) say they are aware of this new measure.

Chart 25: Awareness of Government Measure to Prevent Dog Rabies from Entering Canada



Q27. Recently, the Canadian government introduced a new measure that prohibits commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies from entering Canada. Commercial dogs can include, but are not limited to dogs for resale, adoption, fostering, breeding, show or exhibition, research, and other purposes. Before this survey, were you aware of this new measure?

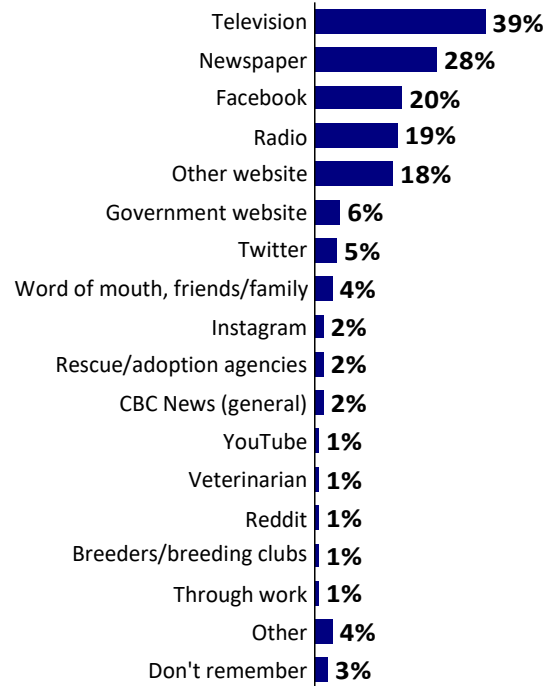
Base: n=2076

- B.C. residents (27%), women (25%), those 65 years and older (24%), those with university education (24%), dog owners (30%), and those who acquired their dog directly (39%) or indirectly (51%) from another country are most likely to indicate awareness of this new measure.

Source of awareness of the new measure

Those who indicated awareness of this new measure were asked where they heard about it. Television (39%) and newspaper (28%) were mentioned most often by these respondents as the source of their awareness of this new measure.

Chart 26: Source of Awareness of the New Measure



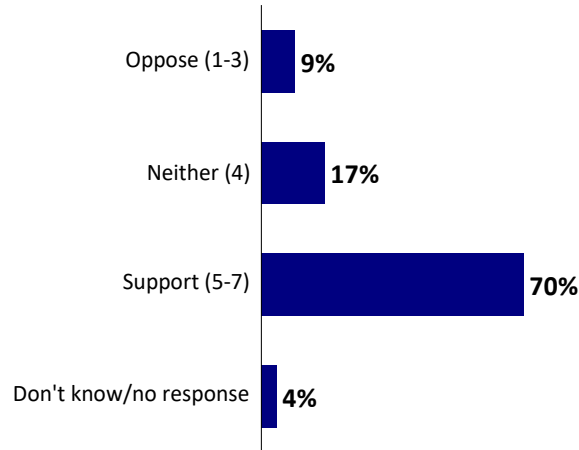
Q28. Where did you hear about this new measure? [Select all that apply]

Base: n=566

Support for the new measure

All respondents were also asked how strongly they support or oppose this new measure. Despite limited concern about dog rabies entering Canada, 70% of Canadians support this new measure, and only 1 in 10 (9%) oppose it.

Chart 27: Support for the New Measure



Q29. How strongly do you support or oppose this new measure? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means strongly oppose, 7 means strongly support, and 4 means neither support nor oppose.

Base: n=2076

- Saskatchewan/Manitoba residents (83%), those 35 years of age and older (75%), those earning less than \$40,000 in income (76%), and those who do not own pets (73%) are particularly likely to support this new measure.

Reasons for supporting the new measure

Those who supported the measure were asked, unprompted, to identify the reasons for feeling this way. The health of pets, wildlife and animals in general (14%), and protecting human health (13%) were mentioned most often.

Table 1: Reasons for Supporting the Measure

	TOTAL
Why do you say that? [Support] [Open ended]	<i>n=1477</i>
Health of animals/wildlife/pets in general, keep our animals safe (not specific to dogs)	14%
To better protect human health	13%
To better protect the health of dogs already in Canada	11%
There are plenty of animals/dogs that are need of rescue/adoption here in Canada, why do we have to import any from other countries	11%
Need to keep rabies out of Canada	10%
Seems logical/responsible thing to do, need to react and prevent against it, preventative measures now is better than management of problem when here	9%
Public health/safety, keep population safe, protection for all	8%
Disease control	7%
Need to regulate/enforce regulations on nefarious/untrustworthy/fraudulent breeders/dealers, eradicate irresponsible/for profit/scammers players	4%
If they follow the proper regulations of vaccination/quarantine periods/papers/procedures they should be allowed entry	4%
Rabies is a very serious disease, deadly/fatal disease	4%
If they come from proven/responsible/reputable breeders/dealers/adoption agencies they should be allowed entry	3%
Would need more information on it	2%
Concerned about ineffective testing/lack of ability to detect rabies	1%
Need for protection of ecosystem/plants/seeds	1%
Other	2%
Don't know/No response	18%

Reasons for not supporting the new measure

Those who opposed this new measure were also asked, unprompted, to identify the reasons for feeling this way. A preference for monitoring animals rather than an outright prohibition (36%), a belief that exceptions should be made for reputable rescue organizations (26%), and a general mistrust of government (15%) were mentioned most often as reasons for opposition to the measure.

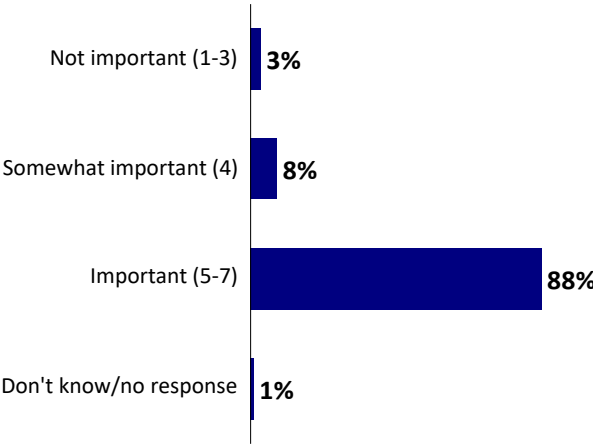
Table 2: Reasons for Not Supporting the Measure

	TOTAL
Why do you say that? [Oppose] [Open ended]	<i>n=229</i>
Rather than an outright banning: if dog/pet/animal is deemed healthy through following procedures/regulations/requirements at border then they should be allowed entry into Canada (testing, vetted, documented...)	36%
Exemptions should be made for rescues/adoption agencies that reputable and follow proper procedures	26%
Mistrust of government (ineffective track record handling matters, mistrust of motives/agenda/tax grab, government tries to control people with over regulation...)	15%
Should be allowed into Canada if coming from a reputable dealer/breeder/supplier, most follow proper procedural requirements	12%
Disproportional response, heavy handed, overreacting	7%
Vaccination required/documented, enforced vaccination	6%
Rabies is not a big problem here/minimal risk, current import system/regulations are working	6%
Other ways to handle the problem (unspecified)	4%
It will negatively impact the welfare of dogs in other countries	3%
Most owners are responsible without incident	2%
We already have rabies here, dogs can catch rabies here	2%
Myself/someone I know imported pet and they were fine/health	1%
Would need more information to understand risk(s)	1%
Some exemptions should be made (unspecified)	1%
Nefarious actors will always find another way	1%
Other	1%
Don't know/No response	6%

Perceived importance that government prevents animal diseases from entering Canada

All respondents were also asked how important they think it is that the Government of Canada prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada. Results reveal that the vast majority of Canadians (88%) assign high importance to this issue, and very few (3%) view this as being of little importance.

Chart 28: Perceived Importance that Government Prevents Animal Diseases from Entering Canada



Q33. How important do you think it is that the Government of Canada prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all important, 7 means very important, and 4 means somewhat important.

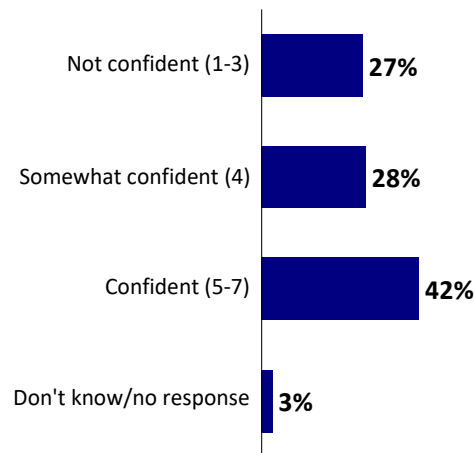
Base: n=2076

- Quebec and Atlantic Province residents (93% each), those 45 years of age and older (93%), and those with university education (90%) are particularly likely to feel it is important that the Government of Canada prevent animal diseases from entering Canada.

Confidence in government ability to prevent animal diseases from entering Canada

Results are more mixed in terms of belief in the government's ability to actually prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases into Canada. Only 4 in 10 (42%) express confidence in the government's ability to prevent the entry of serious animal diseases into Canada, and almost 3 in 10 (27%) express little confidence in the government's ability to do this.

Chart 29: Confidence in Government Ability to Prevent Animal Diseases Entering Canada



Q34. How confident are you in the government's ability to prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all confident, 7 means very confident, and 4 means somewhat confident.

Base: n=2076

- Quebec (50%) and B.C. (48%) residents, women (46%), those 55 years and older (47%), those earning less than \$40,000 in income (48%), and dog owners (45%) are most likely to express confidence in the government's ability to prevent diseases from entering Canada.

Reasons for lack of confidence in government

Those who expressed little confidence in the government’s ability to prevent serious/infectious animal diseases from entering Canada were asked why they felt this way. A general lack of trust in the effectiveness of government (36%), and government’s inability to control the border/prevent diseases from entering the country (19%) were mentioned most often.

Table 3: Reasons for Lack of Confidence in Government

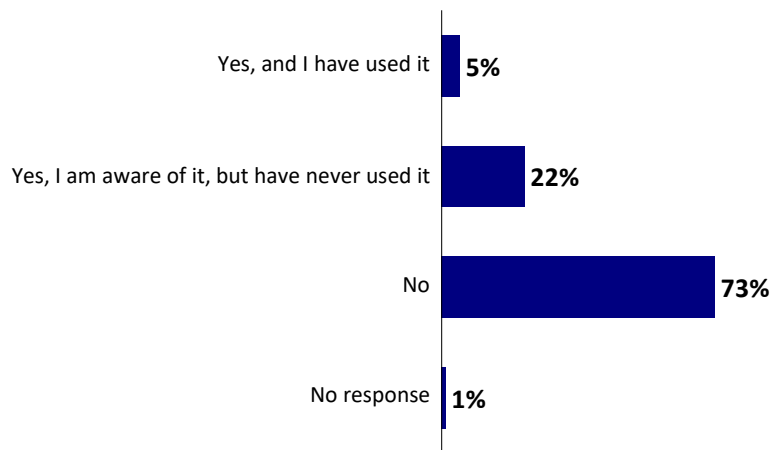
	TOTAL
Why do you say that? [Open ended]	<i>n=538</i>
Lack of trust in effectiveness of government (corrupt/biased, uninformed/misinformed, incompetent/incapable, only interested in own agenda/public perception, lack of accountability/responsibility...)	36%
Proved to be ineffective controlling borders in the past (COVID, guns, passports, invasive species, air travel...)	19%
Impossible to control it all (cannot be 100%, something/disease will always get through, cannot screen everything, nature finds a way, unknown pathogens/lack of effective tests, large/shared border control are difficult...)	12%
People illegally import/find a way around the regulations/requirements	7%
The regulations/requirements are/aren't enforced	6%
Lack of resources/human resources, lack of funding to implement or be effective	5%
We have more important problems, cannot see this as a priority, not a large enough threat	2%
The regulations/requirements are/aren't strong enough	1%
Government cannot handle this issue solely; need consultants/experts/third party to implement and control, do not have the expertise to deal with it	1%
Outright ban will not be effective	1%
Agree with total ban	1%
Other	1%
Don't know/No response	18%

F. AWARENESS AND USE OF THE CFIA WEBSITE

Awareness and use of the CFIA website

All respondents were asked if they were aware that the CFIA’s website has information for bringing animals/pets into Canada. Three quarters of respondents (73%) indicated they were unaware of the website. 1 in 5 (22%) indicated they were aware of the site but have never used it, and only 5% have used the website.

Chart 30: Awareness and Use of the CFIA Website



Q36. Are you aware that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) website has information, including import requirements, for bringing various types of animals/pets into Canada?

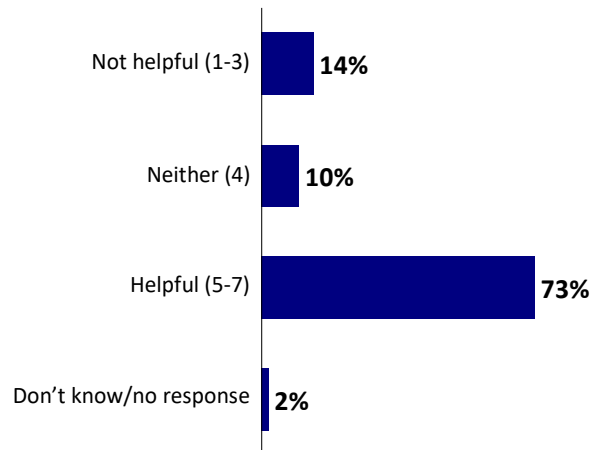
Base: n=2076

- Awareness/use of the CFIA website is higher among B.C. residents (32%), those 45-64 years of age (34%), those earning \$80,000-\$150,000 in income (32%), dog owners (36%), and those who acquired their pet directly (58%) or indirectly (36%) from another country.

Perceived usefulness of the CFIA website

Those who have used the CFIA website were asked to rate the usefulness of the site in helping find information about the requirements for importing animals/pets. The majority of these respondents (73%) indicated they found the site to be helpful, and only 14% thought the site was of little help in finding information about importing pets into Canada.

Chart 31: Perceived Usefulness of the CFIA Website



Q37. In your experience, how helpful was CFIA's website in terms of finding information about the requirements for importing animals/pets? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not helpful at all, 7 means very helpful and informative, and 4 means neither.

Base: n=152

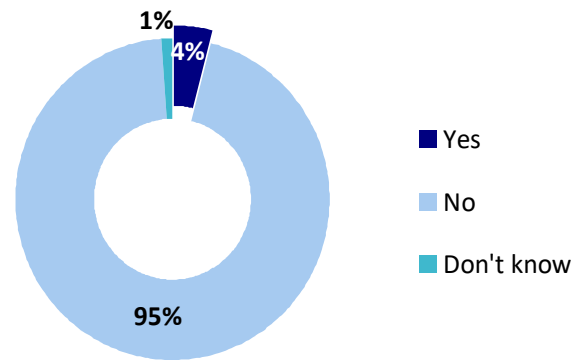
- Those 55-64 years of age (89%), those who own a dog (81%), and those who acquired their pet directly from another country (94%) are most likely to feel the CFIA website was helpful.

