



11/10/2017

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World's Only Accreditation Body Celebrates Tenth Anniversary as Demand for Legitimate Animal Sanctuaries Rises

NIH chimp phase out, Costa Rica legislation, and Ringling Brothers retirement demonstrate growing need for the "Good Housekeeping" seal of approval.

This week Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) celebrates its tenth year as the only international animal sanctuary accreditation body. Over the past decade, GFAS has helped tens of thousands of horses, big cats, primates, and farmed animals by improving quality standards across four continents.

"Anyone can call itself an 'animal sanctuary,' whether it's a roadside zoo or a backyard breeder. It's a huge problem for the public, lawmakers, and press to distinguish real sanctuaries from phony ones," describes Kellie Heckman, GFAS' executive director. "GFAS was founded to solve this problem. But more work remains as only six-percent of self-identified sanctuaries in the United States currently are GFAS certified."

Demand for GFAS accreditation is on the rise. Costa Rican President Luis Guillermo Solís recently signed the Wildlife Conservation Law to require GFAS accreditation for all of the country's wildlife facilities. NIH's phase-out of invasive chimpanzee testing and Ringling's recent decision to retire its traveling animal circuses further underscores the growing need for legitimate retirement homes.

For its 10th anniversary, GFAS has unveiled an innovative, high-tech new way for the public to support legitimate sanctuaries. The "Donation Jar" was recently launched on the GFAS website. It's an innovative online giving tool to permit donors to contribute to one or multiple certified sanctuaries at once.

"When animals retire from labs and circuses and other sources of exploitation, accredited sanctuaries provide the best possible care. Savvy donors can now confidently contribute to highest quality sanctuaries by supporting only true sanctuaries using the GFAS Donation Jar. This will also encourage other sanctuaries to improve their standards of care," explains Heckman.

The Donation Jar is a new feature on <http://sanctuaryfederation.org>.



About Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries:

Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the sole purpose of strengthening and supporting the work of animal sanctuaries, rescues, and rehabilitation centers worldwide. GFAS was founded in 2007 by animal protection leaders from a number of different organizations in response to virtually unchecked and often hidden exploitation of animals for human entertainment and financial profit. The GFAS Board of Directors guides the organization's work in a collaborative manner. While the board includes those in top leadership at The Humane Society of the United States, International Fund for Animal Welfare, the ASPCA, and American Anti-Vivisection Society, all board members serve as individuals dedicated to animal sanctuaries. www.sanctuaryfederation.org.