G. AWARENESS OF GOVERNMENT OF CANADA ADVERTISING

Awareness of government advertising about adopting or purchasing pets

All respondents were asked if they had seen, read, or heard any Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet. The vast majority of respondents indicated they had not been exposed to this advertising, and only 4% indicated they had.

Chart 32: Awareness of Government Advertising about Adopting or Purchasing Pets



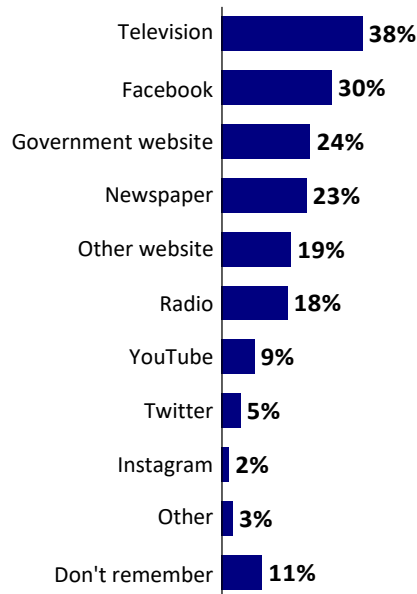
Q38. Have you seen, read or heard any Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet?

Base: n=2076

Source of awareness about advertising

Among those who indicated they had seen Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet, most indicated they had seen the ads on television (38%), or Facebook (30%). About 1 in 4 said they saw these ads on a Government website (24%), or in newspapers (23%).

Chart 33: Source of Awareness about Advertising



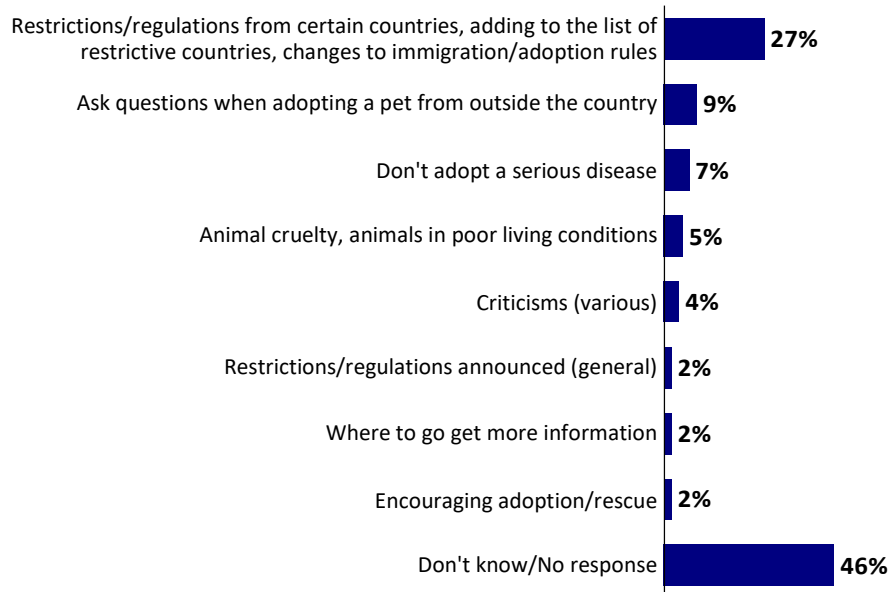
Q39. Where have you seen, read or heard about these ads?

Base: n=124

Main messages of advertising

When asked what they remember about the ads, restrictions in adopting pets from certain countries/changes to adoption rules were mentioned most often (27%). About 1 in 10 mentioned taglines from the advertising: ask questions when adopting a pet from outside the country (9%), and don't adopt a serious disease (7%).

Chart 34: Main Messages of Advertising



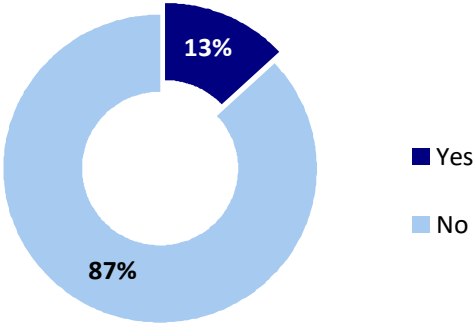
Q40. What do you remember about these ads? [OPEN ENDED]

Base: n=124

Actions taken as a result of advertising

The majority of respondents who saw the ads indicated that they did not take action as a result of seeing the ads (87%). About 1 in 8 (13%) said they did take action as a result of the advertising.

Chart 35: Actions Taken as a Result of Advertising (i)



Q41. Did you do anything as a result of seeing this advertising?

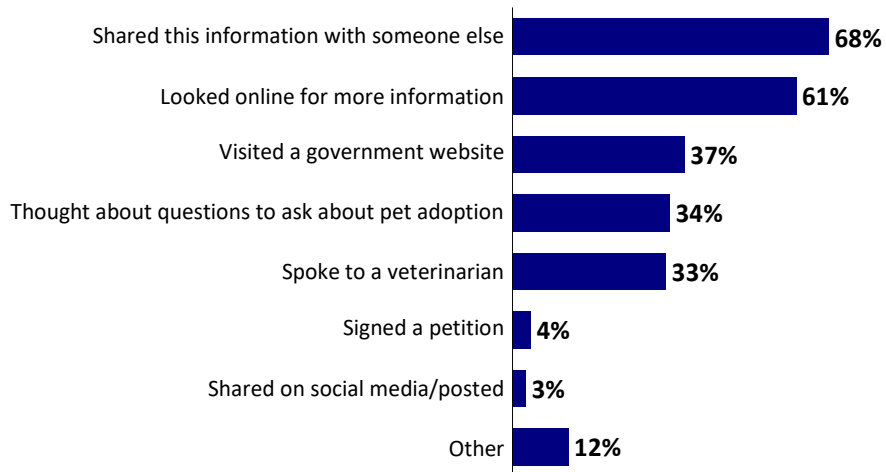
Base: n=124

- Women (21%) and those with university education (23%) are most likely to indicate they took action as a result of this advertising.

Actions taken as a result of advertising⁴

Among those who said they took action as a result of the ads, most indicated they shared the information with someone else, or looked online for more information.

Chart 36: Actions Taken as a Result of Advertising (ii)



Q42. Which of the following actions did you take? [Select all that apply]

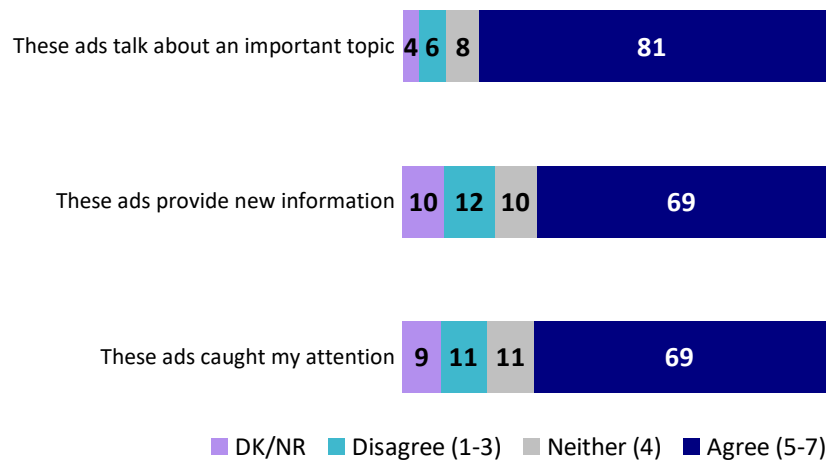
Base: n=23

⁴ Please note these results are based on a small sample size, therefore results should be interpreted with caution.

Views on advertising

All respondents who said they saw the advertising were asked for their views on the advertising. Results are generally positive, with 8 in 10 of these respondents indicating the ads talk about an important topic (81%), and 7 in 10 agreeing that the ads provided new information, and caught their attention (69% each).

Chart 37: Views on Advertising



Q43a-c. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about these ads using a 7-point scale where 1 means strongly disagree, 7 means strongly agree, and 4 means neither.

Base: n=124

- Women are more likely than men to agree with all of these statements about the advertising.

QUALITATIVE DETAILED FINDINGS

The following are results gathered from the 5 focus group participants and 10 interview participants. It should be noted that qualitative research is designed to reveal a rich range of opinions and interpretations rather than to measure what percentage of the target population holds a given opinion. These results cannot be used to estimate the numeric proportion or number of individuals in the population who hold a particular opinion because they are not statistically projectable. In order to avoid portraying these results as generalizable to the population, terms such as “a few,” “some” and “most” are used to broadly indicate views rather than using specific percentages. It is not intended to quantify the findings.

Due to the sample size, the special recruitment methods used, and the study objectives themselves, it is clearly understood that the work under discussion is exploratory in nature. The findings are not, nor were they intended to be, projectable to a larger population.

Specifically, it is inappropriate to suggest or to infer that few (or many) real-world users would behave in one way simply because few (or many) participants behaved in this way during the sessions. This kind of projection is strictly the prerogative of quantitative research.

It should also be understood that the information provided by participants is subjective in nature and based on their own understanding, recollection and perceptions. In particular, comments regarding requirements in the area of importation of animals or diseases of concern, in Canada or other countries cannot be taken as “fact” and have not been validated by the CFA with regards to accuracy.

A. CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH WHEN ACQUIRING A PET

Focus groups

Virtually all focus group participants agreed that where a dog is acquired from is a significant consideration. Some spoke of getting a dog from their own local community, because there are many dogs in local shelters that are in need of a home. Several argued that there is no need to bring dogs from outside of Canada for this reason.

There are enough dogs in Canada, unless you are looking for a very specific breed. A lot of shelter dogs and reserves and off the street. They are damaged and hard to re-habilitate so it can become a problem.

We have a lot of pets in Canada to be adopted at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) etc, and that would be my first choice. My second choice would be a known breeder in Canada if they have a good reputation and if I know someone who had gone with them before with good success. I would not import a dog into Canada. I think there is a lot of risk associated with that.

Some spoke of the importance of knowing about the dog's health and learning as much as possible about the dog's history in order to be sure of their health. Others talked about the benefits of having a dog's health thoroughly checked and certified.

You should know the history of the animal you are getting, whether it's a foster or rescue or from breeder or wherever. You need the age and medical history, social aspects. The more you know about the pet you are bringing into your home, the better.

Are they an ethical breeder using human conditions? You also want a full medical history to be sure you are not introducing diseases to local populations or your home.

Some described their preference for going to a breeder in order to acquire a purebred dog, with certain traits or characteristics, and because they would be able to ask questions and receive detailed paperwork and history about the dog (for example, lineage, health, potential issues). A few said it is important to determine whether the dog would be a good match in terms of temperament and behaviour for a household with children.

We were dealing with a breeder we knew personally. We knew of 5 generations of dogs in the family and that there were no eye issues, heart issues, hip issues and so on.

[We] Went to someone who we knew and trusted (how they handled breeding). [They are] a good breeder, with reputation. We were very concerned about conditions, home and health of the dog.

It's important to know if the pet will get along with children. If we didn't have any children, we probably would have adopted a dog from a rescue.

We imported the first dog from the Netherlands when we were there and we knew we could trust them around children, which was big for us at the time. That's important and you don't know that from a rescue dog.

Some expressed concerns about acquiring a dog as a rescue from another country, believing they would not have sufficient information about the dog's history in terms of health, but in particular about how they were raised and any resulting behavioural or socialization issues.

[Speaking about a rescue from Mexico] It's a nice dog but it's taken a while to get straightened out. It was fearful and on guard, and it doesn't like lots of things. You had to be careful around him.

[Rescue is a] Good dog now but it was very fearful at first. It took the dog 2.5 years to become "normal".

For this reason, a few said that they look for dogs who are being fostered so that they can ask questions if the dog is a rescue, or that they want the opportunity to foster a dog themselves before they make a decision.

We are trying fostering so we can get to know the organization and how they operate and their approach such as the conditions, how they are treated, what kinds of places are they coming from, what kind of health assessments do they do.

I always look for one that is being fostered so that they can tell you about the dog and their personality. You are bringing the dog into a home with other animals and they have to be ok coming into your home (for example, get along with other pets).

Several participants emphasized the need to do research on this topic before making a decision.

There are good sources out there to give good information on [acquiring a dog from another country]. Research needs to be done.

The best [source] for me is the vet. I have a relationship with them and they know of dogs that are healthy or not, so I trust them.

Some talked about researching a breed of dog and their traits. Others talked about the organization including the reputation, standards and living conditions of the breeder. A few said that they would only acquire a dog from an organization they feel they can trust such as the SPCA, or a breeder they have known from previous experience.

You should not just assume that a breeder is a good breeder just because they are registered.

We researched many different breeders because we needed to find a dog that wouldn't trigger any allergies. We took our time – it took us more than a year to get the breed we wanted.

I would go in-person and walk and interact with them to see their characteristics. If from a breeder I would research the breed and their needs, but also the health issues they are known for.

In-depth interviews

When thinking about acquiring a dog from outside of Canada, interview participants were unanimous in their assertion that the primary concern is the health of the dog, based on proof of vaccination and veterinarian health examinations. Dogs coming from rescue organizations should be checked thoroughly, according to several participants.

[Research] the provenance of that dog, and its background and history, where possible. Also, they should be thinking about the vaccination status of the animal, since many diseases can be prevented. There are also many parasitic treatments that work for various parasites that have a high risk of coming into Canada. (Veterinarian)

Investigation of the reputation of the breeder along with the housing conditions was described as important for both rescue organizations and breeders. In the case of a breeder, asking about the health of the parents was also noted.

You have to be looking closely at the reputation and credibility of the importer, looking for references and previous clients to get a sense of the conditions and ethical treatment of the dogs. (Breeder)

I don't want to see money (the cost to purchase a pet) going to an organization with poor practices and conditions, such as puppy mills and rescue organizations that are only driven by the money. [There should be] more certification of what constitutes a reputable "rescue organization". Breeders are also not all the same and do not all do the same things in terms of disease and genetic testing. (Veterinarian)

If the source is not reputable, there can be an indescribable number of defects in the dog from the breeding that was done. People can [unknowingly] obtain a dog with many issues, with huge cost implications. Just because they have papers doesn't mean that they have been bred and raised in a good environment. (Veterinarian)

A few said that research should also be done on both the temperament and health-related risks associated with specific breeds.

There are characteristics and issues [of different breeds] you need to be sure you understand. You need to talk to people who breed and use those breeds, and are familiar with them, and not be pulled by your heart strings. (Breeder)

You need to research health risks for different breeds (for example, flat faced dogs that can't breathe or have long backs and vertebrae that can't support them). If you don't research in advance, then you don't know. (Veterinarian)

I would like to see owners and potential owners researching the breed of dog that will suit their lifestyle and be honest about their ability to care for the pet in terms of time, energy, cost. (Veterinarian)

Participants were divided on whether potential dog owners consider the country of origin. Two breeders believe that many potential dog owners will ask a lot of questions. Several others said that there is an emotional appeal in rescuing a dog from another country, although many may not be making fully informed decisions. The general impression among interview participants is that breeders will be more concerned and educated in this decision than other consumers.

90% will do their due diligence by asking us for background and health certificates, and references. They don't care though about whether the dog is born elsewhere or if the parent is born elsewhere. (Breeder)

They don't care. They are happy to give a dog a home and a chance to live in a first world country. (Animal welfare)

Breeders will care more because they are doing this as a business, and they are far more informed. (Breeder)

B. VIEWS ON ACQUISITION OF DOGS FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Focus groups

Risk of disease was noted frequently by participants, some of whom feel it is not worth the risk to bring dogs from outside the country, particularly from countries where the likelihood is higher that they will not have been well cared for. Some said that bringing dogs into the country must involve thorough health checks and potentially quarantine measures to ensure they are healthy before being released.

I would never adopt a pet from outside Canada because of the potential for sickness or something else. You don't necessarily know what kind of animal you're getting.

It's a nice idea, but there are concerns that the animal is treated well or healthy, which we may take for granted here in Canada.

There are definitely concerns when getting a dog from outside the country, with disease, rabies, parvo and what not. They definitely need to be screened when coming into the country.

Another area of concern for some relates to behavioural issues, with a few expressing concerns around children in particular. Generally, a number of participants said that there are more unknowns in terms of both health and behavioural problems when rescuing a dog from another country.

The dog was very aggressive with other dogs and hard to handle. There was one dog fight where my husband got a bite and had to receive [a] tetanus [shot]. I have grandkids and couldn't risk this, so I gave the dog back [to the rescue agency].

There is something to be said for going to local shelter where you can meet the pet and interact to see how you get along and feel. There are more unknowns if getting animal from outside of the country.

Some people have gone through the hoops and paid a high price and ended up with some pretty hefty vet bills, and in other cases it worked out great. It's a roll of the dice and you don't know as much as you would in our own backyard.

As previously described, many participants believe that there is sufficient supply here in Canada to obtain a dog, through shelters and breeders, without going to other countries. One or two also talked about rescuing dogs in northern Canada.

I think there are enough animals in Canada already. We should approach rescues and breeders here before bringing in more animals from overseas.

There are a lot of dogs after the pandemic that are looking for homes, so there's lots of supply here. You can simply go through a reputable shelter here (like Humane Society) and know something about what they do to check out dogs.

A few expressed concerns about the conditions of the transportation, particularly when coming from overseas. A few said that they feel it is acceptable to transport dogs from the United States, but that flying them in is more complicated, costly and carries greater risks for the dog. Being able to travel to visit the breeder or rescue organization to meet with the organization, tour the facility and see the conditions in which the dogs are housed was noted by a few to be important.

It could get complicated depending on the country. I'd say it's okay from the US, but overseas is another question. There could be unexpected costs associated with importing an animal.

I don't think it's worth bringing in an animal from abroad, especially if you're flying them in. You're risking the animal's health and all that.

I'd be worried about the travel and conditions for the dog. What would that do to a dog (confinement, etc.)

You have to go to the breeder and see how the dog was raised and meet the mother or parents and see the health of the dogs and how they were treated.

Several participants acknowledge the need of dogs in other countries and value of being able to assist. Some spoke of the balancing of helping other dogs, while also having concerns for the protection of dogs in Canada. There is a benefit to being able to interact with a reputable rescue organization that carries out detailed health checks and fosters dogs in order to take the time to assess health and behavioural issues prior to adoption.

I do have concerns because of disease, but I also know from a lot of travelling that there are animals in desperate need in other countries. It's a hard one.

The dog has to be vetted by a reputable or accredited rescue organization that does the due diligence. I'm more concerned about the groups that bring in a truck load of dogs from Asia that they've rescued from a meat market. There's no control there about how [they are] bred or health issues or temperament.

Two participants with experience with international rescue agencies described these processes.

There are a number of rescue agencies (in Spain and the Middle East) that collect the (hunting) dogs and they fundraise here. They have facilities and vet care for them [in the country of origin]. They do assessments and work with them on behavioural issues. They are stable groups with [a] stable [group of] employees and you can see videos of the dogs. They want to make sure the dog is good with other pets and kids, and there is a health certificate with all things that were checked and vaccines.

[The dogs] are fostered to evaluate the personality of the dogs. Some have specific issues so [they] have to assess these things and put controls in place to be sure the owner will be a good match and understands the issues and controls that are needed.

When participants were asked about their reactions or concerns on hearing about a neighbour adopting a dog from another country, several expressed concerns about risk of disease, while others talked about fear, aggression and other behavioural issues, including risk to children.

For me, there would be a certain note of caution around letting the kids out there with the dogs until we knew more and were sure. I'd do more research on my own to have questions to ask the owner

If you are dead set on bringing a dog from another country, I think it's pay to play. You have to be responsible for all of the cost of rigorous health testing and quarantines and whatever needs to be done to be sure the animal is ok to be here.

Participants who expressed concerns about the risk of disease or behavioural issues were asked about their response to arguments made by those who support the importation of dogs because of the conditions and extensive need in other countries. Some maintained that safety and risk mitigation in Canada must be the priority. Others argued that there is a similar situation with regard to the volume of dogs that need to be placed in a home here in Canada.

It's not enough of an argument to say we have a big heart and that we want to do something (to help). There still needs to be safeguards for health and safety at the same time.

Pets are already being returned and shelters are full. We have enough to focus on in our own country to be taking on others' responsibilities. Maybe once we take care of our own backyard and have everything under control then we can start looking elsewhere, but right now we have a lot of problems to take care of.

A few participants suggested that Canada could assist other countries to deal with these issues, without bringing dogs into this country.

I also think we should be supporting other countries with their own outreach and awareness, where they might not have the ability and resources to raise and maintain awareness there (for example, what the risks are) to prevent the risk issues down the road.

[We could] send money or people for a spay and neuter program in those countries. We feel bad for them, but part of the problem is that they are being born.

We should be doing international outreach to countries that do not have the ability to fully fund their awareness of the issues to try to help them [better understand the issues].

In-depth interviews

When asked about their thoughts on dogs coming from outside of Canada, many interview participants expressed strong concern about introducing diseases that are not endemic to Canada. A few also talked about considerations for the conditions of the transportation.

The risk varies tremendously based on where the animal comes from. Every country has different risk when it comes to disease and different import/export requirements. (Veterinarian)

[...] taking into consideration the zoonotic diseases that may also have an impact on the Canadian populations of not only dogs, but on agriculture and overall health of animals here. (Breeder)

When it comes to importing, there are breeds that have health issues because they were not adequately bred. Then you add inhumane transport conditions on top of it, which adds stress and can compromise them in terms of health. (Veterinarian)

Many participants suggested that the decision to rescue a dog from another country can be an emotional one, which may cloud a consumer's judgment. A few said that they support the importation of dogs for the purposes of breeding programs designed to improve bloodlines, but not the rescue of dogs when there are many dogs in Canada that also need a home.

I have trouble with the concept of purchasing non-purebred dogs from outside the country. I know there can be a knee jerk reaction about saving dogs in need, but go to our own pound where there are hundreds of dogs that need a home, love and care. By bringing these dogs from elsewhere that no one knows about in terms of background, they get here and people can't handle them, so they are surrendered to the local shelter anyway, which burdens the system here. (Breeder)

[...] anyone with livestock will have animals quarantined in barn and checked so that all of the biosecurity measures had been duly met. Pet owners many not be as well informed about the potential dangers around letting a dog you are not 100% sure of interact with the other pets in your neighbourhood, and town. (Breeder)

On the other hand, several acknowledged that there are dogs in other countries living in poor conditions, with little prospects without the assistance of countries like Canada to take them in.

It's a double-edged sword. There are dogs here [in Canada]. On the other hand, if we don't do anything about the dogs overseas, they have no prospects whatsoever. (Animal welfare)

They can be in very rough shape when they come to Canada. They were often on the street and neglected terribly. (Animal welfare)

I can't believe that any reputable rescue or dog club would not insist on [health checks], because we definitely do not want to introduce dog rabies into the population, since it is almost always fatal. But at the same time, I feel for the animals that need rescue, whether from a worn-torn country like Ukraine or from the meat market in Asia. (Animal welfare)

Several participants described some specific examples of situations they have personally encountered of dogs imported from another country, including the introduction of foreign diseases, parasites and behavioural issues.

There is one rescue in the [region of Canada] that often bring in dogs coming from overseas. We would consistently see foreign disease in those dogs. We were not impressed that this was happening; with testing that missed these diseases, or however it was happening, bringing the risk of infecting our dogs, and humans. (Veterinarian)

The problem is not just health, but there are common behaviour issues with (adult) street dogs. The potential owner wants to rescue them but has not idea that typically this will be a terrified dog that is not conditioned to living in a house or a with a family. They are not socialized, and are now having to become a house dog. Sometimes it works, but it's buyer beware because you don't know. (Veterinarian)

C. EXPERIENCES WITH TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY (FOCUS GROUPS)

Very few participants have had personal experience with the requirements and procedures for bringing a dog into Canada. One acquired a puppy from a breeder in the United States. Two travelled with their dog into the United States and back into Canada, and one is involved in a greyhound rescue organization that typically brings dogs from the United States. In each case, no issues were experienced and they found the information they obtained to be straightforward and easy to follow.

We bring them [greyhound rescues] from the States and have to follow all of the regulations and it's been fine. Our biggest problem is [...] the border guards [...] want the GST on whatever we sell the dogs for, but we explain that we don't sell the dogs.

We've been through the States with dogs in the past. You show your rabies certificate at the border and that's good enough and all you need. It is trying to convince the border guards who don't believe you (when you tell them the low price you paid).

One person had experience bringing dogs from overseas, although they relied on a rescue agency to physically bring each dog into Canada, through the use of "flight buddies" who accompany the dogs on their flight into Canada.

The dogs are flown in from overseas come in with flight buddies, accompanying them as luggage, rather than flying in cargo, and you meet them at the airport with the Canadian agency rep to pick up your dog.

D. USE OF THE CFIA TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT REQUIREMENTS (FOCUS GROUPS)

Only a few participants had been to the CFIA website to look for information about the requirements in bringing a dog into Canada. Each person said they were able to get the information they needed.

I went to the CFIA website to get all of my information. I didn't see the need to go to any other source for information since they are the authority you have to go through to bring a dog into Canada.

I checked out the requirements on the CFIA website and then went to the rescue agency in Qatar asking if they would give me certificates proving certain things and they said absolutely. They said they send dogs to Canada and they have also researched the CFIA website to make sure they were able to cover all requirements.

(As someone involved in rescue of dogs from the US) I've had to go to the site many times. The site is very straightforward and once you've gone through it once it's all you need.

E. DOG RABIES

Focus groups

Awareness

Only some participants had heard about rabies recently and only one or two heard about the canine variant. These participants were concerned about human cases of rabies, that there was no cure, and that it is highly transmissible between wild and domestic animals.

I just had a conversation with a co-worker about rabies. That there's no cure.

I know people around the world still die from it every year, but I don't know which countries they live in.

Only thing that comes to mind that there was a human case in the US that got it and didn't get treated.

Rabies is still present in the US and highly contagious between wild animals and domestic animals. There is a rigorous vaccination program for pets and farm animals.

Several recalled past federal or provincial government efforts to disburse rabies vaccination packets in the wild to control the spread of the disease.

I've heard of planes dropping food pellets containing the rabies vaccine into the wild to control the spread of the disease.

Also, something I heard recently was about a vaccine packet that was dropped in the forest in <province> to do with rabies vaccine.

A few participants perceive that rabies is very rare or does not exist in Canada and therefore is not a concern, or that other diseases are of greater concern.

I was bitten severely by a foster a few months back, went to the hospital and was treated with antibiotics. I asked about exposure to rabies and the doctor said that it was so uncommon that there was no point in giving me the rabies shots. So, while rabies is a terrifying disease, I personally have very little fear about it in this part of the world.

We have a far greater problem with ticks than with rabies here in Canada. We have wild animals (coyotes, foxes, deer) around our 40-acre property all the time but they don't come near with the dog around, so I'm not worried about it.

Recent government prohibition measures regarding dog rabies

Only a few participants felt that they had heard about the recent measures to prevent dog rabies from entering Canada, and indicated some knowledge of the measure, such as dogs being stopped at the border or banned when entering from identified countries, although not always reporting complete or accurate details of the measure.

That's where they are stopping the dogs at the border. They put a stop to any importing of dogs from any country at the border to try and stop rabies from entering the country.

I heard about dogs from some countries being banned and there was a fair bit of outcry about that.

Perceptions regarding the new measures

Many focus group participants said they fully support the recent move to prohibit commercial dogs coming from countries at high risk for dog rabies. This was typically shaped by concerns for the introduction and spread of disease in Canada.

I think it safeguards breeders and other people working in the pet industry from potential exposure to the diseases.

I'm in favour of the decision, especially if we don't know the incubation period of the disease. It's important to have strict measures in place if this is the case.

As soon as there's a risk, we should close the door immediately. It isn't essential, and if it isn't responding to a need, I don't see the point in bringing in more animals [from outside of the country].

If you can delay it for a few years until there is a specific vaccine for dog rabies, that is readily available and part of your maintenance routine with a dog, then let's keep it out.

Some participants said that they support the measures, however, their response suggests that they may prefer an alternative to an outright prohibition. These participants would support a quarantine similar to that implemented in other countries, or allowing entry after meeting specific requirements, although some others felt that a long quarantine is not a humane solution for dogs.

Any dog coming in should be quarantined for a period of time. That is in place in Australia (6 weeks), but I don't know if we have something like that here in Canada. We definitely need to

be cautious because you don't know what kind of diseases we could be bringing in. and it could be communicable and needs to be controlled.

I think rules and regulations around bringing personal pet dogs into Canada should be relatively strict, but they should be allowed into the country.

Maybe they could start screening for whether it's been at least 6 months since the dog was vaccinated before allowing one to enter the country.

Some participants support the measures, although they would prefer to see these measures extended to all countries, rather than only high-risk countries since the level of risk may be fluid over time. As a few articulated, there may still be some risk of rabies coming from lower risk countries. Some also questioned the exclusion of personal pet dogs from the prohibition, as they perceive this leaves an element of risk in the measure.

Just because a dog is coming from a lower risk country that doesn't mean no risk, and maybe they are lax about letting dogs in from higher risk countries, so you don't really know. Either you do it or you don't, but this seems like a halfway measure to me. It [doesn't go] far enough.

I also [question why] just commercial dogs are prohibited. Why not personal pets as well? There could be confusion down the road between personal and commercial.

If they are going to do it they need to do it properly. It should be for all dogs, not just commercial dogs. And, it should be for all countries, not just high-risk countries.

With regard to extending the measures to include personal pet dogs, some participants disagreed, seeing the risk as much lower with personal pets, where it is more likely that there is a comprehensive history of vaccination and health exams, as well as a lower likelihood of exposure to a large numbers of dogs in close contact while in the foreign country.

I would say not for personal pets. It's a risk assessment. How likely is it that during a trip (a Canadian dog) is exposed to canine rabies, whereas for commercial dogs they've been raised in closer quarters, so chances of an outbreak are a lot higher.

If you are taking your dog on vacation then it should not apply but if you are acquiring a dog from another country then yes it should be quarantined.

A few participants said that they recognize the need for measures to screen dogs and reduce the risk of introducing disease, however, they do not see a prohibition as the appropriate approach to take.

There has to be protections, but there are ways other than strict prohibition. I don't see anything wrong with foreign adoptions being told by domestic authorities if you want to bring in the dog you have to follow health procedures to make sure they are safe, such as quarantine before you can release them into the Canadian population of dogs.

I think restrictions should be on a case-by-case basis depending on where the dog comes from rather than implementing a blanket solution.

A few emphasized the need for education efforts to inform the public, and in particular dog-owners and prospective dog-owners of the issues and considerations with regard to health risk when bringing a dog from outside the country.

You need an education campaign to tell the public that rabies is a problem or becoming a bigger problem here. You need to raise awareness.

A few also said that they have many questions about the details of how the measures are implemented, monitored and assessed over time. These fortify the need for communications with the public from CFIA about the measures that are in place, suggesting that anyone interested in details can find more information on the website.

What caused this explosion of rabies in other countries. How are we scanning this and what decides which countries are on the list and which are not? What does the test look like for this and who is deciding this? Is there enough support at the border to do this?

You want it to make sense in the implementation as well. For example, [how decisions are made regarding] countries that need to be added or removed from the list so that it's not [having unintended] negative impacts. Evaluate regularly to make sure the measures are not having an unintended impact.

In-depth interviews

Most interview participants feel that breeders and animal welfare/rescue organizations are more likely to consider the risk of animal diseases than individual dog owners. A breeding operation, for example, would be sensitive to the risk of spreading the disease to their other animals, and typically work to ensure the health of their animals as part of their business and reputation. These participants perceive that individual dog owners would be less aware of potential disease risks or would rely on breeders, rescues, or animal shelters to take measures to prevent disease before the ownership transfers to individuals. A few participants alluded to

the emotional decision that individuals make when seeking to bring a pet into Canada, which may cloud judgement and supersede any consideration of the health history or disease risk.

[...] Breeders have different considerations. They are [I believe] certified and know what they are doing. Also, if they are bringing a dog into the country then they don't have much choice! They have to meet the regulations [or be denied entry]. A breeder is more aware of the issues than the average pet owner. (Breeder)

Any reputable person who imports into Canada would [consider the risk for disease] for sure. They wouldn't have a business if they were known to have brought in animals that had health issues that were harmful to other animals or people. (Animal welfare)

I don't think people care. They just want help by giving a dog a home. (Animal welfare)

Although all veterinarians interviewed were familiar with canine variant rabies or dog rabies, only some other interview participants are aware. One veterinarian said that their clinic has seen two cases of rabies in dogs in the past year, which they believe included one coming from outside of Canada. One breeder said that a recent instance of rabies in bats in the community had led to concern for transmission to their domestic animals.

We have seen 2 cases of rabies in dogs that came through in the last year. That in itself is disturbing. One of the dogs had come from outside of Canada, they don't realize that rabies is fatal and that people die around the world all the time. (Veterinarian)

I haven't heard of a variant... have heard of rabies in dogs but there are hardly any around here. Rabies is a rare disease these days because of inoculation. (Animal welfare)

Most interview participants are aware of the measure implemented in September 2022, to prohibit the importation of commercial dogs into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies. Some interview participants support the measures, citing reasons such as helping to prevent the entry of dog rabies. However, other interview participants feel that this measure is not necessary as long as there are certificates of health or vaccine records available.

I support it. They are trying to prevent disease from entering into Canada, particularly those that we don't have or have very little of. (Veterinarian)

I think it's justified for sure. But is there a loophole [...] that could still result in risk? (Breeder)

I don't see the rationale behind that. For years dogs have come into Canada, so why now? What brought this about? Has there been a big uptick in canine rabies elsewhere that Canada is reacting to? (Breeder)

I don't think it's something we want to shut down completely. There's a lot of benefits, particularly in terms of breed programs and keeping certain breeds going and the establishment of local breeders rather than having to continuously go to other countries. It just has to be done in a manner that addresses some of the risk of importing diseases, that may otherwise become imported into Canada that are not currently here. (Veterinarian)

A few perceive that the measure was not implemented in consultation with industry, and that there would have been a benefit to consultations when developing the measure.

One problem when reading about the CFIA measures was that they didn't do a lot of consultation with the industry before putting them into place, which is a common problem with government introducing programs. I'm not sure why you wouldn't consult with those who are directly involved and know the topic. (Animal welfare)

Some interview participants feel that it is ineffective to apply the measures to only commercial dogs when other personal dogs, or dogs falsely presented as personal dogs, may end up entering the country with rabies. On the other hand, a few feel that if a personal pet was raised in Canada, fully vaccinated, and brought with the owner to another country for a short period of time, this dog should be exempt from the measure. Many said they would be comfortable with personal dogs entering from a high-risk country as long as there was documentation to support vaccination and health history. A few further stipulated that the length of time of ownership, as well as the vaccination history, should exceed the maximum incubation period for rabies.

I would need to know a little bit more. The definition of commercial is a bit suspect, especially the show dog, who is personal pet. (Animal welfare)

It's not realistic to ban pets if someone took their dog somewhere and brought them back. But you should have to show some vaccine certificate and length of ownership. It can't get too complex either, realistically. We can't say to people, no you can't bring your pets. But, when it comes to personal pets coming from the high-risk countries, there should be some extra requirements for paperwork to be shown. (Veterinarian)

You should be allowed to bring the dog if you have all the paperwork and protocols in place to ensure health. (Animal welfare)

Some interview participants support the implementation of a quarantine for pets coming into Canada, particularly from countries at high-risk for dog rabies. This could help to allow personal pets to safely enter the country in situations with less known health history a few stipulated. These participants do not feel that public funding should be used for quarantine costs, but

rather, be an expense that the breeder, rescue organization or owner should be responsible for and should be considered when bringing in dogs from other countries.

Quarantine might be better than the ban. Although, it's costly and where will they be quarantined. If these rescue groups bring in large loads of dogs then it's very costly and you need large facilities. (Breeder)

To say government should pay isn't always fair, and I recognize that some people will be opposed to public funds going towards that. The cost benefit would have to be looked at and maybe not many would see the benefit particularly when we have a lot of dogs who need homes here. (Animal welfare)

A few interview participants said that they are more concerned about other more prevalent diseases such as kennel cough or parvovirus than dog rabies. Notably, each of the 4 veterinarians suggested that other infectious diseases need to be considered (beyond just rabies), and more rigorous testing be done.⁵

We have had in [region], last summer, quite a serious problem with a different strain of parvo[virus]. It was suspected to have been brought in from a rescue. A lot of dogs not responding to the usual treatments. The year before, there was a problem with kennel cough that was not responding to the usual treatments, and they suspected it was brought in by a rescue. (Breeder)

I don't understand why the heavy focus that CFIA had on rabies where there are more significant diseases to worry about like brucellosis or TB because both of those impact Canadian livestock considerably and Canada right now is brucellosis-free and they are not testing to clear the dogs for either of those other 2. (Breeder)

Ideally, the infectious disease testing for bringing animals in would more stringent, [perhaps] that 2 negative tests for heartworm are performed a month apart or a more detailed test and not just a snap test. It depends on the disease of course. Same with parasites – more testing. (Veterinarian)

There should be health certifications that veterinarians on the export side would have to sign to attest to the health of the animal and then the importer needs to have this paperwork signed and in order before they will accept the animal, with added follow up requirements of checks within 30 days of entry. They [should] both have some responsibility and need to work together. (Veterinarian)

All kinds of diseases and problems are being imported, putting our other pets at risk. The infectious diseases are a concern including diseases from different parts of the world that are

⁵ It should be noted that, while these diseases are important for pet owners to be aware of, they are outside of the CFIA's authority.

not here in Canada, such as leishmaniasis. There have been some other diseases that have been imported such as ticks that are not endemic to Canada. There was a mini outbreak of canine influenza recently in Ontario, which was caught and did not spread very far. But, it falls on the shoulders of the GPs to see these things and recognize it before it starts something super contagious which would be a huge problem. Parasites from street dogs in southern countries is another big issue, with many dogs testing negative for heartworm but testing positive a month after they've been here. I don't think we are testing for any of these things as far as I know. As far as I know there has not been a case of rabies that has been imported into [province]. In other countries, such as the United States [I believe] they have to have detailed testing and certifications before they arrive on their soil. There is a much stricter set of regulations for importing dogs, even for visiting pets. (Veterinarian)

Some interview participants believe that the federal government, in consultation with industry, has a role to play in helping to foster the health and safety of imported dogs and preventing the introduction and spread of disease in Canada. The CFIA has established the requirements for the entry of animals to Canada and can also be a single source for education, tools, and information for veterinarians, breeders, rescues and pet owners. These participants noted that there is no single association or private organization that can take on this leadership role in Canada. A few, however, feel that breeders and rescues can play a stronger role in educating the industry and dog owners, and direct individuals to where to find more information and factors to consider when bringing an animal to Canada.

There could be a role [for industry] but there are many breed and rescue organizations so there is no centralized organization to go through. [CFIA] could play a role in education though. Promoting understanding on what to look for in adopting a dog from abroad. Maybe they can promote information on CFIA requirements. (Veterinarian)

If there was a centralized source to go to that was vetted and comprehensive but easy and quick to use as a reference, that would be helpful. If you want GPs to get involved in some way in testing or informing then the steps need to be very clear (heartworm tests, outbreak of something). We need an easy government website to find the information we need, in a logic place and order with consistent information that is easy to find and use. (Veterinarian)

Views about current issues (in-depth interviews)

Interview participants were informed that currently, around the world, there are issues with illegal movements (or trade) of dogs, using fraudulent documentation. Most interview participants feel that, while this is a concern, it is very difficult to mitigate fraudulent paperwork. These participants cited documentation in different languages, and in various formats, as

challenges in determining if the document is valid. Some interview participants expressed frustration that some individuals will always attempt fraudulent means to import an animal into Canada. Suggestions to help mitigate fraudulent document included the creation of standardized documentation necessary for entry to Canada, and requiring all dogs entering the country to be microchipped to confirm identify, with the same number present on all paperwork.

It's a real problem. I have actually seen paperwork for vaccinations for dogs that are clearly not for that dog (not the same age, the microchip didn't match, and so on), and I've seen a forged signature with someone else's name. (Veterinarian)

I don't know how easy it is to recognize any of these things in a wide variety of different languages. Unless you have to register with the government in some central collection, I don't know how you can control that. You put in the safeguards you can and hope that's enough. (Veterinarian)

Fraudulent paperwork is a real can of worms. The document is only as good as the paper it's written on because you can take any document and have the proper people sign it and then it comes with a dog that is not the dog that the paperwork was written for. Unless the microchip number is there and it's checked against the chip on the dog, you don't know. (Breeder)

Interview participants were also told that the government cannot restrict importers from presenting an animal for import at Canada's borders as importers can still attempt to present a non-compliant animal at the border or port of entry. Most interview participants feel that individuals presenting non-compliant animals should be denied entry to Canada, with many also supporting a ban on future attempts to enter Canada as well as a large fine as a deterrent. A few said that increasing oversight and creating a reputation of a country with strong enforcement at the border would serve as a deterrent from attempts to arrive at the border with non-compliant animals. A few were concerned about what would happen to the animals if the individual was turned away, noting potential implications for inhumane treatment of dogs turned away, and need for quarantine of those accepted.

That one is tricky as well because it becomes an animal welfare issue. If they are found and turned back, what happens to the animals? It may be better to be super strict and have a reputation of strict adherence and inspection, so that it dissuades importers from trying this. (Veterinarian)

That should be like anyone else bringing in any banned substance or products. Their identity should go on record and they should be refused entry and animals sent back, and possibly fined. (Breeder)

If they are non-compliant and trying to get away with something then that individual should be barred from coming into Canada in future. There can also be fines to be paid. There have to be legal ramifications if you break the law. That's no different from bringing in any other kind of contraband into the country. (Animal welfare)

Finally, interview participants were asked about organizations who independently claim to be “responsible, reputable, and legitimate” importers. Many of these organizations establish that they operate under strict guidelines and therefore present a lower risk when importing commercial dogs from abroad, however, there is no governing body at the moment who would be able to oversee or govern such claims. Most of the interview participants believe that a method of identifying reputable importers is a useful approach as it avoids the need for a complete prohibition, and allows some dogs to come into the country, even from higher risk countries.

Maybe registered breeders have to go through more stringent scrutiny to be allowed to import animals for breeding programs. These would take into consideration risk of illnesses/disease and also humane treatment to be able to import dogs. (Veterinarian)

In terms of roles for the industry, two breeders suggested that Canadian organizations currently acting as dog registries may be in a position to assist with the accreditation since this system is already in place for breeders to become registered, although their capacity is often strained. A few participants also suggested that Humane Societies in Canada may have a role to play in helping to identify reputable rescue organizations. One participant suggested that organizations that have earned the reputable status may also become involved in efforts to educate consumers about the risks and considerations and to look for this “reputable” status.

Theoretically, they would be going through their registry such as the Canadian Kennel Club (CKC), or a livestock to register animals. They already have in place the established protocols and methods of tracking documents and so on. (Breeder)

On the rescue side, maybe the Humane Societies here could play a role in helping to regulate the international rescue organizations when they come in. They have a vested interest in making sure that dogs coming in don't have disease and less likely to end up in their shelters. (Veterinarian)

Some interview participants emphasized the need for rigorous health protocols to be followed (vaccination certificates officially logged, a high standard of testing, healthy and humane transport and housing conditions). Any organizations accorded different rights should be

required to prove that they follow these standards, including an initial inspection and periodic review or audit.

Having some type of accreditation once you've established that you follow health protocols, would be good. It could be reviewed in some type of annual audit that you have to renew in order to keep that status. (Veterinarian)

One or two suggested that this should be paid for through users-fees to the organizations since they are the beneficiaries of the status that would allow them to import dogs from high-risk countries. One participant also said that this status could potentially make it more efficient for them to import dogs once they had achieved the reputable status.

If rescues and animal welfare organizations want to do this [import dogs from high-risk countries] they should pay for it. [This is] no different than professional association groups who want self-regulation, who have to prove that they will put measures in place to ensure standards are being met by their members. They pay for the cost of establishing and upholding the standards including the training and inspections. (Animal welfare)

F. FEEDBACK ON AD CREATIVES (FOCUS GROUPS)

Focus group participants were shown a compilation of 5 ads used in previous international dog adoption campaigns. They were asked to provide feedback with regard to the clarity of the messaging, the extent to which the ads command attention including the appropriateness of the images used, specific elements which they felt required revision or improvement, and the overall ad that they preferred.

Clarity of message

By and large, participants felt that the objectives of the ads are clear, although there were mixed reviews about how the messages are portrayed in terms of clarity. While some participants felt the ads are clear in conveying the message about risks and need to be informed when bringing dogs from other countries, others felt that the messages are too weak and not specific enough. For example, the caption “a picture doesn’t tell the whole story”, was viewed as too generic and vague on its own (for example, as used in one of the ads), it was seen as a good message to set the context for additional messaging featured in other ads.

I would mash all of the ads together. Add that the picture doesn’t tell the whole story and that it kills 59,000 annually, along with the questions.

A few also said that the questions featured in one ad need to be more specific. For example, reference to “disease” was seen as non-specific and would be better replaced with rabies.

(The ad) needs more lead in text like “do you know where your dog came from” to lead it and set the stage or context for why the questions.

(They) need to convey the serious risk so that it grabs attention, and tell you that adorable dog could still be patient zero for a major and serious outbreak.

Some said that the call to action is either missing or not clearly laid out in the ads. If ultimately, the point of the ads is to ask people to seek more information, this should be more prominently featured in the ads. Some said that it should be more clearly spelled out and more directly connected with the key message.

The one about rabies kills 59,000 yearly is the one that would grab me the most, but if I don’t have a call to action, to go to a website to get more information, then I don’t really know what the point is.

Move “adopt responsibly” to top under the caption to give it context and tell the story.

(The ads) have to have a link of where to go for more information. I’m sure people need information resources like this to get all of the information they need. Where they can get more links to other resources as well. The caption needs to actually say – go to....for more information.

Commanding attention and images used

Many participants also said that the ads do not command attention in part because some of the messaging is not sufficiently clear or specific. For some, commanding attention would come from the provision of more detail or specificity. For others, the use of stronger images would be required.

These ads are not compelling. You can gloss over them quickly and it doesn’t catch you at all.

If saw in the airport it wouldn’t grab my attention. It needs more context. It would need to have something graphic to grab my attention.

There was a considerable difference of opinion about the best approach to the images featured in the ads. For some, healthy dogs seemed the most appropriate to garner attention. For some, however, the dogs in the images need to look more sickly or more clearly tied to rabies, such as an image of an angry dog. One person suggested an image of a dog having an examination by a veterinarian would point to concerns about health and disease in dogs.

(It would be better to) show a snarling dog, and associate it with angry or out of control animal to grab attention quickly.

I think the pictures are too cute. If they really want people to react, they should use more negative imagery to elicit a reaction and draw attention to the potential consequences.

(Translated)

Specific suggestions for improvements

While many participants said they liked the approach of “Rabies kills 59,000 people a year” to drive home the point about the seriousness of the disease, some said that this was fear-mongering, and a more helpful or constructive approach would be more useful. Many said that the caption needs to add “worldwide” in order to accurately convey the statistic. One person suggested that the fact that there is no cure should be added to the caption in some way to explain how or why it is that so many people are killed each year.

This ad needs to be specific about where that is. It leaves you with the impression that this is in Canada since it's just above the Government of Canada logo.

It's trying to scare me and doesn't provide useful information because you don't know where or why.

The one about 59,000 deaths speaks to me the most, but they should focus more on the fact that if someone is bitten [by an infected dog], they could die because there's no cure.

(Translated)

Related to the earlier point about making the call to action more prominent, a few participants said that they feel reference to the CFIA should also be made prominent, as the authority responsible for regulating dogs coming into Canada.

(The ads) need to increase awareness that it's CFIA. That's not an obvious government branch to be doing this and that they are responsible for vetting pets.

Important to tell people that the CFIA website will give you all of this information.

A few expressed concerns about the execution of the ads, such as the amount of text, size of font or the use of white on grey.

You can't put a lot of questions and text and white on a greyish background, it doesn't stand out, I didn't even see that. And the small writing, most people won't pay attention to the text.

Preferred ad

Overall, more participants said that they liked the ads with the examples of questions, because it provides useful information about the types of questions to ask, provides some context for concerns, and emphasizes the importance of seeking information. A few participants, however, said that the questions need to provide more concrete detail on the topics to be looking for information on (for example, rabies, countries with high risk, need for vaccination).

I like the one with the questions. There's more information and what questions to ask. It's specific and helpful. But you need to be specific about rabies though (not just disease).

If you are looking for a dog from outside Canada having those messages and questions would be helpful to me so would grab my attention.

A few said that they did not like the ad with the caption “the picture doesn’t tell the whole story”, because it does not provide enough context and detail about the concern (for example, that the concern is risk of disease, or specific to rabies). A few also said that the message is not complete without a call to action, to visit the website for more information.

(It’s) good to have these questions listed there but need at least some hint at answers so that it tells more of the story (for example, concerns/why, what looking for).

The ad says ask questions but the majority of people don’t know what questions to ask, so having that is good information for those who needs it. There should be much more specificity, like some points about asking about what vaccinations your dog has had.

If I don’t have a call to action, to go to a website to get more information, then I don’t really know what the point is.

Reach of the campaign

A few participants wondered how these ads would reach them, as individuals who do not have a pet, or who are not currently in the market for a dog. One person said that an ad that emphasized the risk to health would ensure the broadest reach.

Make sure it’s impactful and attention grabbing and associate it with health, so it’s gets wider reach (because of COVID we are all paying attention to health issues).

As an individual who is not in the market for a dog, one participant said that a broadly targeted campaign, designed to reach the general public, would not feel relevant to them. They further argued that, if they were interested in adopting a rescue from another country, they would almost certainly rely on a rescue organization. Several other participants subsequently agreed that the best method of reaching people wishing to acquire a dog from outside of the country would be through breeders and rescue organizations.

As a person who is not interested or in the market for dog, let alone one from outside of Canada, this would not be of interest or applicable to me. [Why is this is a] broad-based campaign for everyone, if it should really be targeted at the rescue agencies bringing in the dogs. It’s they who need to be aware of the risks and requirements, so why spend the money and effort to tell millions of Canadians what you really should be trying to tell only the rescue organizations.

This should be tailored to those organizations [who rescue dogs]. [They could be placing]an ad like this on their website for anyone who connects with them and is interested in rescuing a dog.

APPENDICES

A. METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

This research utilized a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Quantitative data was collected through an online survey of Canadians aged 18 and older, with a focus of the sample being pet owners.

In order to understand feelings and opinions of pet owners and those involved in pet imports, qualitative research was also undertaken (focus groups and in-depth interviews). Participants in focus groups included pet owners who have travelled abroad with their pet, as well as pet owners who have adopted/purchased a pet from abroad, and individuals who are considering getting a pet in the next year.

In-depth interviews were conducted to get information from those that are more challenging to recruit and have high involvement in pet imports. We conducted 10 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with animal welfare organizations, breeders, and veterinarians.

Quantitative

Quantitative data was collected through an online survey of 2,076 Canadians aged 18 and older, with a focus of the sample being pet owners. Results from the survey are valid within a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The survey was conducted across Canada in both official languages. The field dates for the survey were January 23-February 14, 2023. Specific questions in the survey targeted pet owners only, and the survey was also used to recruit pet owners for the qualitative focus groups.

The target population for the survey included:

- Canadian pet owners (with a focus on pet owners who have travelled abroad with their pet; pet owners who have adopted/purchased a pet from abroad; individuals who are considering getting a pet in the next year, either within Canada or abroad); and
- Canadian public.

Sample

We used our probability-based online panel, *Probit*, in undertaking this survey. *Probit* is an online research panel that has been designed by EKOS to provide statistically representative data. Our panel offers complete coverage of the Canadian population (Internet, telephone, cell phone), random recruitment (participants are recruited randomly; they do not opt themselves into our panel), and equal probability sampling. All respondents to our panel are recruited by telephone using random digit dialling; their demographic information is confirmed by live interviewers.

The distribution of the recruitment process for our panel mirrors the actual population in Canada (as defined by Statistics Canada). As such, our panel can be considered representative of the general public (survey results from our online panel support confidence intervals and margin of error estimates). The overall panel size is roughly 100,000 Canadian households. Random stratified samples are drawn from the panel database for individual research assignments.

Fieldwork

The survey was conducted by EKOS using a secure web-based survey. The average interview length was 10.6 minutes.

All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the surveys in their official language of choice. All research work was conducted in accordance with the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Online Surveys and recognized industry standards, as well as applicable federal legislation (*Privacy Act*, *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, and *Access to Information Act*).

Following data collection, the data from this survey were statistically weighted by age, gender, region, education, and dog ownership to ensure the sample is representative of the Canadian population according to 2021 Census data.

Response rate

The response rate for this survey was 23.3%. The response rate is calculated as follows: a total of 8,944 email invitations were sent out, and 33 bounced back, for a total of 8,911 valid emails. A total of 2,076 cases were completed: dividing 2,076 by 8,911 results in a response rate of

23.3%. This response rate is in line with other online surveys we have conducted with a similar length of questionnaire.

Non-response bias analysis

The table below presents a profile of the final sample, compared to the actual population of Canada (2021 Census information). As is the case with most surveys, the final sample under-represents younger Canadians, and those with high school or less education, which is a typical pattern for public opinion surveys in Canada, that is, older Canadians and those with more education are more likely to respond to surveys.

Non-response bias analysis

Sample type	Sample*	Canada (2021 Census)
Gender (18+)		
Male	48%	49%
Female	52%	51%
Age		
18-34	11%	27%
35-54	28%	32%
55+	60%	41%
Education level		
High school diploma or less	18%	35%
Trades/college/post-secondary no degree	31%	36%
University degree	50%	29%

* Data are unweighted and percentaged on those giving a response to each demographic question

Qualitative

Focus groups

Five focus groups were also conducted. Focus group participants were recruited through a question in the online survey completed by Probit panel members. A total of 40 participants were recruited from across the country, including a number with children in the home and those living in rural areas. In 3 of the 5 groups there was a mix of dog-owners, owners of other pets and those without pets. In the remaining two groups, all participants owned dogs, of which at least a few in each group had acquired dogs from outside of Canada or travelled with dogs outside of Canada. Discussions were conducted online between February 15th and 23rd, 2023. Each discussion lasted roughly 90 minutes for which participants received \$120. Each discussion involved 4 to 6 participants for a total of 28 participants from across the country.

Discussions touched on considerations when researching, thinking about acquiring a pet, views on acquiring a pet from outside of Canada, experiences with travel outside the country with a pet and/or use of the CFIA website to research rules and requirements in this regard. Participants also discussed awareness of dog rabies, Government of Canada requirements and recent restrictions when bringing a dog into Canada, and views on recent measures. Lastly, participants were shown a series of ads used in recent dog adoption ad campaigns and asked for their feedback. The recruitment script can be found in Appendix C, and the discussion guide can be found in Appendix D.

Interviews

Ten in-depth interviews were also conducted, also using the recruitment question from the online survey. Of these, 4 were completed with veterinarians, 3 were completed with those who breed or have bred dogs, and 3 were completed with those who currently work or volunteer with animal welfare organizations, or have done so in the recent past. Each discussion lasted roughly 45 minutes for which participants received \$150. The discussion guide can be found in Appendix E.

B. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

WINTRO

WEB INTRO

Thank-you for participating in this survey. Ekos Research Associates, a Canadian public opinion research company is conducting the survey on behalf of the Government of Canada. Your participation is optional and anonymous. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. It is being directed by EKOS Research, and is being administered according to the requirements of the *Privacy Act*. To view our privacy policy, click here.

If you require any technical assistance, please contact online@ekos.com

Q1

Do you own any pets?

- Yes 1
- No 2

Q2

How many pets do you own?

- One 1
- Two 2
- Three or more 3

Q3A

ONE PET

What type of pet do you own?

- Dog 1
- Cat 2
- Ferret 3
- Rabbit 4
- Rodent (e.g., hamster, rat, guinea pig, mice) 5
- Hedgehog 6
- Turtle/tortoise 7
- Amphibian (e.g., frog, toad, salamander) 8
- Other reptile (e.g., lizard, gecko, snake) 9
- Caged bird (e.g., parrot, song bird, etc.) 10
- Fish 11
- Insects/arachnids 12
- Livestock 13
- Other (Specify) 77
- No response 99

Q3B [1,14]

MULTIPLE PETS

What type of pets do you own?

Select all that apply

Dog	1
Cat	2
Ferret	3
Rabbit	4
Rodent (e.g., hamster, rat, guinea pig, mice)	5
Hedgehog	6
Turtle/tortoise	7
Amphibian (e.g., frog, toad, salamander)	8
Other reptile (e.g., lizard, gecko, snake)	9
Caged bird (e.g., parrot, song bird, etc.)	10
Fish	11
Insects/arachnids	12
Livestock	13
Other (Specify)	77
No response	99

Q4 [1,11]

Where did you get your pet(s)?

Select all that apply

Canadian breeder	1
American (US) breeder	2
International (other than US) breeder	3
Humane Society/animal services (adoption from a Canadian shelter)	4
Adopted from an animal welfare/rescue organization	5
Through an online advertising site (e.g., Kijiji, Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, etc.)	6
Physical pet store	7
Online pet store	8
Other Canadian source (specify)	77
Other US source (specify) ____	78
Other international source (specify) ____	79
Don't know/No response	99

Q5

PET OWNER

To what extent did you research the organization/source from which you acquired your pet(s)? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means to no extent, 7 means to a great extent, and 4 means to some extent.

No extent 1	1
2	2
3	3
Some extent 4	4
5	5
6	6

Great extent	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q6A

ONE PET

Regardless of where you obtained your pet, to the best of your knowledge, was your pet born in Canada, brought into Canada from another country (i.e. was born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else), or did you acquire the pet directly from another country?

Born in Canada	1
Born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else	2
Acquired directly from another country	3
Don't know	9

Q6B

MULTIPLE PETS

Regardless of where you obtained your pets, to the best of your knowledge, were any of your pets brought into Canada from another country (i.e. born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else), or acquired directly from another country?

Yes, born outside of Canada and then brought into the country by somebody else	1
Yes, acquired directly from another country	2
No	3
Don't know	9

Q7 [1,3]

Why did you <[Q6A = 3 or Q6B = 2]acquire your pet(s) from [ELSE]choose a pet that was born > outside Canada <[Q6A = 3 or Q6B = 2]?[ELSE]and then brought into the country by somebody else?>

Could not find a suitable pet in Canada	1
Wanted to help an animal in distress	2
Less expensive	3
Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q8 [1,7]

What actions did you take before acquiring your pet?

Select all that apply

Verified or asked questions about where and how the pet was kept and cared for before being offered for sale/adoption	1
Asked for health status and paperwork about pet (e.g., history of vaccinations, veterinarian records) from individual or organization providing the animal	2
Checked how animal would be transported to Canada	3
Checked requirements for bringing an animal to Canada	4
Visited the animal before purchasing	5
Asked about what would happen if health issues occur after purchase/adoption	6

Other (specify)	77
None	98
Don't know/No response	99

Q9 [1,14]

How did you find information on the requirements to bring your pet(s) into Canada?

Select all that apply

Government website	1
E-mail government agency	2
Call government agency	3
Online forums	4
E-commerce sites	5
Social media	6
Web search engine	7
Family and/or friend	8
Animal transport organization	9
Animal welfare/rescue organization	10
Breeder	11
Humane Society/shelter	12
Pet store	13
I did not look for information about bringing pets into Canada	98
Other (please specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q10

IF NOT PET OWNER

Are you considering getting <[Q1 = 1]another[ELSE]a> pet in the next year?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	9

Q11

YES

What kind of pet are you thinking of getting?

Dog	1
Cat	2
Ferret	3
Rabbit	4
Rodent (e.g., hamster, rat, guinea pig, mice)	5
Hedgehog	6
Turtle/tortoise	7
Amphibian (e.g., frog, toad, salamander)	8
Other reptile (e.g., lizard, gecko, snake)	9
Caged bird (e.g., parrot, song bird, etc.)	10
Fish	11
Insects/arachnids	12
Livestock	13
Other (Specify)	77

Don't know/No response 99

Q12

YES

Do you think you will get a pet from an organization/source within Canada or from outside the country?

Within Canada	1
From outside the country	2
Don't know yet	3
No response	99

Q13

If you knew that the animal was from another country before it came to Canada, would you still want to follow through with the purchase/adoption?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	9

Q14

CONSIDERING PET

Do you think you will get a pet that is born in Canada or born in another country and then brought into Canada before you acquire it?

Born in Canada	1
Born in another country and brought into Canada before you acquire it	2
Don't know yet	3
No response	99

Q15A [1,2]

Why do you think you will acquire a pet from outside Canada?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q15B

Why do you think you will get a pet that is born outside Canada and then brought into the country before you acquire it?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q16 [1,14]

Where would you look for information about importing/bringing a pet into Canada?

Select all that apply

Government website	1
E-mail government agency	2

Call government agency	3
Online forums	4
E-commerce sites	5
Social media	6
Web search engine	7
Family and/or friend	8
Animal transport organization	9
Animal welfare/rescue organization	10
Breeder	11
Humane Society/shelter	12
Pet store	13
I will not look for information about bringing pets into Canada	98
Other (please specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q17

PET OWNER

Thinking of the pet(s) you have now, have you ever travelled outside of Canada with your pet(s) (for vacation, moving abroad, etc.)?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know/No response	99

Q18 [1,200]

YES

Which country/countries did you travel with your pet(s)?

Select all that apply

Afghanistan	1
Albania	2
Algeria	3
Andorra	4
Angola	5
Antigua and Barbuda	6
Argentina	7
Armenia	8
Australia	9
Austria	10
Azerbaijan	11
The Bahamas	12
Bahrain	13
Bangladesh	14
Barbados	15
Belarus	16
Belgium	17
Belize	18
Benin	19
Bhutan	20
Bolivia	21
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22

Botswana	23
Brazil	24
Brunei	25
Bulgaria	26
Burkina Faso	27
Burundi	28
Cambodia	29
Cameroon	30
Cape Verde	31
Central African Republic	32
Chad	33
Chile	34
China	35
Colombia	36
Comoros	37
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	38
Congo, Republic of the	39
Cook Islands	40
Costa Rica	41
Croatia	42
Cuba	43
Cyprus	44
Czech Republic	45
Denmark	46
Djibouti	47
Dominica	48
Dominican Republic	49
East Timor (Timor-Leste)	50
Ecuador	51
Egypt	52
El Salvador	53
Equatorial Guinea	54
Eritrea	55
Estonia	56
Eswatini (Swaziland)	57
Ethiopia	58
Fiji	59
Finland	60
France	61
Gabon	62
Gambia, The	63
Georgia	64
Germany	65
Ghana	66
Greece	67
Grenada	68
Guatemala	69
Guinea	70
Guinea-Bissau	71
Guyana	72
Haiti	73
Honduras	74

Hungary	75
Iceland	76
India	77
Indonesia	78
Iran	79
Iraq	80
Ireland	81
Israel	82
Italy	83
Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire)	84
Jamaica	85
Japan	86
Jordan	87
Kazakhstan	88
Kenya	89
Kiribati	90
Korea, North	91
Korea, South	92
Kosovo	93
Kuwait	94
Kyrgyzstan	95
Laos	96
Latvia	97
Lebanon	98
Lesotho	99
Liberia	100
Libya	101
Liechtenstein	102
Lithuania	103
Luxembourg	104
Madagascar	105
Malawi	106
Malaysia	107
Maldives	108
Mali	109
Malta	110
Marshall Islands	111
Mauritania	112
Mauritius	113
Mexico	114
Micronesia, Federated States of	115
Moldova	116
Monaco	117
Mongolia	118
Montenegro	119
Morocco	120
Mozambique	121
Myanmar (Burma)	122
Namibia	123
Nauru	124
Nepal	125
Netherlands	126

New Zealand	127
Nicaragua	128
Niger	129
Nigeria	130
Niue	131
North Macedonia	132
Norway	133
Oman	134
Pakistan	135
Palau	136
Palestine	137
Panama	138
Papua New Guinea	139
Paraguay	140
Peru	141
Philippines	142
Poland	143
Portugal	144
Qatar	145
Romania	146
Russia	147
Rwanda	148
Saint Kitts and Nevis	149
Saint Lucia	150
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	151
Samoa	152
San Marino	153
São Tomé and Príncipe	154
Saudi Arabia	155
Senegal	156
Serbia	157
Seychelles	158
Sierra Leone	159
Singapore	160
Slovakia	161
Slovenia	162
Solomon Islands	163
Somalia	164
South Africa	165
South Sudan	166
Spain	167
Sri Lanka	168
Sudan	169
Suriname	170
Sweden	171
Switzerland	172
Syria	173
Taiwan	174
Tajikistan	175
Tanzania	176
Thailand	177
Togo	178

Tonga	179
Trinidad and Tobago	180
Tunisia	181
Turkey	182
Turkmenistan	183
Tuvalu	184
Uganda	185
Ukraine	186
United Arab Emirates	187
United Kingdom	188
United States	189
Uruguay	190
Uzbekistan	191
Vanuatu	192
Vatican City	193
Venezuela	194
Vietnam	195
Western Sahara	196
Yemen	197
Zambia	198
Zimbabwe	199
Other (specify)	777
Don't know/No response	999

Q18F [1,200]

YES

Which country/countries did you travel with your pet(s)?

Select all that apply

Afghanistan	1
South Africa	165
Albania	2
Algeria	3
Germany	65
Andorra	4
Angola	5
Antigua and Barbuda	6
Saudi Arabia	155
Argentina	7
Armenia	8
Australia	9
Austria	10
Azerbaijan	11
The Bahamas	12
Bahrain	13
Bangladesh	14
Barbados	15
Belarus	16
Belgium	17
Belize	18
Benin	19

Bhutan	20
Bolivia	21
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22
Botswana	23
Brazil	24
Brunei	25
Bulgaria	26
Burkina Faso	27
Burundi	28
Cape Verde	31
Cambodia	29
Cameroon	30
Central African Republic	32
Chile	34
China	35
Cyprus	44
Colombia	36
Comoros	37
Congo, Republic of the	39
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	38
Cook Islands	40
Korea, North	91
Korea, South	92
Costa Rica	41
Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire)	84
Croatia	42
Cuba	43
Denmark	46
Djibouti	47
Dominican Republic	49
Dominica	48
Egypt	52
El Salvador	53
United Arab Emirates	187
Ecuador	51
Eritrea	55
Spain	167
Estonia	56
United States	189
Ethiopia	58
Fiji	59
Finland	60
France	61
Gabon	62
Gambia, The	63
Georgia	64
Ghana	66
Greece	67
Grenada	68
Guatemala	69
Guinea	70
Guinea-Bissau	71

Equatorial Guinea	54
Guyana	72
Haiti	73
Honduras	74
Hungary	75
India	77
Indonesia	78
Iran	79
Iraq	80
Ireland	81
Iceland	76
Israel	82
Italy	83
Jamaica	85
Japan	86
Jordan	87
Kazakhstan	88
Kenya	89
Kyrgyzstan	95
Kiribati	90
Kosovo	93
Kuwait	94
Laos	96
Lesotho	99
Latvia	97
Lebanon	98
Liberia	100
Libya	101
Liechtenstein	102
Lithuania	103
Luxembourg	104
North Macedonia	132
Madagascar	105
Malaysia	107
Malawi	106
Maldives	108
Mali	109
Malta	110
Morocco	120
Marshall Islands	111
Mauritius	113
Mauritania	112
Mexico	114
Micronesia, Federated States of	115
Moldova	116
Monaco	117
Mongolia	118
Montenegro	119
Mozambique	121
Myanmar (Burma)	122
Namibia	123
Nauru	124

Nepal	125
Nicaragua	128
Niger	129
Nigeria	130
Niue	131
Norway	133
New Zealand	127
Oman	134
Uganda	185
Uzbekistan	191
Pakistan	135
Palau	136
Palestine	137
Panama	138
Papua New Guinea	139
Paraguay	140
Netherlands	126
Peru	141
Philippines	142
Poland	143
Portugal	144
Qatar	145
Romania	146
United Kingdom	188
Russia	147
Rwanda	148
Western Sahara	196
Saint Lucia	150
Saint Kitts and Nevis	149
San Marino	153
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	151
Solomon Islands	163
Samoa	152
São Tomé and Príncipe	154
Senegal	156
Serbia	157
Seychelles	158
Sierra Leone	159
Singapore	160
Slovakia	161
Slovenia	162
Somalia	164
Sudan	169
South Sudan	166
Sri Lanka	168
Sweden	171
Switzerland	172
Suriname	170
Eswatini (Swaziland)	57
Syria	173
Tajikistan	175
Taiwan	174

Tanzania	176
Chad	33
Czech Republic	45
Thailand	177
East Timor (Timor-Leste)	50
Togo	178
Tonga	179
Trinidad and Tobago	180
Tunisia	181
Turkmenistan	183
Turkey	182
Tuvalu	184
Ukraine	186
Uruguay	190
Vanuatu	192
Vatican City	193
Venezuela	194
Vietnam	195
Yemen	197
Zambia	198
Zimbabwe	199
Other (specify)	777
Don't know/No response	999

Q19

YES

How often do you travel with your pet(s)?

Once or twice since I have had the pet(s)	1
Once every couple of years	2
Once per year	3
2-3 times per year	4
More than 3 times per year	5
Don't know/No response	99

PQ20

Would you say you are very aware, somewhat aware, not very aware or not at all aware of each of the following:

Q20A

If you are travelling with a pet, you will need to meet specific requirements for each pet to bring it into the country that you're visiting

Not at all aware	1
Not very aware	2
Somewhat aware	3
Very aware	4
Don't know/ No response	99

Q20B

If you are travelling with a pet, you will need to meet specific requirements for each pet you bring back into Canada

Not at all aware	1
Not very aware	2
Somewhat aware	3
Very aware	4
Don't know/ No response	99

Q20C

If you are planning to purchase or adopt a pet from abroad, you will need to meet specific requirements to bring it into Canada

Not at all aware	1
Not very aware	2
Somewhat aware	3
Very aware	4
Don't know/ No response	99

Q23

How would you rate your understanding of current regulations and the requirements for bringing pets into Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means little understanding, 7 means a great deal of understanding, and 4 means some understanding

Little understanding 1	1
2	2
3	3
Some understanding 4	4
5	5
6	6
A great deal of understanding 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

PQ24

Who do you think should have the most responsibility in ensuring that the pets brought into Canada are healthy and free of animal diseases?

Order from most to least

Q24A

Most

The individual/organization bringing the pet into Canada	1
The individual purchasing/adopting the pet	2
A Canadian government department	3
Other (specify)	77

Don't know/No response 99

Q24B [0,1]

2nd most

The individual/organization bringing the pet into Canada	1
The individual purchasing/adopting the pet	2
A Canadian government department	3
Other (specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q24C [0,1]

3rd most

The individual/organization bringing the pet into Canada	1
The individual purchasing/adopting the pet	2
A Canadian government department	3
Other (specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q24D [0,1]

Fourth most

The individual/organization bringing the pet into Canada	1
The individual purchasing/adopting the pet	2
A Canadian government department	3
Other (specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q25 [1,11]

To the best of your knowledge, when bringing pets into Canada, which government departments would you need to check with to ensure you are following all necessary laws and regulations?

Select all that apply

Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)	1
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)	2
Health Canada	3
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	4
Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS)	5
Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)	6
Provincial/Territorial Government Departments	7
Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)	8
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)	9
Transport Canada	10
Other (please specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q26

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system of mammals (dogs, cats, foxes etc.), including humans. Once clinical signs develop, rabies is fatal in over 99% of cases.

In Canada, strains of rabies are found in wildlife such as skunks, foxes, racoons, and bats – however, Canada does not have the canine-variant rabies strain (dog rabies).

Rabies has a long incubation period, which means an infected dog may not show any clinical signs of the disease until months later. A rabies vaccine given to a dog during the incubation period is not likely to be protective. This means that a dog can unknowingly be brought into Canada with the disease, even if it was vaccinated.

Globally, dog rabies kills more than 59,000 people every year. It is prevalent in over 100 countries, and dogs from those countries represent a serious risk to animal and human health.

How concerned are you about dog rabies getting into Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all concerned, 7 means very concerned and 4 means somewhat concerned

Not at all concerned 1	1
2	2
3	3
Somewhat concerned 4	4
5	5
6	6
Very concerned 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q27

Recently, the Canadian government introduced a new measure that prohibits commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies from entering Canada. Commercial dogs can include, but are not limited to dogs for resale, adoption, fostering, breeding, show or exhibition, research, and other purposes. Before this survey, were you aware of this new measure?

Yes	1
No	2
No response	99

Q28 [1,11]

Where did you hear about this new measure?

Select all that apply

Government website	1
Other website	2
Newspaper	3
Radio	4
Television	5
Facebook	6
Twitter	7
YouTube	8
Instagram	9
LinkedIn	10
Other (please specify)	77
Don't remember	98

No response 99

Q29

How strongly do you support or oppose this new measure? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means strongly oppose, 7 means strongly support, and 4 means neither support nor oppose.

Strongly oppose 1	1
2	2
3	3
Neither support nor oppose 4	4
5	5
6	6
Strongly support 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q30 [1,3]

Why do you say that?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q31 [1,3]

Why do you say that?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q32 [1,3]

Why do you say that?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q33

How important do you think it is that the Government of Canada prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all important, 7 means very important, and 4 means somewhat important

Not at all important 1	1
2	2
3	3
Somewhat important 4	4
5	5
6	6
Very important 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q34

How confident are you in the government's ability to prevent the entry of serious/infectious animal diseases that are not currently in Canada? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all confident, 7 means very confident, and 4 means somewhat confident

Not at all confident 1	1
2	2
3	3
Somewhat confident 4	4
5	5
6	6
Very confident 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q35 [1,3]

Why do you say that?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q36

Are you aware that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) website has information, including import requirements, for bringing various types of animals/pets into Canada?

Yes, and I have used it	1
Yes, I am aware of it, but have never used it	2
No	3
No response	99

Q37

YES AND USED IT

In your experience, how helpful was CFIA's website in terms of finding information about the requirements for importing animals/pets? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means not helpful at all, 7 means very helpful and informative, and 4 means neither.

Not helpful at all 1	1
2	2
3	3
Neither 4	4
5	5
6	6
Very helpful 7	7
Don't know/ No response	99

Q38

Have you seen, read or heard any Government of Canada advertising about adopting or purchasing a pet?

Yes	1
No	2

No response 99

Q39 [1,11]

YES

Where have you seen, read or heard about these ads?

Select all that apply

Government website	1
Other website	2
Newspaper	3
Radio	4
Television	5
Facebook	6
Twitter	7
YouTube	8
Instagram	9
LinkedIn	10
Other (please specify)	77
Don't remember	98
No response	99

Q40 [1,2]

What do you remember about these ads?

Response	77
Don't know/No response	99

Q41

YES

Did you do anything as a result of seeing this advertising?

Yes	1
No	2
No response	99

Q42 [1,6]

Which of the following actions did you take?

Select all that apply

Thought about questions to ask about pet adoption	1
Looked online for more information	2
Visited a government website	3
Shared this information with someone else	4
Spoke to a veterinarian	5
Other (please specify)	77
Don't know/No response	99

PQ43

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about these ads using a 7-point scale where 1 means strongly disagree, 7 means strongly agree, and 4 means neither.

Q43A

These ads caught my attention

Strongly disagree	1	1
2		2
3		3
Neither	4	4
5		5
6		6
Strongly agree	7	7
Don't know/ No response		99

Q43B

These ads talk about an important topic

Strongly disagree	1	1
2		2
3		3
Neither	4	4
5		5
6		6
Strongly agree	7	7
Don't know/ No response		99

Q43C

These ads provide new information

Strongly disagree	1	1
2		2
3		3
Neither	4	4
5		5
6		6
Strongly agree	7	7
Don't know/ No response		99

QGENDR

The following questions will be used for statistical purposes only.

What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2
Other	77
Prefer not to answer	99

QAGE

In what year were you born?

Note: answer the full year, i.e. 1977 as "1977"

Year	77
Prefer not to answer	99

QEDUC

What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed?

Less than High School diploma or equivalent	1
High School diploma or equivalent	3
Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	4
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	5
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	6
Bachelor's degree	7
Post graduate degree above bachelor's level	8
Prefer not to answer	99

QPETSTR

Do you work in a pet store?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	99

QBRDLL

Do you breed or sell animals/pets?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	99

QVOLNTR

Do you work or volunteer for an animal welfare or animal rescue organization?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	99

QVET

Are you a veterinarian?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	99

QINC

What is your annual household income from all sources before taxes?

Under \$20,000	1
\$20,000 to just under \$40,000	2
\$40,000 to just under \$60,000	3

\$60,000 to just under \$80,000	4
\$80,000 to just under \$100,000	5
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000	6
\$150,000 and above	7
Prefer not to answer	99

QDEPS

Do you care for any dependents (children, grandchildren) in your household?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	99

QMINOR [1,4]

Do you consider yourself to be any of the following?

Select all that apply

A member of a visible minority	1
Indigenous	2
A person with a disability	3
None of the above	98
Prefer not to answer	99

QPROV

In which province or territory do you live?

Alberta	2
British Columbia	1
Manitoba	4
New Brunswick	7
Newfoundland and Labrador	10
Northwest Territories	12
Nova Scotia	8
Nunavut	13
Ontario	5
Prince Edward Island	9
Quebec	6
Saskatchewan	3
Yukon	11
Prefer not to answer	99

QRURBAN

Would you describe the community you live in as a rural area, suburban area, or urban area?

Rural area	1
Suburban area	2
Urban area	3
Don't know / No response	99

QFG

We are conducting a series of group discussions to learn more about the issue of bringing pets into Canada. You don't need any specific knowledge for this discussion. Each group will include about 6 participants, would be about 90 minutes long, and held online. Individuals will receive a \$120 incentive for participating in this added component.

Would you be interested in participating in one of these online discussions, if you are selected? If you are contacted, you would be provided more information about the dates and time before you commit to participating.

Yes	1
No	2

QRECRUITBA [0,2]

What is the best way to reach you if you are invited to one of our online discussions? Your personal information will be used solely for the purposes of contacting you to participate. The information is not associated with your survey results and your answers remain confidential, regardless of your decision to participate in the discussion group.

NAMEA [0,2]

Name:	
1	1

EMAILA [0,2]

Email:	
1	1

QTELEA [0,2]

Telephone:	
1	1

QEXTA [0,2]

Ext	
1	1

THNK

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

C. FOCUS GROUP SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

INTROA

Hello, my name is _____ from EKOS Research. May I speak with _____? You recently completed a survey for us that is sponsored by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) about pets and pet ownership. At the end of the survey we informed you that we are also conducting a series of focus group discussions with Canadians to discuss factors and considerations in pet ownership, particularly when bringing pets into Canada. Do you remember that survey and expressing an interest in this type of this discussion?

Yes	1
No	2
REFUSED THANK AND TERMINATE	9

INTROB

The 90-minute discussions will take place online between February 15th and 23rd in the evening. In each session, participants will be asked to help the CFIA through discussions about the things Canadian pet owners are aware of and consider in making decisions to bring their pets over the border or adopt pets from abroad. The sessions will be observed by representatives responsible for planning communications so that they can hear first-hand the opinions of Canadians. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout the research process. There will be only 6 participants in each session and each will receive a \$120 incentive for their participation.

Are you still potentially interested in participating?

Yes	1
No	2

Q1A

OWNS A PET

Based on the survey you completed, you own _____, is that correct?

Yes	1
No	2

Q1B

BOUGHT ANIMAL OUTSIDE CANADA

And, one or more of those pets came from outside of Canada, is that correct?

Yes	1
No	2

Q1C**CONSIDERING GETTING A PET**

Are you considering getting _____ in the next year?

Yes	1
No	2

Q2

Are you or is any member of your household or immediate family employed in:

Q2A

Government of Canada

Yes	1
No	2

Q2B

An advertising agency

Yes	1
No	2

Q2C

A market research company

Yes	1
No	2

Q2D

The media (Print, Radio, TV, Internet)

Yes	1
No	2

Q3

Participants in these discussions will be asked to voice their opinions and thoughts in the discussion. How comfortable are you in voicing your opinions in front of a small group of others in an online discussion, in <[FRENCH]French[ELSE]English>? Are you...

Very comfortable	1
Comfortable	2
Fairly comfortable	3
Not very comfortable	4
Very uncomfortable	5

Q3D**NOT COMFORTABLE**

How comfortable are you in voicing your opinions in front of a small group of others in an online discussion, in <[ENGLISH]French[ELSE]English>? Are you...

Very comfortable	1
Comfortable	2
Fairly comfortable	3
Not very comfortable	4
Very uncomfortable	5

Q3B

You will be asked to log onto a Zoom video conference website and if you use separate audio, also dial into a teleconference number, with a Canadian number provided. You will participate through a general discussion where there are no right or wrong answers, just experiences and opinions. No one will be "put on the spot" and you will not need to have any special knowledge to participate. These discussions will be led by an experienced moderator. Sessions will be recorded for research purposes only, but confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained.

Would you be comfortable clicking on a Zoom meeting link that we provide in an email to participate?

Yes	1
No	2
No response	9

Q3C

Participants may also be asked to read a few paragraphs of materials during the discussion. Is there any reason why you could **NOT** participate, including reading some material on screen?

Yes	1
No	2

Q3C2

YES

Would you be comfortable if the person leading the discussion were to read any material shown on the screen out loud to the group?

Yes	1
No	2

Q3C3

NO

Is there anything that we could do to make it possible for you to participate?

Response	77
No	2

Q4

Have you ever attended a focus group or one on one discussion for which you have received a sum of money?

Yes	1
No	2

Q5

Yes, Q4

When did you last attend one of these discussions that was sponsored by the Government of Canada?

Please specify :	77
Months	1
Years	2
Never	999

Q5B

Yes, Q4 AND not never, Q5

Have you attended 5 or more of these discussions that were sponsored by the Government of Canada?

Yes	1
No	2

QLANG

Would you prefer to participate in a discussion in English or in French?

English	1
French	2

QFOCUS

Now that we have gone through all of the details about what is involved in the group, that sessions will be observed and recorded, and what is being done to protect everyone's privacy and personal information.

Are you able to participate in the 90 minute discussion on...?

NOTE that times are listed as Eastern Standard Time and may not necessarily be in your own time zone.

Group 1, Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 PM, General Public, English	1
Group 2, Thursday, February 16, 8:00 PM, General Public, English	2
Group 3, Tuesday, February 21, 6:30 PM, Dog-owners, English	3
Group 4, Thursday, February 23, 6:30 PM, General Public, French	4}
Group 5, Thursday, February 23, 8:00 PM, Dog Owners, English	5
Not available at any of these times.	999

QEQUIP [1,2]

If you have not used them recently, please check to make sure your audio and recording equipment, such as speakers and webcam, are working well before the day of the discussion group. Also, we are providing a Canadian call-in number for anyone without audio on their computer/tablet, but please be advised that it is not a toll-free number, although it may be in your province or region. This is all of the information and questions I have for you, so now, do you have any questions for me before the group discussion?

Check to indicate statement read

1

QFOCUSB

Replacements are not permitted. If you usually use reading glasses you should make sure to have them with you as there will be some viewing of images and reading of materials throughout the discussion.

We are asking that all participants log in 5 minutes prior to the start time of the session. Would you be able to log on and dial in 5 minutes prior to the session time? Late arrivals may not be admitted to the discussion, nor would an incentive be received.

Yes

1

No

98

QTELE

Text/phone

We will be giving you a reminder telephone call and sending an email a day or two prior to your group discussion.

Is _____ the best telephone number at which to reach you?

Yes

1

No, please provide alternate phone number :

2

QEMAIL

Email

<[EMAIL ON FILE]Is _____ the best email address at which to send you an invitation to the discussion, with the secure link and 1-800 number?[ELSE]What is the best email address at which to send you an invitation to the discussion, with the secure link and 1-800 number?>

EMAIL ON FILE

Yes

1

< [EMAIL ON FILE]No, please provide alternate email :[ELSE]Email address :>

77

(VOLUNTEERED) Prefer not to provide email

99

PFNAME

Please provide your first and last names. Only your first name will be used in the discussion.

Name on file: _____

FNAME

First name:

1 1

LNAME

Last name:

1 1

PSETTRANSFER

Is <[AQEMAIL is not empty]_____ [ELSE]_____> the correct email to send the \$120 e-transfer, once you have participated in the online discussion?

Yes 1

No, please provide alternate email : 2

I actually prefer by regular mail 3

PSMAIL

May we have your mailing address to send the \$120, once you have participated in the online discussion?>

Street address format: (apt #) - (Street #) (Street name) eg. 102 - 359 Kent st.

Postal Box Number format: (PO BOX #) (Station info, if applicable) eg. PO BOX 1004 STN MAIN

Rural Route format: (RR #) (Station info, if applicable) eg. RR 6 STN MAIN

ADDRESS1

Address Line 1:

1 1

ADDRESS2 [0,1]

Address Line 2 (if needed):

1 1

ADDRESS3 [0,1]

Address Line 3 (if needed):

1 1

DDRESS4

City:

1 1

DDRESS5

Province:

Please specify 98

BC	1
Alberta	2
Saskatchewan	3
Manitoba	4
Ontario	5
Quebec	6
New Brunswick	7
Nova Scotia	8
PEI	9
Newfoundland	10
Yukon	11
Northwest Territories	12
Nunavut	13

DDRESS6

Postal Code: (Format: T5A 1A1)

1	1
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THNK

If you have any questions or something comes up and you can no longer participate in the discussions, please let us know by calling us toll-free at 1-800-388-2873 or by sending an e-mail to focusgroups@ekos.com. Thank you for your cooperation and time.

QFIL2

QUOTA FILLED

Thank you for your cooperation! We will contact you should space become available in the group.

THNK3

Thank you for your cooperation! Based on the information you have provided, unfortunately you are not eligible to participate in this survey.

Go back to previous question	1
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THNK2

I am very sorry, but due to the parameters of the study we will not be able to include you in the focus groups.

D. FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- I represent EKOS Research (reminder to only use first name of moderator and participants). These groups are being conducted for the Canada Food Inspection Agency or CFIA. We will be talking about pets and animals, specifically about anyone's experience with buying or adopting your pet. As well as any experience you have in travelling out of the country with your pet.
- This research will help the Government of Canada plan communications activities designed to increase the awareness of Canadians about disease risks when travelling with or obtaining a pet from another country, in particular dogs, and the rules/requirements in place to mitigate these risks.
- This is also an opportunity to learn about your thoughts on the Government of Canada's current pet import rules for preventing introduction/spread of serious diseases.
- This group is part of a series of focus groups taking place online with Canadians across the country. This session will last 90 minutes, and we'll just quickly go over the format and "ground rules":
 - Discussion is being recorded so I can listen to what everyone is saying and not worry too much about taking notes.
 - There are observers who have logged in from the Government of Canada so they can hear your opinions first-hand.
 - All comments are confidential.
 - Please do not take screen shots or make copies of the materials shared today. They are for discussion purposes only, in draft form as you will see, and they are confidential.
 - Results of these discussions will be made publicly available through Library and Archives Canada within about 6 months.
 - There are no right or wrong answers here and no need for any expertise. We're looking for reactions and opinions.
 - Please try to speak one at a time and be respectful of one another's opinions.
 - It's okay to disagree. Please speak up even if you think you're the only one who feels a certain way. Everyone may have different experiences and different points of view.
- I'm going to raise some points for discussion, watch for time and make sure everyone has a chance to participate. We do not work for the Government of Canada.

- Please make sure that you are in a quiet place, free from distractions. We ask for your full attention for this time.

2. Introductions (5 minutes)

1. Let's start by going around the group. Please introduce yourself and tell us what part of the country you are in, and what kind of pet you have in your home, or are considering getting?
 - If you don't have a pet and don't plan on having any, maybe you could share with us your favourite pet that you know – it could be an account you follow on Instagram, or a pet your friends or family members have.

3. Acquiring your pet (35 minutes)

NB. Probes in grey are only used to guide moderator or act as examples

2. Do you think how or where someone acquires their pet matters?

Probe: (from a breeder, pet store, animal shelter, Facebook marketplace, kijiji etc.)

 - i. Probe: Depending on what type of pet/animal
 - ii. Probe: Perceptions of different sources? Risks with different sources?
- b. How did you get your pet or pets? Was it through a purchase or adoption or from an animal shelter?
- c. For those of you considering getting a pet, where do you plan on getting it from/what sources are you considering and why is that?
 - i. Probe: What led you to that decision
3. What type of research is necessary when getting a pet? What recommendations would you give to others?
 - a. What research did you do, if any, about the organization you were getting it from or the process to acquire it?
 - i. Organization (reputation, guarantees/assistance to adopters/purchases, where animals are sourced)
 - ii. Individual pet (history (e.g., length of time with organization), health record, vaccinations, concerns about health or behaviour)
 - iii. Helpful sources when researching about your pet? Did anyone in your life impact your decision to get a pet? Probe: did you consult a breeder or a vet in advance? Why/why not?

4. What are your thoughts about purchasing or adopting pets from outside of Canada, including Eastern Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and so on? Have you thought about it? Does it raise any concerns for you?
 - i. Probe: risks of animal diseases impacting your own pets and family?
 - ii. Probe: organizations who bring in dogs from abroad for adoption or sale/resale to Canadians
 - iii. Probe: breeders who import dogs from abroad for breeding programs, Probe: do you think there is a **difference in level of concern or risk** depending on how the dog is acquired?

- b. Where was your pet from and does it matter to you where they're from?
 - i. Probe: Born in Canada or other country?
 - ii. Conscious decision (in Canada or abroad)?
 - iii. Concerns/motives/factors considered?
 - iv. (DOGS only) If dog acquired in Canada but came from another country – did this matter?

5. (For those who acquired their pet from abroad or travel abroad with their pet): Tell me about the process of bringing (importing) your pet into Canada – did you encounter any issues?
 - a. Did you use any sources to understand what was involved (e.g., rules)? Which ones?
 - i. Did you use an animal welfare/rescue organization to do so?
 - b. Did you find it easy or hard to find this information?
 - c. Did you check with any specific organization/source to get information about bringing your pet into Canada? (name/type of organization and type of risks)

6. If you hear that your neighbour or someone at your dog park recently adopted a dog from another country, what would be the first thought that pops into your mind? Write your answer into the chat.

[Probe]

Interaction with your own kids/pets

Types of concerns - health/diseases of concern

Trust in owner – followed proper steps

Pet travel (5 minutes)

7. Have you ever travelled with your pet outside of Canada? If you did, where and why?
 - a. Not USA: Probe - What was the process like? How much research did you do in advance?
 - i. Probe: did you talk to your vet?
 - b. Not USA: Probe - Did you encounter any issues travelling with your pet to the destination outside of Canada? Coming back to Canada?
 - i. Probe: Issues with access to timely titre testing?
 - c. No travel: Why not?

Resources/website (5-10 minutes)

8. Has anyone gone to the CFIA website to look for information about bringing a pet into Canada or travelling with a pet?
 - i. Were you able to find what you were looking for?
 - ii. Was the process of finding it easy or difficult?
- b. Did the information meet your needs (tell you what you needed to know, was clear and easy to understand)?
- c. *If someone has:* Have you used AIRS (Automated Import Reference System) / used the pet import tool / applied for an import permit (experience, thoughts?)

Rabies & Other Diseases – 35 minutes

Let's talk about animal health...

10. How familiar are you with the disease rabies?
 - a. Have you heard anything recently about rabies?
 - b. What was it about (information or concern)?
 - c. Have you heard of the canine-variant rabies strain (aka dog rabies?) What about?

To present to the group:

Dog rabies is different from the strains of rabies found in Canadian wildlife. Dog rabies is adapted to dogs, and thus makes it a greater risk to human health due to our close

proximity with dogs. Once clinical signs develop, rabies is fatal in over 99% of cases (in dogs humans and others). While many other countries have dog rabies, Canada does not.

10. Have you seen, heard or read about what Canada is doing to prevent dog rabies from entering Canada?
 - a. What have you heard?
 - b. From what source?

As of September 28, 2022, the entry of commercial dogs into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies was prohibited until further notice. Commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies are not permitted to enter Canada and import permits are no longer issued. Commercial dogs include dogs intended for purposes such as being given/transferred to another person, resale, adoption, fostering, breeding, show or exhibition and research.

11. How do you feel about this measure?
 - a. What do you think this measure is designed to do?
 - b. Do you support or oppose a measure like this? Why?
 - c. Would you say these measures are necessary or not necessary? Sufficient or not enough or too much?
 - d. Should Canada apply additional requirements to personal pet dogs as well? How would you feel about this?
12. There have been previous instances where a healthy-looking dog entered Canada, with all the proper documentation and health records, including a rabies vaccination certificate. In one of these cases, due to a long incubation period, signs of rabies didn't show up until 6 months later. Public health officials had to contact all the individuals who interacted with the dog to give them treatment.
 - a. Does this concern you?
 - i. If asked why this might happen – refer to supporting information about the definition and requirements for personal pet dogs, long incubation period with rabies, titre testing and vaccinations
 - ii. If asked about the requirements for personal pet dogs: personal pet dogs require a rabies vaccination certificate to enter Canada, and must be adopted/purchased prior to being brought into Canada to be considered a personal pet dog.
 - b. Knowing this, does this change how you feel about the existing measure?
 - c. Does it change how you feel about whether it should be extended to personal pet dogs?

13. Knowing more about dog rabies and the severity of this disease, does this make you feel differently about your neighbour adopting a dog from another country?
14. Is it your impression that the government is doing enough to prevent canine rabies?
 - a. What more could/should be done?
 - b. Would you be supportive of the government strengthening requirements (e.g., applying import permits, minimum ages, disease testing, treatments, etc.)?
 - i. Why do you say that?
 - ii. If not supportive, what do you think should be done instead?

If needed: during the pandemic period, dog imports increased by 400%

Advertising messaging and creatives – 10 minutes

[Refer to presentation on creatives from previous dog imports campaign]

15. Looking at these creatives, what messaging do you think the government is trying to communicate?
 - a. Is the messaging clear?
16. How do they make you feel? What do you like about it? What do you not like about it?
 - a. Do these ads grab your attention?
 - b. Are they relevant for dog owners (and potential dog owners)? Why not?
 - i. Does it include images of the right types of animals? If not, what is missing (cats, birds, etc.)?
 - c. Is there anything missing? What can be improved?
 - d. Which ad among these is the best? What messaging resonates to you the most?

6. Wrap up (2 minutes)

17. Is there anything that we haven't talked about or that you would like to add before we go?
18. Indicate that incentive for participation will be sent within a few days by e-transfer unless other method indicated.

THANK YOU

E. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project on behalf of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The research will be used to help the CFIA better understand your views on pet trade regulations.

As a reminder:

1. There are no right or wrong answers here, so please speak as openly and frankly about opinions.
2. Results are confidential. Your name is anonymous and your views --- as well as those of others participating in the research --- are compiled into a report that will provide feedback to the CFIA.
3. We will be recording the interview for reporting purposes as it is difficult to take notes and lead the discussion at the same time. With your approval, we would also like to share the recordings with the CFIA so they can hear your views firsthand.
 - o Do you approve of us recording the interview?
4. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

We really appreciate you taking the time to talk with us today and share your experiences. Your views and opinions are extremely important.

1. Introduction/general state of the field (5 minutes)

- Let's start by you telling me a little about yourself. Then, tell me a bit about your current work.

2. Importing dogs into Canada (15 minutes)

Subsection (veterinarians/veterinary technicians only)

- Do you think that it matters where someone acquires their dog? [Probe for why]
 - o Probe for sources: individual/organization and/or country from which the dog comes from.
- What are your thoughts about importing dogs from outside of Canada? Does it raise any concerns for you? [Probe for why]
 - o Probe: As an animal health professional, what do you think people should know about, research, or consider before adopting/purchasing a dog from abroad?
 - o What sources would you recommend people use to research adopting/purchasing a dog from abroad?

- In your role, do you interact with people who are importing dogs from outside of Canada?
 - Probe for details: personal pets being brought in by Canadians or commercial animal importers such as animal rescue/welfare organizations).
- Have you examined and/or treated dogs that have been brought from outside of Canada?
 - Probe: Issues/concerns related to these dogs? Have you shared these concerns with anyone? (Members of your community or others)? Do they share similar concerns?
 - Why do you think these issues occur? How can they be addressed/prevented in the future?
 - Who's responsible for preventing these issues and why? What more can be done?
 - Probe: responsibilities of the industry, importers, people acquiring dogs from abroad, the government.

Subsection (all other participants other than veterinarians/veterinarian technicians) (25 minutes)

- What type of research do you think is important for Canadians who are considering adopting/purchasing a dog from abroad? What recommendations would you give to others? [Probe for why]
 - What sources would you recommend? [Probe for why]
- Have you, or the organization you volunteer/work for ever imported dogs from outside of Canada for resale, adoption, or breeding?
 - If you have, what information do you typically provide to potential owners about the dog? (e.g. origin of the dog, information on animal health and diseases, behaviour risks, etc.)
- Could you tell me about the process of bringing (importing) these dogs into Canada? Did you encounter any issues? [Probe for why]
 - What were the considerations you were weighing (humane transport risks? Animal disease and animal health risks?)
 - Did you check with any specific organization/source to get information about bringing the dogs into Canada? Which ones?
- What are your thoughts about bringing in dogs from foreign countries into Canada for resale/rehome/adoption? Does it raise any concerns for you? [Probe for why]
 - What are your thoughts on its impact to Canadians?
- Do you think it matters for most Canadians whether the dog they have purchased/adopted came from abroad? [Probe for why]
- Have you worked with dogs that have been brought from outside of Canada? Have there been any issues/concerns related to these dogs?
 - ?
 - Who's responsible for preventing these issues and why? What more can be done?
 - Probe: responsibilities of the industry, importers, people acquiring dogs from abroad, the government.

4. Rabies (15 - 20 minutes)

- Are you aware of any requirements on importing dogs into Canada? What about for other pets?
 - Do you know which agencies develop and enforce these requirements?
 - Where would you look for information and/or updates about these requirements?
- Do you think that most people who import dogs into Canada take into consideration the risk of animal diseases? [Probe for why and how]
 - How about organizations/people who bring in dogs from abroad for adoption or sale/resale to Canadians? [Probe for why]
 - Do you think people evaluate the risks differently depending on the reason they're bringing dogs into Canada? (e.g. purposes such as breeding, resale, adoption, discovered during vacation, or is a family pet)
- Are you aware of any recent issues with animal diseases?
 - Probe: could you name any specific ones you've heard in the past and which species it primarily affected?

Just checking, how familiar are you with canine variant rabies (also known as dog rabies)?

- Have you seen, heard or read about what Canada is doing to prevent dog rabies from entering Canada?

Mention the following information: (if not already raised in requirements section)

You may have heard - As of September 28, 2022, the entry of commercial dogs into Canada from countries at high-risk for dog rabies was prohibited until further notice. Commercial dogs from countries at high-risk for dog rabies are not permitted to enter Canada and import permits will no longer be issued. Commercial dogs include dogs intended for purposes such as being given/transferred to another person, resale, adoption, fostering, breeding, show or exhibition and research.

- How do you feel about this measure? [Probe for why]
 - Do you support or oppose a measure like this? What led you to decide that? [Probe for reasons]
 - As a professional in your field, are there other measures you think should be included? [Probe for why]

Probes:

 - Concerns over personal health, overall impact to Canadians, etc.
 - Risks that imported dogs from these countries pose

- Should Canada apply additional requirements to personal pet dogs as well? How would you feel about this? [Probe for why]

Mention the following information (if opposed):

There have been previous instances where a healthy looking dog entered Canada, with all the proper documentation and health records, including a rabies vaccination certificate. In one of these cases, due to a long incubation period, signs of rabies didn't show up until 6 months later. Public health officials had to contact all the individuals who interacted with the dog to give them treatment.

(If previously against the policy prohibiting imported dogs from countries with dog rabies.)

- Knowing this, does this change how you feel about the existing measure? Does it change how you feel about whether it should be extended to personal pet dogs? [Probe for why]
 - If not, what do you think should be done instead?
- Considering the scenario that was just shared, with the increase in global animal (including pet and dog) movements and the spread of diseases, what type of stance should the government take on pet (including dog) imports? [Probe for reasons]
 - What other animal diseases concern you? How can import requirements play a role?
 - Would you be supportive of any revisions that could strengthen the existing import requirements for pets, including dogs (e.g. including requirements such as: import permits, minimum ages for import, disease testing, treatments, etc.) [Probe for why]
 - [If supportive] Are there any requirements related to pet and/or dog imports that you think should be changed?
 - [If not supportive] What would you recommend instead?
 - (Not for Veterinarians) How do you see your role in helping foster the health and safety of imported dogs and preventing the introduction and spread of disease in Canada?
 - What about the role of your organization? The industry as a whole? Government?

5. Current issues (15 minutes)

- Currently, around the world there are issues with illegal movements (or trade) of dogs, using fraudulent documentation. Do you have any thoughts on what can be done to curb the use of fraudulent paperwork? (i.e. rabies vaccination certificates, titre test results)
 - What role should the industry, importers, and government play in this?
- The government cannot restrict importers from presenting an animal for import at Canada's borders. Even if there are import requirements and restrictions in place, importers can still attempt to present a non-compliant animal at the border/port of entry. How do you think non-compliant importers should be dealt with? How do you think non-compliant animals should be dealt with? Do you think more action is required for non-compliant importers? (e.g. prohibit future imports? After how many cases of non-compliance?)
- The government must regulate all importers (which includes individuals, organizations, and businesses), regardless of the reason an animal is being brought into Canada, to mitigate the introduction and spread of diseases. There have been claims that "responsible, reputable, and

legitimate” importers should be able to have different rights to importing commercial dogs from abroad. How can these types of importers be identified and defined?

- Do you think industry should play a role in being able to demonstrate, regulate, and meet this type of classification system? [Probe for why/why not]
 - How do you think industry can/should do this? Is there a way for industry to demonstrate that their imports are a lower risk compared to others?
- Are there risks to these classifications? (i.e. importers who are actually importing from puppy mills or importing sick dogs who claim to be “responsible, reputable, and legitimate” importers.) How can these risks be prevented?

6. Wrap up (5 minutes)

- Is there anything that we haven’t talked about or that you would like to add before we go? Any suggestions you would have for the CFIA, as someone that is knowledgeable in your field and/or industry?

Thank You